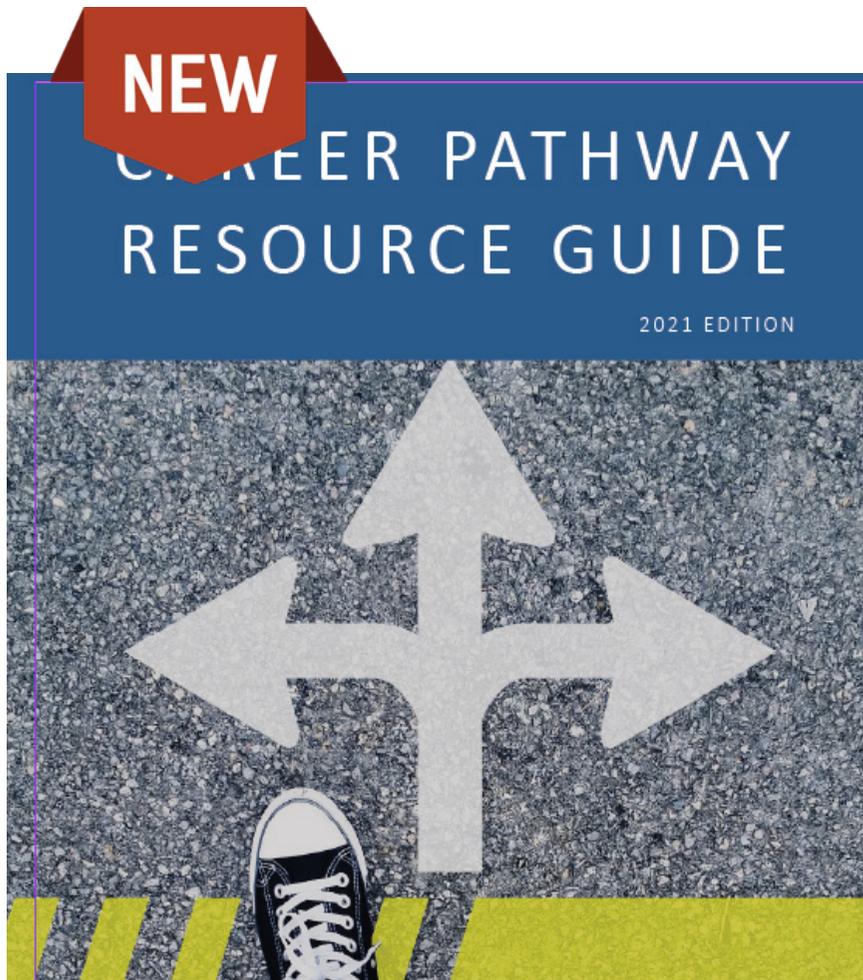


OUR NEWLY UPDATED CAREER PATHWAYS RESOURCE GUIDE

Our Confluence news magazine was first established in September 2018. The purpose of the newsmagazine is to provide our Board members, Senior Fellows, and stakeholders an inside look into the Center's accomplishments, events, partnerships and highlight our career pathway program. In addition, our pathways resource guidebook has been updated to showcase where people can get an education in Criminal Justice, Cybersecurity, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Services, Homeland Security Emergency Management, and Occupational Health and Safety. Readers can also learn about the Washington State Skills Centers, resources for Veterans, and find the locations of our 34 Community and Technical Colleges. The Pathway Resource Guidebook will be available to download on the Center's website, and there will be a Spanish language version. We are proud of this issue of Confluence and want to thank those who helped contributed: Deb Moller, Tiffany Brown, Ron May, YuVonne Bailey-Navarrette, and Sarah Miller."

You can download the guidebook in our *Guidebooks* section at:
<https://www.coehsem.com/our-services/>



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9/11 REMEMBRANCE – CONTINUING TO HONOR OUR FIRST RESPONDERS

By Kellie Hale

Where were you that September day? For me, I was getting ready for school. I was only in my second week of high school, so I was around 14 years old at the time. As I was putting on makeup, I hear my mom crying. She mentioned something about a plane crashing into one of the World Trade Centers in New York. Honestly, I didn't pay too much attention to her at the time because I didn't want to be late for school. Unfortunately, it wasn't until I got to school where the teacher had the television on one of the news stations. I don't think any of my classmates at the time understood the significance of this event and how it would change our lives. We were too young to grasp the concept that this was a terrorist attack on the United States on our home soil.

