

HBCU EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORKFORCE CONSORTIUM NEWSLETTER

“WHOLE of HBCUs”



February 2024

<https://www.huttc.org/hbcu-emc/>

Welcome from the Chair

Colleagues, welcome to the “WHOLE OF HBCUs.” This is the first edition of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Emergency Management Workforce Consortium’s (HBCU-EMWC) triannual newsletter. In this edition, we share how our nationwide HBCUs are working collaboratively to address the emergency response training needs of students on their campuses. This approach is in concert with meeting the mission of the HBCU-EMWC. Started in 2018, the HBCU-EMWC found that limited or no emergency response training is provided to students at HBCUs, many of which are in vulnerable geographic areas, unlike their white counterparts. Recent natural weather and pandemic-related disasters have further highlighted the need for equity in disaster and emergency response before, during, and after these occurrences. Identifying the gaps and addressing the emergency response training void that exists within our HBCU communities is the primary goal of the HBCU-EMWC.

In 2018, we determined that only 10% of our 101 HBCUs had knowledge of the Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), a program which has been in existence since 1993. The primary purpose of CERT is to, “train volunteers in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations.” Using CERT as a steppingstone to the emergency management profession is a key goal of the HBCU-EMWC. Strengthening the national emergency management workforce by diversifying it with HBCU student graduates is imperative. The HBCU-EMWC has made great strides in addressing the emergency and disaster training needs of our HBCU communities. Our stakeholders, described in the stakeholder committee’s report by committee Chair, Danielle Cortes DeVito below, have been stellar in their support. They are active partners in this effort. Our Research Committee, chaired by Dr Robin Kelley continues to support our HBCU members research, analyze and develop best practices as well as other key approaches in implementing campus CERT programs. In this edition, we welcome new HBCU partners: Chief Chris Anderson of Talladega College, Alabama; Acting Chief Ron Culmer, III of the University of the District of Columbia; and Assistant Provost, Dr. Darius Watson of Lincoln University, MO. We hope you enjoy the rich activities of the HBCU-EMWC as we work to make our communities more resilient as presented by the Interim Dean of Benedict College, Dr. Leon Getter, Dr. Kevin Kupietz of Elizabeth City State University, and Mr. Ashley Davis and Ms. Ivy Baker of Florida A&M University (FAMU). We encourage all of you to share your institution’s updates with us for the next edition of “WHOLE of HBCUs.”

Visit us at <https://www.huttc.org/hbcuemc/index.php>
Email us at HBCU.emwc@outlook.com

Goulda A. Downer, PhD, FAND, RD, LN, CNS
HBCU-EMWC, Co-Founder
Principal Investigator/Associate Professor
Howard University College of Medicine

Table of Contents

Page 1-2: Welcome from the Chair/Committees

Page 3: Benedict College Launches CERT

Page 4: ECSU Awarded Funding

Page 5: FAMU Emergency Management/
Benedict CERT Meeting

Page 6: Benedict Meeting with FEMA/ HBCUs
and Stakeholders



Dr. Goulda Downer

Stakeholder Committee

The stakeholder committee of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Emergency Management Workforce Consortium's (HBCU-EMWC) strives to provide the group with resources, tools, internships, and trainings that sustain prepared and resilient campuses. The committee consists of government agencies and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), including Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), AmeriCorps, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Red Cross. The 2024-2025 goal is to assist consortium members to establish and maintain college and university Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). The committee meets once a month and is open for all to attend.

Danielle Cortes DeVito EMT-P B.S.
HBCU EMWC Stakeholder Committee Chair
FEMA Region 5 Continuous Improvement Advisor



Danielle Cortes DeVito EMT-P B.S.

Research Committee

The Research Committee is committed to exploring the challenges and successes of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) as they implement CERT programming on their campuses. We will continue to reach out to our colleagues in historically black colleges and universities to collect qualitative data on why they chose to initiate CERT, what strategies they found helpful in working through their administration on the programming around CERT, and their next steps.

Our committee members have assembled documents that are helpful in launching a CERT on college campuses, and we will have those available on the website.

The Research Committee is excited to launch a new survey program to help us quickly gather the opinions and fears of those on campus immediately following a national disaster, whether on their campus or another campus.

The program is called the Valuable Informants on Pulses (VIP) program. Its membership will be comprised of our HBCU Emergency Management Workforce Consortium members. They will be sent electronic surveys and asked to record their perspective on how campus members process the disaster. We will record the VIPs' perspectives on the impact or perceived effect of the natural disaster on their campus and the populations they serve. The intention is to identify measures to increase HBCUs' preparedness and resilience in the face of such occurrences to recover more rapidly from these emergencies.

We look forward to keeping the Consortium abreast of our findings and to having, as an outcome, a positive impact on the emergency management research community.

