

## Homeland Security and Higher Education

**Eugene J. Monaco,**  
Director, Professional Development Program

The heightened attention to homeland security has significant implications not just for national, state, and local governments but also for higher education. The leading question, "What role can higher education best play in support of homeland security?" was answered by the National Research Council in its publication *Frameworks for Higher Education in Homeland Security* (National Academy of Sciences, 2005). The Council charged the Committee on Educational Paradigms for Homeland Security Policy and Global Affairs to identify appropriate roles that colleges and universities can engage in to bolster homeland security. Four roles were defined — provide access to homeland security careers for students, offer relevant content knowledge to those who need it, make available programs and information that better inform citizens, and provide a forum for public debate. Over the past several years, universities across the country have answered the call by engaging in activities that are consistent with the mission of higher education.

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## Homeland Security: A Challenge for Local Government Executives

**An Interview with Major General John H. (Jack) Fenimore,**  
USAF (ret.)

*Jack Fenimore is the former Adjutant General of the State of New York, and served concurrently as Chairman of the New York State Disaster Preparedness Commission where he had overall responsibility for the employment of all state responding agencies during natural or man-made disasters. At the Federal level, he served as Chairman of the National Guard Bureau's WMD Advisory Board, Chairman of the NGB Counter-Drug Advisory Board, and member of the Reserve Forces Policy Board. He currently operates a consulting practice focusing on the subjects of Homeland Security and the integration of Federal, State, and Local emergency responders.*

**Q: In responding to homeland security needs, the federal government seems to have been slow to recognize the role of elected local officials. Why is that?**

There is a very real "we are the experts" mind-set at the federal level that makes it difficult for them to see and appreciate the world from a local perspective. It's a classic example of Rufus Miles' celebrated maxim that, "Where you

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## Social Science and Disaster Preparedness

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A Newsletter from the  
**Professional  
Development Program,  
Rockefeller College**



UNIVERSITY  
AT ALBANY

State University of New York



Major General John H. Fenimore



PHOTOS: GEORGE DOWSE

*Eugene J. Monaco, Director and Public Service Professor*

## Homeland Security and Higher Education

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Recognizing the substantial intellectual and technical resources of higher education, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has linked together some of the leading colleges and universities by establishing Homeland Security Centers of Excellence. These centers focus on research and education in emergency preparedness, especially counter-terrorism. Over the past two years, DHS has selected lead universities to work on plans to squarely address these areas. The University of Southern California, Texas A&M University, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Maryland have partnered with other academic institutions across the country to form consortia to study the economic, public health, and agricultural consequences of acts of terrorism. These consortia have been further charged with developing comprehensive plans and systematic responses both to better prevent terrorist acts and effectively respond to such events.

Although not directly involved with the Centers for Excellence, other colleges and universities, including the University at Albany, have responded to the call for action by developing a wide range of homeland security offerings of their own. Degree and certificate programs have literally sprung up overnight across the country in community colleges and graduate schools alike. These programs organize existing and new courses to provide knowledge and skills for those already in the field and those interested in a career in the field of homeland security. A few examples of such programs are:

- A master's degree offered by Metropolitan College of New York in Emergency and Disaster Management
- The Homeland Security Management Institute at Monroe Community College which offers on-line courses

Education and training programs have also materialized to provide both generic and specialized content knowledge for the general public, first responders, and public officials. These include the Yale New Haven Center for Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response and the University of California's program in Public Policy and Biological Threats. Senior level executive education programs have also appeared such as those offered through the School of National Security Executive Education under the auspices of the National Defense University.

Here at the University at Albany, we have been proactive in exploring creative ways to assist in doing our part in fostering ideas and engaging in activities that support homeland security. Some initiatives include the Northeast Regional Forensic Institute; a graduate Certificate in Public Security Studies; on-line courses in bioterrorism offered through the Center for Public Health Preparedness at the School of Public Health; and the World Trade Center Response Study conducted by the Center for Technology in Government.

Finally, in establishing a working partnership with Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) to jointly develop and implement homeland security training for elected local government officials, PDP continues its mission "to make a difference in a changing world by linking the learning, applied research, and evaluation resources of the university with the continuing professional education needs of the public service." This issue of the Communiqué provides a sense of the contributions being made by higher education to the challenge of protecting an open society in an historically difficult time. With these and similar initiatives, the University at Albany is fully committed to supporting homeland security activities.

