

HBCU EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WORKFORCE CONSORTIUM NEWSLETTER

“Whole of HBCUs” Vol. 3



December 2024

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

Welcome From the Chair

Dear Colleagues, as we look forward to an exciting year ahead, I take this opportunity to thank each of you for your continued commitment to strengthening our Emergency/Disaster management workforce by diversifying it. Your work is a pressing necessity as we continue to help build a safer, stronger, and more culturally connected workforce that equitably supports the “Whole Community.” This is the year when we will evaluate our work and ensure meeting the goal of adding 5 additional CERT programs in our nationwide cadre of HBCUs has been accomplished. The need to elevate the academic contributions of students to the EM workforce is an even more vital part of national conversations as a growing body of scientific literature shows a consistent trend of earth’s temperature rising. In fact, data show that the 10 warmest years in the historical record have all occurred in the past decade with the hottest summer on record occurring last year. The National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) reports that in the U.S., as of November 1st, 2024, there have been 24 confirmed weather/climate disaster events. These events exceed \$1 billion each and included 17 severe storm events, 4 tropical cyclone events, 2 winter storm events, and 1 wildfire event. As such, the need for an increased emergency/disaster management workforce as a corollary to the ongoing increasing disasters cannot be over emphasized. It is against a backdrop of these challenges that you, our dedicated Consortium Members, work with our next generation of student leaders and prepare them to deal with the ongoing climate crisis through collaboration and by translating words into action as well as by championing mitigation strategies.

In this newsletter, read about how our Consortium members provide a diversity of pathways through which students can learn and develop the requisite professional, academic, and personal skills needed to succeed in the field of emergency/disaster management. We welcome our newest partner, the Black Resilience Network, led by Dr. Atia Martin and look forward to exposing our students further to emerging opportunities in the discipline. The Resource Corner reminds us of the Federal partnership support we have as well as programs within our HBCU lineage, such as the Bullard Center for Environmental & Climate Justice at Texas Southern University. Let us continue our mission to accelerate strengthening the emergency/disaster management workforce by emphasizing the importance of collaboration, resilience, and collective action for the “whole community.”

-Goulda Downer, PhD FAND, RD, LN, CNS

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Stakeholder Committee Update

The Stakeholder Committee continues to focus on supporting and providing resources to students and faculty, with the goal of enhancing the campus's existing capabilities in emergency preparedness and response. This quarter, committee members identified an opportunity to meet with FEMA's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program coordinator. The outcome of this meeting led to an invitation for Ms. Amy Pfine, FEMA's Individual Preparedness Officer, to speak at the consortium's October 2024 meeting. Ms. Pfine presented valuable insights on starting a CERT program on college campuses. Her presentation was particularly beneficial for newer consortium members who are in the early stages of developing emergency response capabilities, while also serving as a helpful refresher for campuses that already have an established CERT program.

As we move into 2025, the stakeholders' committee will focus on providing a comprehensive list of state CERT coordinators, state training officers and FEMA regional Individual Preparedness officers. The effort will provide the HBCU consortium members with more than 100 points of contact that will allow the HBCU Workforce Consortium colleges and universities to build relationships and strengthen existing partnerships. Additional CERT training resources can be found at [Community FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov). - *Danielle Cortes-Devito*

The Valuable Informants of Pulse (VIP) Research Committee Update

Currently, vulnerable populations and many Southern Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are at risk of student mortality, morbidity, and/or loss of extensive property as a result of the rising frequencies and the severity of human-generated and natural disasters. These situations can include active shooters, bomb threats, hurricanes, flooding, and the crises of lack of adequately functioning utilities as a result of these various calamities. These occurrences can tear at the fabric of HBCUs' ability to address emergencies as a whole community. To better understand the opinion of members of the HBCU community, we have assembled a small cadre of volunteers who would respond to questionnaires about natural disasters that occurred on their campuses or that they had heard about in the media. These volunteers comprise our Valuable Informant Pulse (VIP) Program members.