Robin Kelley, PhD.
HBCU EMWC Research Committee Chair



Dr. Robin Kelley

Benedict College Launches Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Initiative

Benedict College, a proud member of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Emergency Management Consortium, is taking proactive steps to bolster emergency preparedness within its community. The institution has announced the development of the Benedict College Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Initiative, aimed at equipping students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively respond to emergencies, hazards, and disasters.

The primary objective of the Benedict College Campus CERT is to enhance emergency management capabilities and provide ongoing CERT training towards certification. By leveraging the expertise of various departments such as Campus Police, Student Affairs, Student Activities, Academic Affairs, College Health Services, ROTC, and the College's physical plant, among others, the initiative aims to create a comprehensive framework for emergency response.

Under the oversight of the College CERT Team, CERT volunteers will actively engage in selected emergency management drills and exercises throughout the year. Recent activities include active shooter drills and CPR training sessions, which serve to raise awareness and develop essential skills among the college community.

A core focus of the initiative is to empower trained CERT volunteers to identify life-threatening conditions, administer basic life-saving techniques, provide initial treatment for injuries, and understand standard disaster medical operations and policies. Additionally, Benedict College is conducting needs assessments to evaluate potential threats, risks, response needs, and hazards within the campus and surrounding areas, further strengthening its preparedness efforts.

To ensure the sustainability of the initiative, Benedict College is actively seeking funding opportunities and fostering collaborations with relevant stakeholders. By building a network of trained individuals and fostering a culture of preparedness, the CERT Initiative aims to serve as a valuable resource not only for the college community but also for the broader surrounding area.

In essence, the Benedict College CERT Initiative represents a proactive approach to disaster preparedness and emergency management, emphasizing education, training, and community engagement. By equipping individuals with the skills and resources needed to respond effectively to emergencies, Benedict College is taking significant strides towards creating a safer and more resilient environment for all.

-Dr. Leon Geter



Benedict College Campus Police



Benedict CERT Volunteers

ECSU awarded DHS Funding for studying UAS in Public Safety

Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) Emergency Management undergraduate program has received Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding for their research work in the use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Public Safety. This follow-up funding Grant is a conjunction with the DHS sponsored Summer Research Team (SRT) project. In the summer of 2023, the ECSU Emergency Management program participated in an SRT program, mentored by the Coastal Resiliency Center (CRC) in examining how drones could be used to build more resilient communities. While the summer research team examined multiple ways that drones could be used in public safety, they highlighted with the CRC how drones could be useful in mapping downtown flood areas of coastal communities to be able to better be able to make recommendations on how to mitigate future flooding making the community more resilient.

As part of this new funding, students and faculty from ECSU Emergency Management and unmanned aircraft undergraduate programs will be examining current uses of drones in public safety as well as examining and trying different applications that could be beneficial in Public Safety. This program will also create classroom experiences that can be replicated by other public safety programs with lesson plans on how drones can be used in public safety with real world experiences for students.

This latest ECSU DHS funding represents the fourth funded project for ECSU EM program. In previous funded cycles, the program students conducted a summer research team project on examining the safety of responders in austere conditions with follow-up funding from DHS to further investigate causes of injury and death to responders including starting a voluntary reporting repository for injuries to allow for the tracking of incidents to provide data for future research.

Dr Kupietz, who has been the lead investigator through each of these projects, is an advocate of the DHS Summer Research Team program. He states the benefits of the program in being able to get students involved in practical real world research projects which is incredibly valuable to the education of the student and to the growth of the programs the students are a part of while providing real world answers to real world problems. He also stresses how important it is for the school to obtain follow-up funding to be able to allow students to take leadership roles in the research of being able to help communities. This real-world experience allows students to do the research, document their findings, present their findings, and even advocate for change using their data as well as being able to travel and network with others of similar interests. All of this makes the students highly sought after in their chosen career paths.

If you would like to know more about the DHS SRT program visit the DHS SRT website([Our new Jametosca technology is now available and already receiving rave reviews from early adopters. We're excited to bring this cutting-edge technology to market and see the impact it will have in our industry.](#)) or feel free to contact Dr. Kevin Kupietz at ECSU (kdkupietz@ecs.edu)

-Dr. Kevin Kupietz



ECSU EM/CERT students using BFD drone to airlift an AED to CERT members in the field doing CPR on a patient as an exercise on how drones can be utilized in public safety.



ECSU CERT Students

FAMU Emergency Management: Leading the Way in Campus Resilience

In the ever-evolving emergency management landscape, Florida A&M University (FAMU) stands at the forefront, prioritizing emergency management on campus for its students, faculty, and staff. With a proactive approach and a commitment to readiness, FAMU has been making significant strides in bolstering its emergency management capabilities.

Leadership Enhancement: September 2023 marked a significant milestone for FAMU by appointing a dedicated Deputy Director for emergency management. Endowed with extensive experience from local and state levels, this leadership ensures FAMU's preparedness for emergency challenges. With a keen understanding of the intricacies of emergency response, the Deputy Director spearheads initiatives to bolster the university's resilience in the face of adversity.