## SAIC Agreement



*University at Albany Vice-President Lynn Videka, SAIC Vice-President Robert Kromer, and PDP Director and Public Service Professor Eugene J. Monaco review a new agreement that commits the University and SAIC to jointly pursue opportunities in the area of homeland security. With PDP as the campus focal point, efforts are currently underway to develop a program for elected local government officials. Established in 1969, SAIC (Science Applications International Corporation) is a Fortune 500® company that now ranks as the largest employee-owned research and engineering firm in the United States.*

- Associate degree programs offered by the Houston Community College system
- The Drexel University program offered in collaboration with Bucks County Community College, the Community College of Philadelphia, Camden County Community College, and Delaware County Community College
- A master's degree in Strategic Planning for Critical Infrastructures at the University of Washington

stand depends on where you sit.” What is something of an abstraction in Washington is a real exercise in applied governance in cities, villages, towns, and counties. It’s similar to the state-local disconnect. There’s certainly been an effort to push resources to first responders but local government executives have largely been overlooked. They make decisions that have significant implications for large numbers of people. We need to work with them to make sure they’re prepared. Ensuring the security and safety of citizens is a principal role of government.

**Q: Don’t local government agencies already deal with natural disasters and industrial accidents? How is homeland security different?**

In some ways you’re right. The consequences of an attack with weapons of mass destruction are fundamentally the same as if a railroad car derailed spilling hazardous chemicals. Yet there are some significant differences. First, the involvement of WMD automatically makes it a crime scene so it has to be treated differently. Secondly, there are profoundly different psychological issues associated with terrorism. Think about it this way — you’re sitting home on an October evening and the power goes out. After waiting a few minutes, you turn on your battery-operated radio and hear a local power company representative telling a reporter that there’s been a transformer failure and the power will be out for two days while crews install a new unit. Your initial reaction is anger. Then you get out the flashlights and candles, maybe go to the store for ice, and resign yourself to waiting it out. At worst an annoying inconvenience.

Consider a slightly different scenario. When you turn on the radio you hear the President of the United States announce that, “We have just experienced a series of attacks by unknown forces that have disrupted the power grid. We are doing everything we can to restore power and catch the perpetrators. Initial reports indicate that we will be able to get the lights back on in

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*We need a shared learning experience for city, town, and county leaders that...will ensure they know what they need to know about responding to a low probability/high consequence event.*

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a day or two.” You will most likely react with fear and anxiety wanting to know who is behind the attack, where it happened, and if there will be more attacks. A very different reaction even though the same thing has happened — the lights have gone out for a couple of days.

**Q: You are working with PDP to develop a program for elected local government executives at the city, village, town, and county levels. How will it help them be ready to respond to a terrorist act?**

At the local level there are important differences in responding to a hazardous spill resulting from an accident vs. the same materials released as a result of a terrorist act. First responders know how to manage accidental discharges. If the incident is a result of terrorism, every level of government up the line gets involved. Local officials need to know their legal authority and the authority of the governor who can exercise power under Executive Law Article 2B. This provision allows the governor to step in and do things with or without local permission. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) was established to provide a framework for levels of government to work seamlessly and cooperatively in response to a WMD attack. Local officials need to understand how that works and how it ties levels of govern-

ment together. You need to understand the system and your role in the process — if you don’t you will not be effective. The bottom line is that they need to know what can happen and the rules of the game because a few people are going to be making decisions that affect a lot of people.

**Q: So what will this program look like?**

Elected officials are good at what they do but their backgrounds have prepared few of them to deal with terrorism. It’s critical that they know the process, where they fit, what legal authority they have, and the limits of that authority. They also need to know the consequences of terrorism if it happens in your community. Since they have limited discretionary time it needs to be packaged in a way that delivers a basic understanding and the need-to-know essentials. Currently there are long courses but nothing custom-designed for chief executives in local government.

That means we need to create a shared learning experience for city, town, and county leaders that gets the job done in one day or less. Learning from subject matter experts in the presence of other senior elected officials will ensure they know what they need to know about responding to a low probability/high consequence event. Think of it this way — you really don’t need to know about terrorism, just what to do. It’s kind of like your home in case of fire — you buy fire insurance, install smoke detectors, and call 911 if you smell smoke. It’s not a top priority all the time. You make the necessary preparations, and get on to whatever’s next.

**Q: In a nutshell, how would you sum it up?**

No matter how good your subordinates and first responders are you are ultimately the one who decides how to allocate limited critical resources. There are some decisions only local officials can make. You need tools to make informed decisions. This program will deliver those tools.

# Social Science and Disaster Preparedness

**Tom Birkland, Director, Center for Policy Research,  
Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy**

The September 11 attacks on the United States were unprecedented attacks in American and world history. Never had a concerted set of terrorist attacks killed so many people and done so much damage in one day. The attacks were said to have “changed everything” in the United States, and many things did change. But the differences between terrorist attacks and other catastrophes are not as great as they may seem.