Now it has been twenty years since that fateful day. I'm twenty years older now. I have a better understanding of the effects that day created. When I was just a green-eyed freshman, I never thought I would be immersed in the world of emergency management or homeland security. Sometimes the paths we take are unexpected but turn out to be important ones to take.

Now it has been twenty years since that fateful day. I'm twenty years older now. I have a better understanding of the effects that day created. When I was just a green-eyed freshman, I never thought I would be immersed in the world of emergency management or homeland security. Sometimes the paths we take are unexpected but turn out to be important ones to take.

One of the lasting impressions 9/11 had on me was how it showcased the importance of our first responders. How many emergency workers in New York City responded to the World Trade Center? The answer is 412. Many of those emergency workers included firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians and paramedics, court officers, patrolmen.

Those who survived continue to live with long-lasting mental and physical health ailments such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and cancer (prostate, leukemia, and thyroid) from the toxic dust from the rubble of the Twin Towers at Ground Zero. There are even reports of how some 9/11 first responders are experiencing rapid cognitive decline such as dementia and even suffer from seizures.

For years, first responders and survivors had to lobby Congress to receive compensation for injuries sustained from 9/11. Sadly, many died due to 9/11-related illnesses during advocacy to receive their fair compensation. It is also important to note that many first responders were injured in the days after 9/11 while still trying to locate possible



survivors amidst the Twin Tower rubble. Unfortunately, when the Bush Administration established the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund (VCF), it only assisted those injured within ninety-six (96) hours after the attack. This excluded many first responders. By 2011, the VCF was reactivated under the Obama Administration by signing the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. President Obama reauthorized the VCF again in 2015.

When the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act was set to expire in December of 2020, President Trump signed the Zadroga Reauthorization Act into law. The third reauthorization will make funds available for the first responders and survivors until October 1, 2090.

As Americans commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorists, it is the perfect time to connect and share our thanks to the heroic efforts of first responders and even survivors. First responders deserve to be recognized, not only on 9/11 but every day. They are willing to put their life on the line, to sacrifice for the greater good, and are committed, heart and soul, to aiding and protecting others.

We could all learn something from first responders to step up and take action during an emergency to help those in need. So, be sure to take the time to thank a first responder, not only on 9/11 but every day. They deserve it. They more than earned it.

Thank you.

INTERVIEW WITH RON MAY

By Linda Crerar

Back in June, I interviewed Ron May, Dean of Health and Technology at Pierce College. It was great talking with Ron about the EMS and Fire degree programs. He provided incredible insight and knowledge about the degree program's plans and goals, along with Pierce College's new building for the Dental Hygiene and Vet Tech Programs.

Linda: We will be featuring YuVonne Bailey-Navarette Pierce College's EMS Program Manager and Joe Dilley, the Fire Programs Program Manager for the BAS, AA, and Apprenticeship Programs in our Confluence News Magazine.

You are the Dean of their Programs, and I would like to know more about them. Let's start with the Fire Program and the new legislation that the state is involved with regarding wildfire training and education.

Ron: I think that they have their fire academies where that's occurring.

That would not be the Pierce College training because ours is the fire services leadership and management. So we're looking more at the leadership side of things; indeed, wildfires from a leadership standpoint need to be addressed. I suspect Joey is addressing that.