The HBCU Emergency Management Workforce Consortium's Research Committee's VIP program has conducted five rounds of monthly surveys with campus volunteers. Each survey consisted of 5-10 questions about the preparedness of their HBCU campuses for incidents such as demonstrations against the Gaza conflict, heat waves, hurricanes, flooding, and tornadoes. Findings revealed that less than 50% of respondents were aware of or familiar with emergency preparedness plans for these incidents.

This highlights the need for improved emergency preparedness planning or, at minimum, better training and communication regarding emergency procedures. However, data analysis has been limited by low response rates and the quality of responses. Therefore, a new inquiry methodology is necessary to better assess the preparedness levels and opinions of HBCU volunteer representatives. Future research may involve onsite interviews and collaboration with campus representatives to obtain more comprehensive insights.

-*Robin Kelley, PhD*

Empowering Preparedness: Benedict College's CERT Leads the Way!

Launched in 2022, Benedict College's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) provides essential emergency response training and preparedness for the campus and surrounding community. The CERT initiative works closely with the Emergency Management Committee and Campus Police to ensure a coordinated approach to campus safety. Supported by six faculty members, the Benedict College CERT is focused on empowering individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to respond to disasters effectively and confidently. We anticipate welcoming 20 new members to the next cohort in the spring.

Recently, South Carolina was impacted by a series of hurricanes that affected both local communities and the Benedict College campus. In response, Benedict College CERT took a proactive role, organizing awareness campaigns to inform students and faculty of best practices for hurricane preparedness and safety. The team worked diligently to educate the college community on storm readiness, providing guidance on assembling emergency kits, developing family communication plans, and understanding evacuation routes. By addressing the specific risks associated with hurricanes, the CERT team helped ensure that the Benedict College community was better prepared and informed as the storms approached.

The CERT program at Benedict College has a lasting impact on the campus and surrounding community. By educating individuals about emergency preparedness and encouraging outreach, the team is ensuring that students and residents are ready to act when disaster strikes. This initiative is invaluable to the college's mission of empowerment and community service. Benedict College encourages students and community members who are interested in building emergency response skills to join the CERT program. New members receive thorough training and become part of a team that is committed to making a difference.

The Benedict College CERT initiative is more than just a team; it's a commitment to the well-being of the college and its surrounding community. Through preparedness, teamwork, and proactive outreach, Benedict College CERT is leading the way in creating a safer, more resilient future for everyone involved.

-Leon Geter, PhD

ECSU Announces the Creation of the International Disasters Workers Program

Through the funding support from the Department of State IDEAS program Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) has created an "International Disaster Workers" program. The program was created with two legs. Leg one was to partner with international aid organizations to enable college students to be able to deploy with to other countries with mentors from these groups to practice their skills they learned in school. The second leg is the creation of fixed site locations in foreign countries where students can participate in faculty led emergency and disaster educational opportunities to see how other countries operate to develop better informed students but also to help the host countries with projects. The first host country is set to be Costa Rica with an initial trip date proposed for the summer of 2025 and working with Caribbean countries in summer of 2026.

Dr. Kupietz, the Lead Investigator of the new program discussed that while this program was developed by the ECSU Emergency Management (EM) program it is designed to encompass students of all disciplines, as all disciplines are needed to help mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. The expectation is that HBCUs and academic institutions will join the project. As natural disasters become more frequent and more severe it is going to take new thinking and new heroes to help protect the populations of the world. -Kevin Kupietz, PhD, EFO

CERT Members Perform Public Education for Thousands at Oceana Air Show

Public Education is nothing new for the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) at Elizabeth City State University (ECSU). They typically provide education multiple times a month through the academic month using innovative technologies such as the Planetarium for severe weather, to Virtual Reality, Drones, simulators and more. However, even they were in for something new when they were asked to participate in the September Oceana air show in Virginia Beach. In 2024 the event hosted more than 8,000 5th graders on Friday and saw more than 130,000 patrons through Saturday and Sunday events and ECSU CERT was there the entire time with more than a dozen student CERT members each day offering a wide variety of public education from bystander CPR, drone safety, stop the bleed, victim movement and more.

These events have done a great deal for the growth of the CERT members, giving them instructional, logistical and leadership skills. Dr. Kupietz the lead advisor for the CERT team talks about the pride he has in his students as he states, "All the faculty have to do is give them their objectives and parameters and cut them loose, they do the rest."

