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NPS winter graduation ceremony includes 28 students from CHDS

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APEX 2017 discusses emerging issues, education

 chds.us/c/item/5022

Brian Seals

More than 150 alumni, instructors and staff attended the Center for Homeland Defense and Security's 2017 Alumni Professional Exchange and Continuing Education Workshop held February 22-23 at the [Naval Postgraduate School](#).

Naval Postgraduate School President, Vice Admiral (ret.) Ronald Route, welcomed attendees, commending them for their service to the nation.

"In many ways, your group here is much like our military students," Route said. "You come here and bring your operational experience with you. You know the right questions to ask."

The event included somber memorials to alumni Michael Fahy and David Longshore, who passed away during the previous year. In addition, the CHDS Founders Award was bestowed on William Kelley, one of the Center's founders, and Stan Supinski, who developed the Center's University Agency and Partnership Initiative.

The annual gathering offers updates on emerging issues facing the homeland security enterprise and this year included announcements of two new CHDS educational programs to begin this year.

A wide array of presentations focused on illegal immigration from predominantly Muslim nations, critical infrastructure protection, the sociological process of radicalization, cybersecurity and an update on operations at the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#).

Among the new educational programs at CHDS is what is being dubbed the Emergence Program, scheduled to launch in March 2017. The program is targeted at rising homeland security professionals in the early part of their careers.

A second program that is in the formative stages, called Advanced Training in Homeland Security, would target long-graduated alumni for an intensive, 18-month, graduate-level course. The first in-residence for this program is scheduled for September.

"We are taking all of our programs, our most innovative thinkers to explore horizons of homeland security untraveled," Woodbury said. "Our idea is not to teach what the next generation of homelands security needs will be, but work together to identify problems and solutions in way no one has ever imagined."

CHDS [Executive Leaders Program](#) alumnus Scott Kelberg, Assistant Director of FEMA's National Education and Training, gave an update on the agency and its transitions to a new presidential administration and looking back on actions during 2016. Those actions include:

- An update to the National Planning Framework was completed in June 2016, and aligns with the second education of the National Preparedness Goal released in October 2015.
- The National Disaster Recovery Frameworks was reformatted to align with other frameworks and which clarified such things as the relationship and difference between prevention and protection areas.
- The National Exercise Principle Objectives which were revised by the National Security Council Principles



APEX provides opportunities for alumni to catch up and engage in informal discussions. (Photo by Guadalupe Javier Baltazar/CHDS)

Committee.

- The Joint Counterterrorism Joint Awareness Workshop Program continues its work in bringing tighter law enforcement, the fire services and emergency medical services to collaborate on response to small arms and small explosive attacks. Since 2011, 26 cities have participated.
- A new National Preparedness Report was issued in May 2016 and identifies six core capabilities for improvement: cyber security; economic recovery; housing; infrastructure; national and cultural resources and supply chain integrity.

In addition, Kelberg noted the importance of CHDS education and to nation. Recalling his first day as an ELP participant, he said the former CHDS director told the group to look around the room because classmates would be future leaders.

“Little did I know that the speaker that day, Tim Manning, would become FEMA’s Deputy Administrator for Protection and National Preparedness and one of my bosses,” Kelberg said. “So many of you may become part of the leadership in this administration or future administrations. The talent and expertise in this room is unbelievable and I appreciate everything you do.”

Presentations during the two-day conference included two alumni. Master’s degree alumnus Todd Bensman, Manager, Counterterrorism Intelligence and Infrastructure Protection Programs, Texas Department of Public Safety, Intelligence and Counterterrorism Division, expounded upon his CHDS thesis with a presentation titled “Illegal Immigration from the Islamic World to America’s Southwest Border: Sanctuary or Security First?”

Master’s alumnus David Riedman, Captain, Montgomery County (Maryland) Fire and Rescue Service, also incorporated his thesis topic in a presentation titled “Thinking Critically about Infrastructure Protection.”

Additional presentations included:

- “The Challenges of Cybersecurity and a Strategy for Meeting Them?” by Luke Dembosky, Partner at Debevoise & Plimpton, and former Deputy Assistant Attorney General for National Security, U.S. Department of Justice
- “Resilience through Social Infrastructure” by Eric Klinenberg, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology & Director, Institute for Public Knowledge, New York University, and Fellow at Stanford University, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences.
- “Behavioral Analysis of Violent Group Behavior & Radicalization Process” by Mary Ellen O’Toole, Ph.D., Director, Forensic Sciences Program, George Mason University; Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Violence and Gender; former FBI Senior Profiler.
- “The Impact of Tomorrow’s Technology: A Futurist’s Perspective” by Robi Sen, Chief Technology Officer, Department 13.

For in-depth coverage of APEX 2017 presentations, be sure to read the spring edition of Watermark, the alumni magazine of CHDS.

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