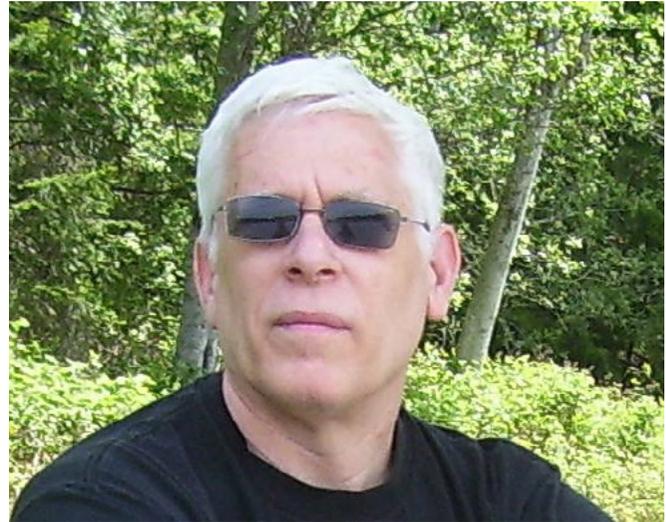
Linda: The actual language in the legislation talks about workforce development. The existing legislation is House Bill 1168, which focuses on workforce development focused on long-term forest health and reducing wildfire dangers. It says DNR, jointly with the Department of Commerce. In consultation with Centers of Excellence, Secondary and Higher Education, and the Workforce Development Centers, must develop and implement initiatives to address the forest health workforce. It includes developing a tracking plan, maintaining and publicly reporting on specific items related to the development of workforce initiatives. Including a working definition of the forest sector workforce training recommendations, identifying gaps and barriers to a whole for sector workforce pool, and any recommendations for addressing barriers or other needs to develop a forest sector workforce.

What they're doing and the new Fire BAS degree?

Ron: The legislation is comprehensive, and at this time, we do have any involvement with developing a plan. I don't know how they plan to do that with no money attached to it.

Linda: Yes, the State Board and the state agencies did not get any money.

Ron: So, really, it sounds to me like they need to have some



person who will be managing this whole thing because I think that they need to address forest health, but someone needs to help pull together the different elements that are there. As an educational institution, we certainly can speak in those conversations about providing programming and support. I am sure that the Department of Natural Resources will have the authority to bring the many different agencies involved together to develop a plan. It will be good to look holistically and think about what the fire programs and the community colleges with continuing education could bring to the table. We could do something that will not necessarily cost us a lot of money and help build our communities' resilience. So, you know, this is all part of the continuous improvement with our programs; indeed, we need to incorporate the forest health piece into it.

I think most especially where we are situated in an urban now relatively metropolitan area, and we are concerned primarily on the structure and human life. Now, I know that Joey does have some wildland curriculum in the program. And we can look at it from a leadership standpoint.

So, we need to be looking at it from training for the individual firefighter. Once again, the legislating will be at the level of the academies and on the leadership and management side. We need to go ahead and have that as strategic plans for all of our fire departments. So we've got to have better communication and networking throughout the state and the counties in the state, along with the state agencies.

The challenge we have run into is that fire is not as relatively standardized as it could be from a training standpoint. So, once again, that gets back to talking about the needs and the different requirements for the various counties. So the fire departments are trying to adjust what they do to what their community needs. So I think there is a movement to standardize at the national level state level.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Linda: It is essential that our colleges are aware and concerned, and getting our faculty involved, that we are part of the community and building that resilience.

Ron: The things we have been focusing on may need to change in the future because I think that forest health will undoubtedly get more important to us as time goes on with climate change.

So we certainly have been meaning to be not necessarily ahead of the game because that's hard to do, but we certainly need to be responsive to that. We need to go ahead and address that in new ways for our nation. And find out how we articulate with the grand scheme of wherever we fit into that so that we can be part of the communication and find out what our contribution should be to them, or if we need to expand that to move forward. That's great.

Linda: We will be talking to Joey so he can highlight all of the fire programs from around the state and the resources that are available for preparedness, and Joey is strategically placed because he has the BA degree to facilitate leadership in this realm.

Ron: Yeah. The very idea is to get them to think as leaders, be forward-looking, and be strategic and how they're approaching their work. That's a real challenge because that is very reactive by the very nature of the fire service. You've got a fire alarm going off, you find out where you're going, and you have to react to that emergency. So Joey is trying to get them to think in more of a long-term kind of strategic type of way. And certainly, this house bill is addressing that as well, and how we can prevent the fires and discuss how we can respond to it in a much more strategic way when a fire does arise.

I think that Joey is very strategic in his approach and trying to instill that in the students.

Linda: Thank you, Ron. That was a good discussion, and I look forward to working with you and Joey on this bill and the implementation and where we go in the future. So now I'd like to switch to another topic —your EMS

Program with Yvonne. I know we're going to highlight that program and talk about what you're doing with the articulation agreement with Central Washington University.