Years of research show that people tend to behave well in disasters. People tend not to panic; instead, they tend to work together to help each other leave dangerous areas and they often converge on disaster areas—rather than fleeing—to offer help. We know that there were few, if any, instances of panic that led to losses of life that day; indeed, we know of many examples of selfless behavior exhibited by first responders and by would-be victims of the event. This behavior, coupled with the fact that the twin towers stood longer than one might expect, allowed nearly all the occupants of the towers below the points of impact to escape the buildings. We also know that “first responders” are key to effective emergency response, and that the federal government plays a supportive role, not a primary role, in responding to disaster.

To address natural disasters and terrorism, many social scientists and emergency managers are promoting

an “all hazards” approach to disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. In particular, mitigation gained considerable attention during the 1990s under the leadership of James Lee Witt at FEMA, but mitigation has fallen out of favor in the Bush administration. Indeed, the focus on first responders and on quasi-military, national security concerns has relegated mitigation to a much lower priority, which will mean that future disasters will likely be deadlier and costlier. Indeed, the response to Hurricane Katrina has revealed the shortcomings of the near-exclusive federal focus on less likely terrorist attacks, which ignored much more likely natural disasters.

Hurricane Katrina is a major test both of what social scientists generally know about disasters, and about the federal response system. In general, we have learned that people tend not to panic or loot after disasters, but looting is apparently a significant problem in New Orleans; we will need to learn why. We also know that, in most disasters, those at the site of disasters are entirely helpless; yet, in the wake of Katrina, people were growing desperate for relief and rescue. Response strategies must take into account the variations in capacity for those at the scene of disasters to help themselves and others as they wait for first responders to arrive. Indeed, response strategies should



PHOTO: MARK SCHMIDT

*Tom Birkland*

be designed to complement these tendencies and not interfere with them, but we should also be prepared to step in when local people utterly lack the capacity to help themselves.

Like in so many areas of government, social scientists can aid in program design and delivery, because they have amassed a great deal of knowledge about how people behave in disasters. It is incumbent on policy makers to consider this knowledge; the failure to do so will put people and property at risk. And it is also important for social scientists to continue to study disasters to help explain differences in damage, victim behavior, and government response.

## Did You Know?

- The Federal Government has spent more than \$12 billion on homeland security research and development since 9/11. (Washington Post, April 30, 2005)
- The largest homeland security research grants come from departments other than the Department of Homeland Security, such as the National Institutes of Health. (Cox News Service, March 24, 2005)
- According to the American Association of Community Colleges, approximately 80% of community colleges offer courses related to homeland security. (Washington Post, April 30, 2005)
- Out of the \$4 billion set aside for homeland security research in 2005, \$64 million goes directly to university programs. (Washington Post, April 30, 2005)
- The University of Tennessee is offering the nation's first advanced nursing program specializing in homeland security nursing. (The Associated Press State & Local Wire, August 3, 2005)

# News and Views

## **PDP Partners with the UAlbany Center for Public Health Preparedness**

PDP is entering its fourth year of a partnership with the UAlbany Center for Public Health Preparedness, one of fifteen centers whose mission is to improve the capacity of the public health workforce to respond to current and emerging public health threats with a focus on bioterrorism and infectious disease outbreaks. PDP's Instructional Technologies Unit (ITU) developed and maintained the Center's web site, evaluation instruments, and web-based courses — *Terrorism, Preparedness and Public Health: An Introduction* and *Environmental Health Microbiology and Communicable Disease Control* that have enrolled over 6,500 participants. This fall the newest course, *Preparedness and Community Response to Pandemics*, will be released. ITU is also developing an online resource center for the project, and is planning the development of two additional courses on epidemiology and school emergencies.

## **Vermont Food Stamps Online Training Slated for National Replication**

The Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) has learned that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) plans to replicate DCF's Food Stamp Computer-Assisted Training (CAT) Program on its national website. PDP's Instructional Technologies Unit (ITU) developed the program for DCF in 2004.

National food stamp error rates for 2004 show Vermont experienced a marked improvement in its determinations, which state officials attribute, at least in part, to the online course. Notification that the USDA plans to use the course as a national model prompted DCF Assistant Operations Chief Meg Huston to congratulate the ITU team, lead by Instructional Designer Ron Fancher, "Your hard work and long hours created a fabulous product! It is my honor to work with you!"

