



## **ACKNOWLEDGING THE LEGACY OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

(A MESSAGE FROM PIERCE COLLEGE)

As Martin Luther King, Jr. Day approaches, Pierce College has the opportunity to acknowledge the profound impact of Dr. King's civil rights legacy, which is embodied in their mission, vision and values, and their commitment to building an anti-racist institution. Pierce College wants to thank all of you for actively engaging in the legacy of MLK's fight for racial and social justice.

To help commemorate MLK Day, Pierce College is pleased to share a special video, produced by the City of Lakewood. This video celebrates the mix of languages, art, dance, culture, history, vision and values that comprise the community, and also reflects the rich diversity of Pierce College and the region as a whole. EDI CARES Retention and Engagement Manager Obe Quarless appears in the video playing steel drums for the sound track.

Pierce College hopes you will join in viewing this heartfelt video tribute to the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr:  
<https://cityoflakewood.us/2022-mlk-jr-day/>

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# It's Time We Have a Talk

Difficult Conversations and Keeping Good Relationships

By Jim Mullen and Kellie Hale

“

People fail to get along because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they have not communicated with each other.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

”

## Jim Reacts:

It has become more challenging to communicate effectively with people in the last couple of years. It is sad how the above quote still resonates today.

People will ask, “How did we get here?” But a look at our nation's history suggests that little has changed. People tend to fear what they don't know or don't understand and are often unwilling to consider someone else's perspective. As a result, too many of us recoil from venturing outside our comfort zones. The fear of change, the fear of the unknown, tends to hold people back.

I'm no stranger to difficult conversations: one could say my professional approach often prompted such exchanges! As a local emergency manager, after attending multiple professional conferences and being disturbed by the “pabulum-like” content of peer presentations, I wrote an article for the International Association of Emergency Managers Bulletin (in August 2003) entitled “How Come We Never Argue.” The article contended that we would use our time more productively if we debated current professional issues, limiting the “happy-talk” that all too often dominated discussions. The contention that conferences were a good time to “let off steam” seemed to prove my point: said “steam” was usually just hot air!

Disputes over policy or values do not have to be disagreeably conducted, but it does take both sides to adhere to the principles of respectful dialogue. Early in my professional life, working at a private college in

Illinois, I was introduced to the concept of “conflict management” - the guiding principle, adaptable to almost any situation, is that most conflict is value conflict. Recognizing that the “other” party to the argument might have a “value” of their own to defend is an excellent first step to resolving said conflict - “understanding” is not the same as “acquiescing” to another's point of view but can be a beginning in resolving disagreements.

Sharing perspectives on essential matters can be stressful unless it occurs in an environment where opposing views are welcomed. Certainly, some points of disagreement cannot be resolved – there are gaps in ethics, or some might say morality that may be insurmountable. In my monthly blog, “Emergency Management Once Removed,” I increasingly focus on such tipping points. Still, honest acceptance of what the “other side” values can improve one's understanding of the motivations behind the positions in dispute.

Two professional conferences that I attended were devoted to a direct, civil, and potentially volatile subject to illustrate this (and perhaps explain the inspiration for “How Come...”). In Oklahoma City in 2000, the Memorial's dedication to the victims of the Murrah Building bombing attracted terrorism experts from all over the world to debate and critique each other's presentations - sometimes sharply, but always civilly. Their common value was to prevent or mitigate the global threat of terrorism, whatever other

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### Jim Reacts (continued):

professional or national differences intruded. In Sri Lanka in 2003, I keynoted an international disaster mitigation conference: the focus was on governmental or cultural obstacles to implementing prudent disaster mitigation measures. Again, the discussion centered on identifying values in common before analyzing the values in conflict and the barriers to the desired outcome.

Both conferences promoted spirited yet civil debates: no one went away angry, and some of us left a little wiser! There is nothing to fear from open, civil dialogue about critical issues. Disagreements are healthy if they are honestly presented, and flaws in one's thinking can be corrected if someone makes a sound counterargument. Disagreements, bared in good faith, need not be disagreeably presented or received.

### Kellie Reacts:

Difficult conversations, unfortunately, are a part of life. We all experienced it once or twice. Sometimes relationships do reach an end. For example, a friend of yours said something offensive or a colleague has different values than you. These types of conversations are not easy to have and can get out of hand if not approached delicately. Of course, people want their voices to be heard and valued. However, it is essential to remember that being respectful of what others bring to the conversation can impact the overall structure and outcome of the conversation.