Ron: YuVonne is the prime mover; if I can use that word, she's the person that has been pushing that EMS program expansion, and I think she's been working on that for probably about ten years. This has been her vision for quite some time. And so it's wonderful for us to see the fruition of that. Some details still need to work out from the Central Washington side of things to have the program physically, and our lab training still occurs on campus. But, still, we certainly have the articulation to allow students to move into central Washington, a Bachelor's of seamlessly. Science and paramedics and so that that is in place. And like I said, we still have some logistical challenges in getting to that next piece where we have the labs on this side of the state, the labs where we can. Most of that bachelor's program is online, but they need to Ellensburg's for one day a week if they get accepted into that program for now.

Yvonne, it's probably been a vision of hers for a long time, and that she has worked towards realizing that vision. She is an incredible individual; she has excellent attention to detail, and she is outstanding about following through, which I certainly appreciate.

But I think beyond that; it is her passion. Through her passion for the field of emergency medical services and her passion for student success, and addition to that, I think she's got a passion for employee success. So she is very supportive of the folks in verse, staff, faculty, and other staff members that are supporting the program, the Emergency Medical Services Program.

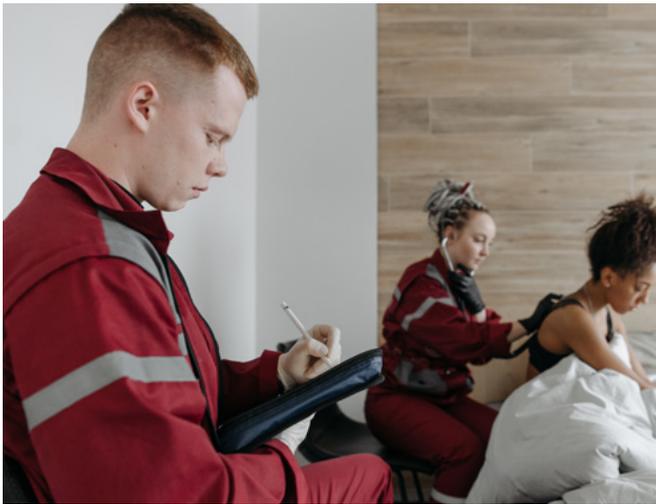
YuVonne is also a visionary; as I said before, she's been working on this particular piece for quite some time. So, she is aware of the industry and is aware of where the industry field is moving. And so I think that she is seeing the movement of professionalism going on with this, where

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you know the expectation is for folks in this field to have more education. And so certainly with that in mind, we have to open up the opportunities for students to receive their bachelor's degree.

And so that's why it's so vitally important for us to have an easy path for students to get their EMT basic to get their associate's degree and then get their bachelor's degree. And then we also really need to think about what about graduate programs beyond the bachelor's degree. That would be Central asking the students stuff to graduate programs, but from where we are, as soon as a student gets into the EMT basic program that we need to instill upon them.



So, in many cases, once the students get on campus with the EMT basic, they learn how exciting it is for them to know, they discover the opportunities there for them to move forward. And once they get the success of the EMT basic of basic under the belt. They can realize, hey, I can go on, I can get my associates and bachelors.

Linda: And of course, the other thing that Pierce's is working on the new building right now. Do you want to talk about that and how that will help our different programs, particularly the EMT program?

Ron: Sure. We do have a new building coming on board the port still from campus. The new facility, which is a standalone building, is going to be housing Veterinary Technology. Then we're going to go into the second phase, which will be the renovation of the cascade. So the first floor of the cascade building, which currently knows dental hygiene bit and events. The building should be complete by the winter quarter of 2023.

So the vet tech dental hygiene building should be completed by January of 2022, and it will take about another year for us to renovate the cascade building. But what's going to happen to the cascade building. When the renovation is complete, that will be the MS department, and that's a

fascinating thing because for the first time in what is it 2025 years. So you know EMS will have a space that has been designed for them so they will finally feel like they have a permanent home.