## **PDP Develops Emergency Action Plan Course for State Agency Staff**

PDP's Instructional Technologies Unit (ITU) recently completed development of a web-based course for staff employed by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) in fifteen locations around the state. The Emergency Action Plan course provides staff with mandatory training on workplace safety in the event of an emergency. Recognizing and reporting potential hazards, reporting fires or other emergencies, reacting safely, and proper evacuation are some of the topics covered in the course. Designed to draw content from a database, the course provides trainees with information specific to their work location, including identifying tenant safety officers and designated evacuation routes. The self-paced course is available on demand via Training Space, a web-based-learning center developed by PDP with OTDA.

## **PDP's ITU Wins Web and Intranet Site Award**

PDP was pleased to learn recently that the Instructional Technologies Unit (ITU) was selected to receive a 2005 APEX "Grand Award" for publication excellence in the (not-for-profits) "Web and Intranet Sites" nomination category. The award was based on the design and development of the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing web site, [www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org), a joint effort between ITU and Graeme Newman from the UAlbany School of Criminal Justice.

APEX is an organization that recognizes writers, editors, publications staff and business and nonprofit communicators for their work in a variety of professional publications. This year's Seventeenth Annual APEX Awards for Publication Excellence resulted in nearly 5,000 entries. PDP received one of just 100 "Grand Awards" and, better yet, received one of only two awards given out of the 565 nominations APEX received for the Web and Intranet Sites category. Congratulations again to ITU for a job very well done.

## **Peter Kircher Wins NSDTA's 2005 Distinguished Service in Training Award**

PDP recently received notification that veteran Master Trainer Peter Kircher, of the Temporary Assistance Training Unit, had been selected to receive the National Staff



Development and Training Association's annual Distinguished Service in Training Award. His nomination was prepared by a PDP work group, who assembled an extensive package of materials that affirmed Peter's 24+ years of outstanding training contributions in the field of public human service delivery. These materials included letters of support that were received from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, a local department of social services Commissioner and several Staff Development Coordinators.

Peter will personally receive his award at NSDTA's national conference in Washington, DC later this year. Congratulations to Peter for an award well deserved.

## **PDP Organizes 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Event**

Attended by over 450 foster care youth, the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Event and Speak Out was held on August 24<sup>th</sup> at Herkimer County Community College. Organized by the PDP Independent Living Training Program Team, foster care youth leaders, and agency staff, the Speak Out provides an opportunity for youth to learn from one another and make suggestions to a panel of local social services commissioners, NYS Office of Children and Family Services officials, and executive directors of non-profit agencies. This year's event was both the largest in its history and a forum for thought provoking and instructive presentations by youth in foster care.

## **PDP Selected to Serve on the Board for CWIGCS**

The Professional Development Program has been selected to serve as an institutional board member for the Center for Women in Government and Civil Society, part of the Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the University at Albany. Through research, teaching, leadership development, networking, and public education, the Center works to promote equity for women in public service and inform policy makers and advocates on issues related to women, children, and families. In making the announcement, CWIGCS

Director Judith R. Saidel said that “the Center is delighted to add this new dimension to our long-standing relationship with PDP.” Accepting on behalf of PDP, Eugene J. Monaco noted that, “PDP and the Center for Women in Government and Civil Society have long been active change agents and serve as the practice arm of Rockefeller College.” He added that he was, “...honored to serve on the board of an organization whose core mission so closely mirrors our own... that of making a difference in a changing world.”



*Eugene J. Monaco and Judith R. Saidel*

PHOTOS: GEORGE DOWSE

## **PDP Staff Members D’Andrea Brooks, Stephanie Burkes and Natalie Jay-Short Win Initiatives for Women Awards**

On Thursday July 21, at the 2005 IFW Awards ceremony, UAlbany’s President Kermit Hall presented awards to D’Andrea Brooks, Stephanie Burkes and Natalie Jay-Short. D’Andrea was recognized in the “Special Awards” category, having been selected to receive the Secretarial/Clerical Council Award-monetary resources to help her cover costs associated with attending a Women’s Studies Residency as part of her Bachelor’s of Science Degree work at Empire State College. Stephanie was recognized in the “General Awards” category, receiving monetary

resources to help defray costs associated with the purchase of books and other expenses related to the pursuit of her Bachelor’s Degree in Business Management and Communications. Natalie was also recognized in the “General Awards” category, receiving monetary resources to help defray expenses associated with attendance at a course entitled “International Treatment of Women of Color in Criminal Justice,” an activity associated with her pursuit of a Bachelor’s Degree in Community and Human Services.

UAlbany’s Initiatives for Women program enables women students, staff



and faculty to realize their academic and career potential. PDP is proud of the achievements of D’Andrea, Stephanie and Natalie and wishes them well in their academic pursuits.

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