In today's social climate, stress is high, and conversations involving race, diversity, equity, and inclusion are more important than ever. But, unfortunately, they can also lead to conflict amongst those with differing opinions.

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## So, how does one go about having difficult conversations?

Here are some tips on making a difficult conversation a productive one:

### 1. Thoughtfully Prepare ahead of Time:

Taking the time to prep ahead of the conversation can help avoid the outcome of a damaging encounter and feelings of getting hurt. Exchanges do not need to be mapped out word for word. But it is essential to be mindful of your overall intent. Ask yourself what the goal of the conversation is? Please don't allow anyone to feel like they are being caught off guard.

### 2. Stay Present and Remain Calm:

To have a productive conversation, one must give their undivided attention. Whether the dialogue is in person or on Zoom, put away items that distract you. Remember, having a difficult conversation can turn into a healthy discussion. Avoid the urge to "win" the conversation. Suspend any judgment and speak with an open mind and heart.

### 3. Get Your Message Across and Let the Other Party Do the Same:

Make sure your intentions and message are clear. It is okay to be literal in talking about what bothers you. For instance, you can say, "I feel [feeling], when you do [X], because, for me, it would be better if [...]. An example would be, "I feel sad when you talk down to me in a condescending way because, for me, it would be better if you talked to me with the same respect I give you." It is crucial not to interrupt or lessen the other person's perspectives.

### 4. Be An Active Listener:

To be an effective active listener starts with making sure the world around you is turned off. That means closing the door, shutting off the computer, and shutting off the phone. Be sure to give the person you are conversing with your undivided attention. Also, it is okay to ask questions when you need clarification. For example, "I'm not sure I fully understand, can you please say it differently?" or "Do I have this right? I think you are saying...." This shows that you want to get the whole story and are fully listening.

Emotions are bound to run high when partaking in difficult conversations. That is okay. Remember, it takes a lot of courage for a person even to take the initiative to begin such a conversation. It is not always easy to talk about what is bothering you. If any conversation you have gets heated, it is perfectly acceptable and okay to ask for a break or reconvene at another time. Sometimes, taking the time to "sleep on it" can help see an outcome or solution to the problem.

Source: <https://www.bu.edu/articles/2021/how-to-have-difficult-conversations/>



# BREAKING NEWS – NATURAL DISASTER FLOODING

By Nancy Aird



1860 news from Missouri to California took ten days by Pony Express. Western Union transcontinental telegraph line rendered it obsolete by 1861. Today natural disaster breaking news only needs cell phone cameras and internet coverage. 2022 started with the atmospheric river of rain washing snow into rivers for major flooding declarations and volcano tsunami.

Washington State declared 11 Major Disaster Declarations with FEMA in 2021: two from a severe winter storm, straight-line winds, flooding, landslides, and mudslides, and nine from wildfire disasters. Overall, Washington State ranks as #2 for Flood Disaster Declarations, with 32 incidents declared since 1953. In 2022, FEMA has granted Disaster #4635 - Flooding and Mudslides for our state.

In Washington, the cost of flooding exceeds all other natural hazards. The Dept. of Ecology (DoE) site states flood clean-up may cost three times more than preventing the flood damage. There is over an 80% chance ten or more flood events will occur in our state in any given year. WA has three types of common

floods. Western WA flooding usually results from prolonged winter rains. Eastern WA and the Cascade flooding are often triggered by spring snowmelt and rain-on-snow events. Coastal flooding results from storm surges, overwhelmed storm drains, flash floods, ice jams, debris blockages, and channel migration.

Wildland forest fires increase community flooding risks. The vegetation, under layers, and soil layers that normally absorb and slow the runoff of the water are affected up to 5 years from a wildfire incident. The burn scar is rated from low, moderate, to high. This depends on the severity of damage to the vegetation and soil. "These changes affect hydrological systems—streams, groundwater, water absorption, and other water processes—that greatly influence floods and landslides. That risk is then impacted by climate, slope angle, slope length, and other factors". (Mills, 2015)

Risk management is a crucial mitigation factor in improving community and individual flood risks.