They're pretty much taking over the end of the building that were dental hygiene, dental hygiene clinic, and the vet tech. So, with them that space, we will have dedicated simulation space, the simulation lab for UMass. There will be, I believe, two simulated ambulances that are there; they will have a hospital bed, they will have a residential bit to simulate, you know, emergencies that are taking place at home. And what happens in the hospital, there will be.

I think they're six simulation bays where we could project a simulation and then have the students respond to that. So it's going to be a very interactive space for students in the 21st-century, really using combining that virtual reality, but with and getting people hands-on experience.

And so, in looking at demand. As far as healthcare demand and what are you seeing as far as the growth in this area? You know healthcare demand is always going to be increasing COVID pandemic has compounded that certainly has complicated that enormously. We've got a lot more healthcare workers who are retiring out of the field because of all the stress associated with the pandemic. So, from not getting enough PPE to doing all of the overtime hours that have stressed out the whole healthcare system, it again so many different ways.

Ironically enough, one of them, the bottlenecks, and all of this are clinical sites. So that's the piece that is stopping we have demand from students. You know, hundreds of nursing students at Pierce College want to get into nursing, and we have 40 spots for getting into the nursing program.

With dental hygiene, we have 20 spots, and we've got probably 100 students trying to get into that program. So we certainly based upon the number of students that want to get in. We have the demand, we can go ahead and bring them into the programs, but we don't have faculty and faculty for them. So expanding our health care programs is very problematic because of those pieces, so you can't. You don't want to step up people for failure.

And I can't even imagine having it be at the volume that is occurring now. And how the toll takes just psychologically on our healthcare workers, I'm amazed that you know these people are still at it and are incredibly dedicated.

Linda: Ron, I appreciate you and your faculty. It's evident that you are very supportive, and you know and care about what they're doing and encouraged their work. And so, I will end our conversation with that.

Thank you so much.

INTERVIEW WITH: YUVONNE BAILEY-NAVARRETTE

By Kellie Hale

Where do you see the degree programs going in the next 3-5 years?

We are currently launching an AAS-T that has been accepted by 3 BA programs, Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Fire Service Leadership and Management, and Paramedicine. By developing this AAS-T, students will be able to transfer between colleges to continue their study in their chosen fields. With that hard work finished, we can again focus on bringing our advanced training programs to Pierce College and its military and rural partners.

How has technology changed the way you teach, and what are the challenges?

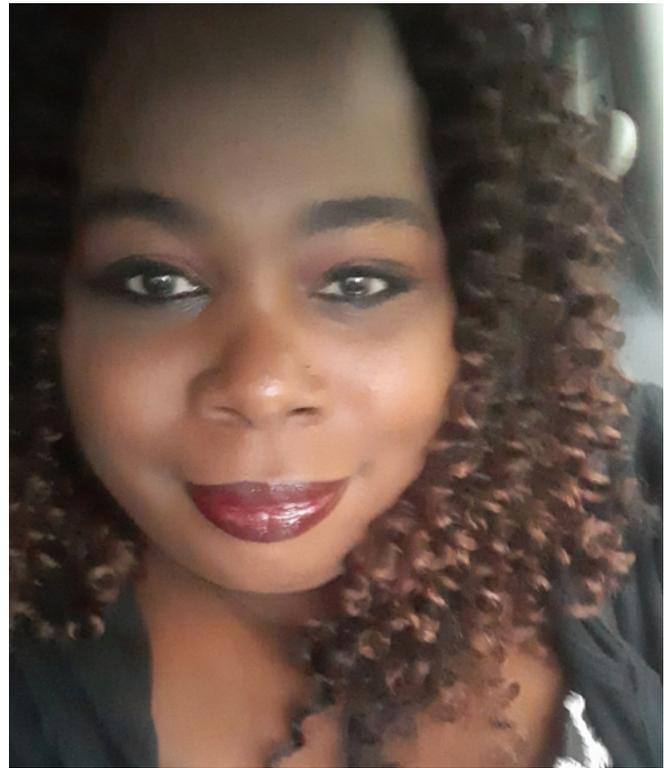
We are fortunate that engineers are constantly updating devices to improve patient care. With our instructional team and Advisory board working out in the field, we are able to bring to our students the training on devices they use when in ambulances, fire houses, or hospitals. We teach “national standards” so any specialty devices they will learn on the job. The challenge comes with funding and to replace outdated equipment, careful planning and grants help in this area.