Cybersecurity Readiness: FAMU recently hosted a Cyber Tabletop Exercise in collaboration with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) in line with the modern landscape of threats. This exercise aimed to simulate cyber-attack scenarios, allowing stakeholders to assess their readiness and response capabilities in the digital realm. By staying ahead of emerging threats, FAMU continues to fortify its defenses against cyber incidents.

Continued Engagement with CISA: FAMU's collaboration with CISA extends beyond mere partnership; it entails comprehensive assessments, rigorous training, and immersive exercises. Through these concerted efforts, FAMU reaffirms its leadership in understanding and managing risks to its physical infrastructure, reinforcing the university's unwavering commitment to resilience in the face of evolving threats.

National Security Initiatives: FAMU's steadfast partnership with the Department of Homeland Security's Whitehouse Initiative on the "See Something, Say Something" campaign underscores our dedication to national security efforts. This commitment is particularly poignant within our Historically Black Colleges and Universities community, where FAMU is pivotal in fostering a culture of vigilance and awareness.

Strategic Partnerships: Collaborating closely with the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security, FAMU actively enhances safety protocols for sporting events held on campus. By prioritizing the security and well-being of attendees, FAMU ensures that these events offer a safe and enjoyable experience while mitigating potential risks.

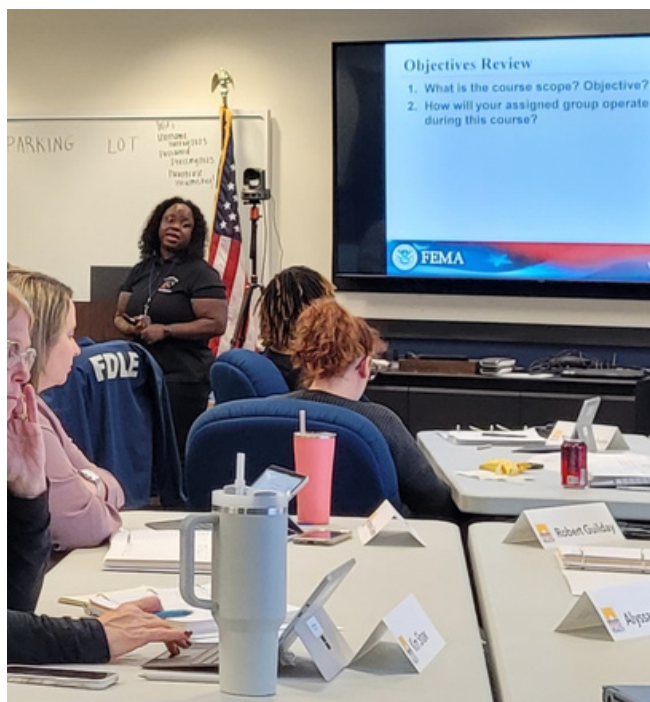
Hurricane Exercise: Looking ahead, FAMU is gearing up to host a Federal Emergency Management Agency tabletop exercise in May. This exercise will unite senior leaders from FAMU, fellow universities, and state and local emergency management partners. It will be a valuable opportunity to test coordination, communication, and response strategies in a simulated emergency scenario, reaffirming FAMU's dedication to continuous improvement and readiness.

As FAMU prioritizes emergency management, it remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering a resilient campus environment. Through strategic leadership, collaborative partnerships, and proactive initiatives, FAMU sets a precedent for excellence in emergency preparedness, ensuring the well-being and security of its community amidst adversity.

-Dr. Ashley Davis



Ashley H. Davis, MS, CEM, FPSEM



Ivy A. Baker, MPA, CPM

Benedict CERT Meeting with FEMA

February 27th marked an important milestone for Benedict College (BC) as they convened their inaugural BC Cert Advisory Council meeting, made possible with invaluable support from Neil Anderson of FEMA Region 4. Neil's expertise and extensive network greatly contributed to the success of this endeavor. With his guidance, stakeholders representing various organizations participated, offering invaluable insights and a strong commitment to collaborating with Benedict in establishing and running a formal CERT Initiative.

The meeting saw representation from key agencies, including Richland County Emergency Services (3), South Carolina Emergency Management Division (2), Richland County Sheriff's Department (1), and FEMA Region 4 (1), alongside twelve faculty and staff members from Benedict College.

Looking ahead, Benedict College is preparing to launch its first CERT Training cohort this April. These sessions are scheduled to convene twice weekly for three hours each, facilitated by the South Carolina Emergency Management team and hosted on our campus.

During their discussions, they explored avenues for internships, career prospects, potential funding opportunities, and even the prospect of introducing a Minor in Emergency Management.

Overall, the meeting was productive, laying a strong foundation for future collaboration.

-Dr. Leon Geter

Newsletter Committee

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Denise Bailey, MEd. – Assistant Editor
Ceeon Smith, PhD – Assistant Editor

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Stakeholders

AmeriCorps
American Red Cross
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)