A strong CERT program is great for the student members as it provides life-changing personal and resume building opportunities. It also creates loads of positive university image to the communities that the academic institution supports. If you would like to know more about how you can build a strong CERT program on your campus, please reach out to the HBCU EM Workforce consortium.

– Kevin Kupietz, PhD, EFO



In one of the many CERT public education stations at the Oceana Air show, team members teach 5th graders how to properly coordinate lifting a patient from a disaster



Some of the many ECSU CERT volunteers that it took to have a successful event at the Oceania Air Show.

Florida A&M University Emergency Management Department: Building Resilience and Supporting the University Community Through Unprecedented Disasters in 2024

This year has been one of the most challenging and active in Florida A&M University's (FAMU) history, marked by a series of natural disasters affecting our campus. On May 10, two EF-2 tornadoes struck our university directly, resulting in millions of dollars of damage. In the month that followed, Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton each left their mark on our campus and community.

In the wake of the May tornadoes, FAMU prioritized recovery and opened its doors to the community by establishing a shelter, in coordination with the American Red Cross, for those affected by the disaster. Our university also hosted Team Rubicon, a veteran-led organization that played a vital role in community recovery efforts. Following Hurricane Debby, when lodging resources were scarce across North Florida, FAMU provided campus accommodation for Urban Search and Rescue teams, supporting critical recovery operations in the region. These actions reflect FAMU's commitment to not only withstand adversity but also serve as a beacon of support for those around us, even in times of need.

The challenges of 2024 have underscored the importance of preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation, and resilience, all of which are foundational to FAMU's approach to emergency management. Furthermore, with the support of our volunteer, private, local, state, and federal partners, we prepared for and recovered from these disasters as a whole community.

With each event, our campus has become stronger, more resilient, and more unified in the face of adversity.

- Ashley Davis MS, CEM, FPEM



EOC presented to the Office of Housing RA's and RD's during one of their trainings.



During Hurricane Debbie response, FAMU utilized FSUs drone team to conduct a flyover damage assessment for the campus.

In recognition of initiatives in the Community Resilience Project at Jackson State University, Dr. Jessica Murphy received "Excellence for Women in Technology" Award. This award recognizes the superior performance and achievement of a woman who has demonstrated notable leadership, superior achievement, influence in industry, and who has made a great impact in their field. This honored was bestowed upon by the Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (ATMAE).

Dr. Murphy is a Professor of Technology and Emergency Management in the Civil & Environmental and Industrial Systems & Technology. She leads the multidisciplinary project team including faculty in Technology, Computer Science, Meteorology, Journalism and Media Studies, and Health Policy and Management. Dr. Murphy is elated to be recognized by ATMAE; however, success of Community Resilience with the incorporation of Technology would not be possible without the great contributions and innovation of the overall project team.



Dr. Jessica Murphy
Professor of Technology and
Emergency at Jackson State
University

HBCU EM Workforce Consortium Collaborate on DHS Funded Anti-Terrorism Recruitment Project

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently announced that an HBCU EM Workforce Consortium idea, examining terrorist recruitment efforts, was funded through the Targeted Violence and Terrorism (TVT) Innovation program for further development. Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) has been examining the recruitment efforts of extremist and terrorist groups on college and University campuses in their EM 490 Global Terrorism class since 2019. The seed data from these students run programs was utilized in a proposal to DHS to examine the problem of recruitment on college campuses by these problematic groups. The second part of this project will be to develop, through a multi-disciplinary group of professionals, academics, and students, a lesson plan to provide free of charge to university leadership, police departments, and other stakeholders on how to recognize recruitment activities on their campuses and how to counter the recruitment activities.

Dillard University, Grambling University, Lincoln University, and Texas Southern University will be other HBCUs joining ECSU in this important project. These HBCUs will be providing subject matter experts to help in the research and lesson plan development as well as serving as pilot locations for the testing of the created lesson plan in year 2 of the project. It is known that college students are recruiting targets for terrorist groups. Dr. Kupietz, the lead on this project, says that he is hopeful that projects like this will help to break the chain of terrorism by limiting the pool of people that are able to be radicalized to harm others. -ECSU



Student research during their normal classes can be a great way to work on research idea and collect seed data for larger projects. Here ECSU EM students (Makyla Grant, Aprylee Brown, and Joseph Cole) are presenting two of their class research ideas at IAEM Conference. One of these projects became an important case study and the other a funded research project.