Online classes: how do you make them effective, so students retain and understand learnings (e.g., applied learning)?

There is online classes and online interactive instructional classes and we used the latter. We had daily interactive instruction with our students and met with them weekly for laboratory instruction. During the interactive instruction student participation was mandatory and demonstrations and various multimedia was used to demonstrate techniques to students. Students got creative using teddy bears and siblings to practice on. We met with our students and taught them how to use their equipment the first day and the weekly labs reinforced learning. We divided our labs into smaller sessions to provide more hands on and individual instruction. We did not see a drop in numbers or success in passing NREMT and maintain success above the national average.

How will EMS professionals need to change/adapt to address future concerns, especially with issues like COVID-19?

The EMS field already has/had proper “Standard Precaution” practices and has made adjustments as needed, such as increasing the level of PPE worn on suspected/confirmed COVID cases. COVID-19 is just another health concern and in the EMS field we are always looking forward to address the future. I believe our EMS community will adapt and overcome as we always have.



Do you see more diversity in student enrollment?

I smile as I answer this question because diversity is a buzz word for this time. In our EMS world it means so much more than the obvious. Myself being an African American, German born, Military Brat that also was a single mother and am a Lesbian, I would say yes. Shows on TV that have diverse staff, deliberate interactions and open mindset have opened the minds of potential students that EMS is not a closed field. Our staff take pride in learning and developing our own intercultural practices so that our students learn to be aware EMS personal. Our student body has become a beautiful rainbow of people from various cultures, economic statuses, and educational backgrounds. Employers have recognized this by “word of mouth” and by experiencing our student’s productivity in the field and recruit out of our classes quarterly. EMS employers are also offering tuition and internship incentives that bridge the costly gap that is a barrier to entry into the EMS field.

How do you foresee the EMS field evolving?

Respect. One of the things that events like 9/11 and COVID-19 did was open the eyes of local communities to how valuable the EMS community is. The direct contact between hospital and EMS care providers has led to the advent of Community Para Medicine and I see that evolving and maturing on its own in the next few years. EMS departments are valuing education and more hospital personal are attending EMS education so that there can be less of a divide and more understanding. The best patient care is what everyone wants and that is all systems working together. Community Para Medicine appears to be a proactive approach to preventing our fire departments, private ambulance companies, and emergency rooms from getting overwhelmed with ongoing care needs of our underserved.

INTERVIEW WITH: **SARAH MILLER**

By Kellie Hale



How does it feel to be the Interim Chair for the BAS HSEM Degree Program?

Busy! Very, very busy! This was a very unexpected change that happened really close to the beginning of the term. Faculty had to be reassigned to new classes, students had to be assigned to new advisors, new students had to be oriented, and there were meetings. So many meetings! But it's been really great to start getting to know the faculty, staff, and administration on a different level, and to make contact with all the students I hadn't yet met.

What are your goals for the program to keep the curriculum up-to-date with the effects of climate change and new technologies?

We have to keep the curriculum up-to-date with a lot of things, including climate change and technology. Being a technologist myself, it's easy to focus on that aspect and see all the possibilities, but I know there's a lot more that has to be done. This fall we're doing our scheduled curriculum update, so we'll be taking a look at all of our current classes and pathways and make sure they work for the needs to the modern workforce. We have great team of regular and adjunct faculty, all of whom are current or retired HSEM practitioners, who are all pitching in on this effort, lending their expertise where it can be most useful.

The BAS HSEM degree program is looking to include special certifications for students to obtain in areas such as Cybersecurity, Business Continuity, or Mental Health? Can you share more about what these certifications may consist of and when they could be available?

It's going to be a while before we can solidify these plans. As I mentioned before, our scheduled curriculum update is

happening this fall and we have to get that done and out to the cooperating colleges in time for them to adopt all the changes by Fall 2023. As part of that process though, we'll be looking at where/what we might be able to offer as certificates at either the AAS or BAS level. I've already had conversations with the Computer Information Science and Criminal Justice Chairs to see how we might be able to partner on some of these things going forward.