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Attached is a link to a Risk Map to help facilitate flood planning. This site has clicked on information for governments, individuals, WA projects, FEMA Risk maps, and transparency overlays to help locate sites. <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shoreline-coastal-management/Hazards/Floods-floodplain-planning/Risk-MAP/Floodplain-planning-for-homeowners>

FEMA has published a NEW FLOOD INSURANCE RATING system. This rating methodology (Risk Rating 2.0) has updated the program in place since the 1970s. As a result, the rates may go up or down for policyholders with premium increases mostly on par with what they already pay. The new rates consider the cost to rebuild based on a single property's unique flood risk. A fundamental change is once a premium reaches its total risk rate, increases stop.

Compare data at: [www.fema.gov/flood-insurance/risk-rating/profiles](http://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance/risk-rating/profiles)

"Map Your Neighborhood" is a WA Emergency Management Division's Public Education program promoting neighborhoods preparing for emergencies and disaster situations by saving lives, reducing the severity of injuries and trauma, and reducing

property damage. In addition, it teaches neighbors to rely on each other during the hours or days before the fire, medical, police, or utility responders arrive. Check the Emergency Management Division website <https://mil.wa.gov/map-your-neighborhood> or your county local site for this program

Ready. Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed. U.S. Department of Homeland Security-Federal Emergency Management Agency. Retrieved from <https://www.ready.gov/floods>

Following the fire: Preventing floods and erosion. Michigan tech news. <http://www.mtu.edu/news/stories/2015/august/following-fire-preventing-floods-erosion.html>

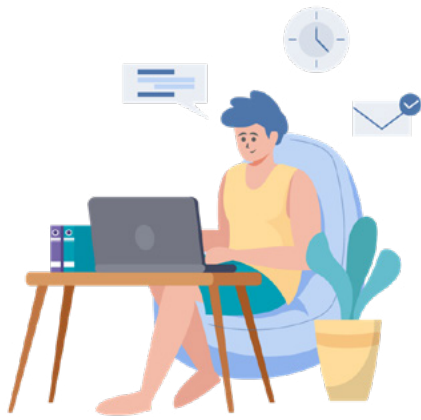
## DHS CLIMATE CHANGE PROFESSIONALS PROGRAM

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WASHINGTON – The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the creation of a new Climate Change Professionals Program to recruit recent graduates and current federal employees to support DHS growing focus on adapting to climate change and improving resilience. This two-year program will be run by the DHS Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer and provide participants with hands-on opportunities to contribute to new initiatives. Upon successful completion of the program, participants will receive a Climate Change Professional accreditation from the Association of Climate Change Officers and be eligible for permanent, full-time positions at DHS. Leadership of the program will be under Climate Change Action Group and focus on promoting resilience and addressing multiple climate change-related risks, including flooding, extreme heat, drought, and wildfires.

Interested applicants can view the first job postings for the Climate Change Professionals Program on the [DHS is Hiring webpage](#). To learn more about DHS's climate commitment, visit [DHS Actions: Climate Change](#).

<https://www.dhs.gov/news/2022/01/12/departments-homeland-security-announces-climate-change-professionals-program>



# Digital Equity: What Is It and Why Is It Important?

By Kellie Hale

You may have been hearing the term “Digital Equity” in the news a lot more lately. What is digital equity? Well, it is a vital necessity for “civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.” The overall goal of digital equity is to make sure that students from rural and urban communities have equal access to technology (e.g., software, the Internet). It is also vital that students have adequately trained educators to help navigate with these tools.



Listen, education and the workforce is becoming more digitized. It is a trend that will not slow down, especially with Covid and its different variants. When talking about students, it is crucial to consider that different types of students need access to technology, and it is not only about those from urban or rural communities. It also provides students with physical or learning challenges with adequate resources, along with female and minority students who may not get the same opportunities otherwise. All kids should have access and support to help them with their education and career pathways.

**“A lack of digital access is a lack of access to education period.”**

- Terry Godwaldt, Director of Programming at  
The Center for Global Education in Canada.

Where are we at with digital equity? Well, it starts with digital infrastructure. This issue can primarily affect rural areas because it relates to if residents have broadband availability in the region. It is also about whether they can access digital services with sufficient speeds. Finally, this issue addresses whether students and working professionals have the monetary needs and knowledge to benefit from technology effectively.

As we have seen, the past two years have highlighted the digital divide. We hear stories about how schools do not have adequate digital devices for individual students. With parents working from home, sometimes families stress over who gets access to the computer or gets time for Wi-Fi. It is somewhat premature to indicate or suggest that the playing field with digital equity has been leveled. While the devices and increased bandwidth may have improved since the

beginning of the pandemic, a different challenge has risen. It is now vital for educators to relook how they use technology in the classroom to offer technology-powered opportunities.

