

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ECSU's Community Emergency Response Team Wins National Innovation of the Year Award

Recognized for leading efforts and training in community emergency response



[Elizabeth City State University](#) (ECSU)'s Campus Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) earned a top award from the [National CERT Association](#) at the organization's awards ceremony in Galveston, Texas, today. Created by CERT Leaders across the United States in partnership with FEMA, the non-profit association was established in September 2019 to support communication and resource sharing across the CERT community.

ECSU's CERT was organized in 2018 and has grown to include 65 students, faculty, and staff who are trained to offer certification courses to other members of the community in emergency and disaster preparedness and response. The university has a Bachelor of Science degree in Emergency Management as part of the School of Science, Aviation, Health and Technology.

Dr. Karrie G. Dixon, ECSU chancellor, comments, "The university is thrilled that the important work done by our students and faculty, under the leadership of Dr.

Kevin Kupietz, associate professor in the Department of Aviation and Emergency Management, serves as a model for other CERTs across the nation. Our CERT enables our students to be better prepared to become an asset to our communities when disasters arise, and has ignited their interest in this field of study."

Dr. Kevin Kupietz, remarks, "The honor bestowed by the National CERT Association is a testament to the hard work of our students and the entire campus. During the pandemic, our CERT was a critical and readily utilized resource. I'm certain that our advocacy for this program will assist other colleges and universities, including our sister Historically Black Colleges and Universities, across the nation to develop an active and engaged CERT that works to serve in communities in preparing and responding to crises."

"As a Campus CERT based program, you have proven the challenges that may occur can be tackled," notes Suu-Va Tai, president of the National CERT Association. "This includes writing grants, to training and exercises, to YouTube channel demonstrations, and the forward thinking of applying for and receiving experimental funds from the Department of Education to pay Federal Work Study Students for participating in CERT training and activities for a three-year period.

"Your community and National CERT Association would like to thank those involved in creating and fostering this program as CERT becomes a household name across the United States," says Tai.

Media Note: A video featuring the Chancellor Dixon and members of the CERT is [available here](#).

About Elizabeth City State University

Elizabeth City State University provides students with a high-quality, affordable education as one of North Carolina's leading four-year public institutions that is part of the University of North Carolina System. ECSU develops leaders who are courageous, resilient, and empowered through excellent student-centered, experiential learning. We offer baccalaureate, professional, and master's degrees across a wide variety of interests. Excellence is the standard at Elizabeth City State University – success is our legacy. *Come to Discover. Leave to Conquer.*