Are you seeing a diverse population of student enrollment? How important is diversity in the HSEM field?

There is a concerted effort across HSEM to fully embrace Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in everything we do, from hiring to serving our communities.

Professional organizations now exist in the HSEM field that are specifically dedicated to DEI. As part of our curriculum review, we will be working to ensure that our current curriculum adequately addresses these issues. We know from research and from simply watching the news that communities around the country are continuing to struggle with adequately serving their historically underserved populations. Part of the solution to that is hiring diverse people to run HSEM related programs. We will continue to enhance our programs to help students better understand how to serve the people they are responsible to. I'm hopeful that we can also increase our outreach and recruitment efforts in the coming year to reach a broader range of students.

Are there trends or areas that you believe the industry will be looking at in the future that will be of interest? Particularly to a more diverse audience?

One of the strongest trends in HSEM right now is the recognition and acknowledgement that disaster preparedness, response, and recovery is not solely a government function. Governments have to empower people in their communities to become their own best resources, while recognizing that there are systemic barriers that prevent some people from fully doing so. Another strong trend is the acknowledgement of the importance of DEI in all phases of activities. I'm actually speaking on a panel soon about the role of equity in crisis decision-making. The goal of that project is to build open source, equitable decision-making models that can be executed using artificial intelligence. It's a big effort, but one that I think we will ultimately be successful in.

How can the Center of Excellence – Homeland Security Emergency Management help the degree program (e.g., marketing, workshops, and forums)?

I'm hopeful that our partnership with the COE will continue to get even stronger as we move forward. Marketing, special topics workshops, and forums are critical to the field in general and to the success of the Pierce College HSEM programs.



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PROFILE:

TIFFANY BROWN

By Deb Moller

What if you found the perfect role for yourself, working in a field you were passionate about, grateful to serve your community as a behind the scenes leader who many people might not even know about? What if you preferred the spotlight to be on others, and were happy to lay the foundation in planning, coordination and partnerships that resulted in effective response and recovery from disasters? What if that suited your personality perfectly?

And what if your role kept getting bigger and your contributions more needed and you really couldn't count on staying in that comfortable spot behind the curtain any longer? What if competing perspectives, with narrower interests than whole community safety, continued to grow as your role expanded, demanding greater engagement and negotiation? Finally, what if a simple mission of serving your community could no longer be your only driving force, because without a greater focus on taking care of yourself there would be no way to shoulder the ever more intense demands of your work?

Tiffany Brown, like any successful Emergency Manager, has keen situational awareness. She pays attention to what is around her. She grew into many of the challenges facing her as her role expanded. But one of her traits continued to be problematic.

A long-standing preference of hers to work behind the scenes was coming into direct conflict with her ability to increase her influence as an Emergency Manager. Tiffany disliked the spotlight and worried about her reaction to it – being a woman in Emergency Management offered enough challenges without risking a display of too much emotion. She wasn't at her best when put on the spot. But she knew both her preference and her resistance were limiting what she could accomplish.

Some of us would have inched out of our comfort zone and set a few small challenges to help us get better at what we were reluctant to do. But Tiffany Brown isn't like most of us. She had a strong insight that a decision she'd made as a child to stay behind the scenes rather than sing a solo in a school performance was at the heart of her challenge, and that the fastest way out was to pointedly change that decision.

So, taking the stage and finding her voice seemed the most straightforward way to prove to herself that she could forge a new path. She offered to sing the National Anthem at the statewide emergency management conference, attended by hundreds of her colleagues. She knew if she could do that,

no experience of being in the spotlight later could possibly be more stressful.

Tiffany hired a voice coach for three intense lessons. She practiced incessantly for six months. Her superpower, persistence, helped her to just keep at it. She sang at the conference, showing a side of herself none of her colleagues had seen. It worked. It didn't change her natural bent, but it freed her to operate across a much wider spectrum. That has been good for her, and good for the field of emergency management.

What if we were all willing to take such a breathtaking risk?



ABOUT DEB MOLLER

Before joining the Center as a Senior Fellow, Deb Moller was the former public-private partnerships manager at the Oregon Office of Emergency Management. Her experience also includes twenty years of designing and managing adult education and job training programs for marginalized populations.