Technology can help students enhance their critical thinking skills and teach them how to collaborate with others while allowing them to be creative. It is the path for students to become life-long learners. These skills will be crucial for students to have when entering the workforce.

Skilled teachers are essential to digital transformation. Digital transformation is essential to providing meaningful learning to students who become skilled in crucial areas. Skilled students with digital education become essential to the workforce.

## RISING STAR AWARD VIDEO INTERVIEWS

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# RISING STAR AWARD

The Center of Excellence – Homeland Security Emergency Management has always been focused on student success and helping people to positively change the trajectory of their lives and who have demonstrated excellence in their professional endeavors working for the advancement of people in education and public service. Each year, it is an honor to recognize outstanding award winners with our Rising Star Award for their accomplishments and contributions to the Center.

Click on the links below to view the video interviews with each of this year's Rising Stars:

### MIKAELA HAGBERG

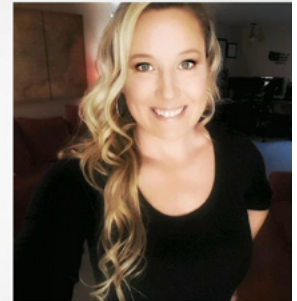
Mikaela Hagberg is a Flight Nurse for Airlift Northwest. She brings critical care to the bedside of both urban and rural communities throughout the Washington, Wyoming, Alaska Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) region. She is also an outreach coordinator collaborating with pre-hospital and hospital systems to create and continually support working relationships. She is also a member of the Trauma Critical Care Team (TCCT) that provides medical care for disasters both domestically and internationally.



<https://youtu.be/DwZcIRPoYUE>

### TAMARA CORPIN

Tamara is a Homeland Security Emergency Management and Project Management Professional who currently works as a Disaster Preparedness Planner with responsibilities that range from developing a PPE Supply & Crisis Management Plan for HCP Staff; to leading the coordination of plans, policies, and strategies to mitigate the impacts of potential business disruptions.



<https://youtu.be/tyBRuof86sM>

### SHONTIEKA ADEOGUN

Shontieka (Tieka) Adeogun is the Emergency Manager for the City of Tacoma Fire Department. She is a graduate of the Homeland Security Emergency Management Bachelors of Applied Science program at Pierce College. Before working for the City of Tacoma, Tieka was the Emergency Response Plans Coordinator at the Washington State Department of Health.



<https://youtu.be/6K8xJACJd0Y>





# TOP 10 BEST HSEM BAS Program

## PIERCE COLLEGE'S HSEM DEGREE PROGRAM NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST

The [World Health Organization](#) estimates that 160 million people are impacted by natural disasters each year. These disasters are compounded by thousands of terrorist attacks, accidents, and other incidents around the world. From first responders to agency administrators, the emergency management field provides daily opportunities to prepare and respond to disasters. The best bachelor's degrees in emergency management balance the preparation, executive, and recovery aspects of the discipline.

Pierce College's HEM BAS program comes in at number 9 on the list. Pierce College, in Puyallup, WA, is the only community college to make the list of emergency management programs. Founded in 1967, the school offers three bachelor's programs along with dozens of associate degrees. Pierce College placed No. 311 among the Best Community Colleges in America, based on Niche's 2020 grades. The Bachelor of Applied Sciences in Homeland Security Emergency Management helped the school reach this rarified air.

The BAS program is geared toward associate degree students who have completed courses in emergency management and homeland security. Pierce College also considers military, law enforcement, and government experience when reviewing applications. These experiences are helpful in completing required courses like Public Information Management and Continuity Planning. BAS candidates are asked to complete two project management courses, a professional development seminar, and a senior capstone project.

Students can balance their professional schedules with coursework thanks to a 100% online format. Pierce College offers an HSET certificate focused on tribal governments that includes eight courses over nine months. BAS candidates access lectures, conferences, and other networking opportunities through the Homeland Security Emergency Management Center of Excellence, which is based in nearby Lakewood, WA.

Source: <https://www.collegerank.net/best-bachelors-emergency-management/?fbclid=IwAR2SarQ5bxDtyaAJqNoSRzmNDpSdLDo8mG3yHBfTdXLjV86PESiEKHsjnk&nowprocket=1>