Lincoln University New Health and Security Sciences Building

Lincoln University is excited to announce the groundbreaking of its new \$45 million Health and Security Sciences Building, a transformative addition to the campus that will further elevate its leadership in public safety and emergency management education. This state-of-the-art facility will serve as the epicenter for the university's rapidly growing programs in health, security, and emergency response fields.

The new Health and Security Sciences Building will house advanced laboratories, high-tech simulation rooms, the country's first open access Emergency Operations Center, and innovative classroom spaces, all designed to provide students with hands-on training in emergency medical and response services. The facility will serve as a comprehensive training ground, equipping students with the critical skills necessary to excel in careers that safeguard both individual and community well-being.

As part of this expansion, Lincoln University is launching four new certificate programs that reflect the growing needs in health and security sciences: Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Cybersecurity, Mental Health for First Responders, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). These programs are designed to provide specialized, career-oriented training that meets the urgent demands of the health and security sectors.

In a significant move to enhance student opportunities, Lincoln University has also partnered with AT&T, which will provide scholarships to students pursuing cybersecurity and EMT studies. This partnership not only strengthens the university's financial support system but also brings in industry expertise to further enrich academic programs.

With AT&T's backing, Lincoln University students will gain access to critical resources, networking opportunities, and real-world experiences that will help launch their careers in health and security sciences. The partnership will also foster new research and training initiatives, ensuring that the university stays on the cutting edge of technological and public safety advancements.

Lincoln University's investment in the Health and Security Sciences Building reflects its commitment to being a leader in public safety education. The facility will offer students and faculty an unparalleled environment for learning, research, and innovation, cementing the university's role in shaping the future of emergency management, health services, and cybersecurity.

This new chapter marks Lincoln University's ongoing mission to prepare its students for impactful careers that protect and serve communities across the country, addressing some of the most pressing challenges in today's world. - *Darius Watson, PhD*



Groundbreaking of the Health and Security Sciences Building

Resource Corner

Bullard Center: Environment Justice Climate Corp

The program is called the HBCU Environmental Justice Climate Corps (EJCC) is a six-week residential program, which focuses on environmental and climate justice issues. Participants have the opportunity to explore topics such as pollution, poverty, urban planning, transportation justice, and recurring flooding, with the aim of equipping them to advocate for policy changes and solutions.

Learn more about the program by visiting:

<https://www.bullardcenter.org/hbcu-climate-change-consortium#:~:text=HBCU%20Climate%20Change%20Consortium%20Partners,University%2C%20Xavier%20University%20of%20Louisiana>

Navigating the Federal Hiring Process Series: Interview Tips

- Location: Virtual
- Event Date: December 10, 2024 12:00pm - 1:00pm Eastern Time
- Event Description: As the nation's preeminent public health promotion, protection, preparedness, and prevention agency, CDC works 24/7 to conduct critical science and provides health information that protects our nation against public health threats, both foreign and domestic. Join us for this informative session to hear directly from CDC Recruiters to gain expert knowledge on how to craft your federal resume, tackle the assessment questionnaire, and discover ways to becoming the most competitive applicant during your federal job application process. Please contact recruiter@cdc.gov for any accommodation requests.

FEMA External Resume Writing Workshop

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) hosts a virtual, monthly resume writing workshop each second Tuesday of the month from 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. EST, to help interested applicants tailor their resumes for federal employment at FEMA. The next workshop is scheduled for December 10.

Attending a federal resume writing workshop can help candidates to take their resume to the next level. By attending a workshop, candidates will receive expert guidance from professionals who understand the challenging requirements of federal resumes and will provide you with the tools needed to ensure their resume complies with federal resume requirements. Specific topics to be covered will include:

- An overview of FEMA.
- Federal resume writing tips.
- Navigating USAJobs.
- Additional resources.

To register, visit www.fema.gov/event/fema-resume-writing-workshop

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