She is the author of *"Get Ready - How to Prepare For and Stay Safe After a Pacific Northwest Earthquake."*

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE – HSEM: SUBCOMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) -

An integral part of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion project for the Center of Excellence for Homeland Security & Emergency Management. The goal is to develop student experiential learning opportunities by developing a plan to promote, support and disseminate research regarding diversity and inclusion in Emergency Management.

Outcomes:

- Highlight innovative diversity and inclusion practices enhancing community resilience.
- Building the social equity and diversity value into our community and technical college systems.
- Identify and integrate EDI concepts into the emergency management curriculum with the goal of improving outcomes for all underrepresented communities.

Public and Private Partnerships -

The goal is to identify and lead discussion on career prospects for emergency management and what the role of an emergency manager plays in the corporate setting.

Outcomes:

- The capacity of a business, organization, or community to rebound from various impacts from an unforeseen event such as economic disaster or sudden economic downturn is the focus of our “Pathways to Resilient Communities: Public and Private Partnerships” training program.
- Begin the process of planning DACUM session with the Advisory Board, along with different public and private sector representatives to help develop curriculum/ courses that could be implemented within the HSEM degree program.

Work Experience Marketplace -

Develop student experiential learning opportunities by developing a plan to cultivate strong partnerships with business and organizations that are able to offer these opportunities. The consultant will provide leadership and oversight with an intentional focus on the production of deliverables.

Outcomes:

- Partners with businesses or organizations with the CoE for HS&EM in providing a variety of experiential learning opportunities for students among the six (6) career pathways by June 2022.
- HSEM students will participate in one or more experiential learning opportunities in the first year.

SEPTEMBER: NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH – PREPARE TO PROTECT



“The theme of this year’s National Preparedness Month is “Prepare to Protect.” During the past year, natural disasters have sent our communities into turmoil, and we have seen the particularly devastating toll they take on disadvantaged, low-income communities and people of color. Beyond the physical damage done by natural disasters, these storms also exact an emotional toll on their victims, from the pain of losing a loved one to the pressure caused by financial setbacks. Therefore, we must all prepare to better protect ourselves and our communities against both immediate crises and their residual effects.” – President Joseph R. Biden Jr. - A Proclamation on National Preparedness Month, 2021

National Preparedness Month (NPM) is an observance each September to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen at any time. As President Biden mentioned in his Proclamation, this year’s theme is “Prepare to Protect.” It is crucial to prepare for disasters in any way one can. When a disaster strikes, we all want to protect ourselves and our loved ones.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

No matter the month, we can always learn more about planning and preparing for disasters effectively. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to become better prepared.



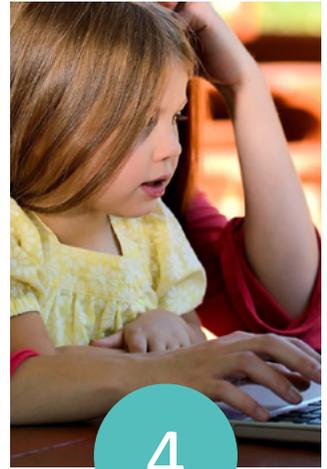
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Make a Plan

Take the opportunity to talk with friends and family about developing a communications plan that will occur before, during, and after a disaster. Then, make sure to update your communications accordingly.

Build a Kit

Gather the necessary supplies you will need during a disaster. Make sure you have enough for several days. Be sure to include supplies for everyone living in the home. Update your kits and supplies as needed.

Low-Cost, No-Cost Preparedness

Sign up for safety alerts that help track possible disaster occurrences. It is also vital to safeguard essential documents (e.g., insurance cards, medical records, identification). These low-cost/no-cost preparedness actions can help lessen the impact of emergencies during a disaster for your family and you.

Talk to the Younger Generation about Preparedness

Talk to your kids about the importance of personal preparedness during an emergency. Develop an action plan with them in case you are separated. Provide (and reassure) them with the correct information and additional resources on how they can be more prepared for a disaster.

Resources

<https://www.ready.gov/september>

https://www.weather.gov/bmx/outreach_npm

<https://www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/september-preparedness-month>

<https://www.fema.gov/blog/september-national-preparedness-month>

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