



Red River Valley battles historic flood. The Veterans Memorial Bridge over the Red River of the North in Fargo, ND, barely stays above water. (Photo courtesy of Daiko Abe)

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Quote of the Day:

"One more day, one more foot."

- Local saying for the sandbagging effort during the Red River Flood of 2009.

Red River Valley Battles Epic Flood

NDSU Emergency Management Students, Faculty Provide Support

By: Breanna Koval, Senior, Emergency Management

For the past month, Fargo, North Dakota, and other surrounding communities have been fighting a flood of record proportions. The Red River of the North, Sheyenne River, and other tributaries reached record levels at nearly every community within the region. Countless evacuations took place, ranging from isolated neighborhoods to entire communities. While much of the threat has passed, there is still much work to be accomplished.

Fighting the Flood

In Fargo, the flood fight began in the middle part of March. However, with each passing day, preparedness measures escalated, requiring the massive mobilization of volunteers and resources. Due to the winter's record snowfall and early snowmelt, many communities were forced to accelerate their flood protection efforts. With the river level in Fargo projected to exceed 41 to 43 feet, which is well beyond the city's flood stage of 18 feet, an urgent call for volunteers was placed to citizens in the region. City officials estimated that 2 million sandbags were needed to adequately protect the city. Volunteers responded by filling sandbags and constructing levees around the clock for days. Fargo's mayor, Dennis Walaker,

was confident that the community could be protected at 41 to 42 feet, but was unsure what would happen at 43 feet. During a daily press conference, Mayor Walaker made an urgent request of the citizens for "One more day, one more foot" in reference to the desired height of the levees. Ultimately, with the help of thousands of volunteers and a little luck, the communities of Fargo and Moorhead were able to successfully contain the rising waters of the Red River. Fortunately, the Red River crested lower than projected, but still exceeded the previous record by reaching an unprecedented level of 40.82 feet. A second crest a few weeks later, although initially projected to be quite high, came in at 34 feet.

Volunteer Effort

Incredibly, it was not the sight of the swelling river that was impressive; instead, it was the convergence of thousands of volunteers from all parts of the region and country, arriving each day at the city's two massive sandbagging sites and three main volunteer dispatch sites, that was most memorable. Volunteers arrived around the clock to fill sandbags or to be transported to neighborhoods that needed assistance building levees. Donations from citizens and local businesses

also arrived unceasingly. Donated items included hot food, coffee, water, gloves, and hand warmers.

Although North Dakota State University (NDSU) canceled classes for an additional two weeks beyond the scheduled Spring Break due to the flood, emergency management students were hard at work in the community. Many of the students assisted FirstLink, a local volunteer management organization, with managing the numerous sandbag and volunteer dispatch sites around the community. Students were tasked with ensuring that all volunteers were registered upon arrival; the management of donations that arrived

at locations; fielding interviews from the press; and numerous other tasks pertinent to the management of each individual site. NDSU also played an integral role in managing the operations of the 24-hour flood information hotline. The hotline received over 50,000 phone calls during the span of its operation. The call center became so busy at times that it became impossible to make an outgoing call.

Overall, this experience allowed students to apply what they have learned in the classroom, and to also give back to the community.



Roadway under water. (Photo courtesy of Daiko Abe)



Fargo resident staying dry. (Photo courtesy of Daiko Abe)

Message from the Chair

By Dr. Daniel Klenow, professor and chair



Daniel J. Klenow, Ph.D.

The Spring semester of 2009 is nearly over and it has been a very busy one. A number of faculty changes will take place effective in the Fall semester of 2009. First, Carol Cwiak, J.D., has been hired on a tenure track line in the Emergency Management program. In addition, I, along with Dr. George Youngs will be moving from split positions in Sociology and Emergency Management

to full-time in Emergency Management. We are also currently advertising for a one year faculty position in EM. Undergraduate and graduate enrollments have expanded over the past year and curriculum revisions are in progress for the graduate programs. The next three to twelve months should also see a number of dissertations completed. Last but not least, the Fargo Flood of 2009 went down in the record books. It was a tremendous test for the local community and we are all very proud of the contributions made by our undergraduate and graduate students. I hope to see many of you this summer in our courses with Drs. Enarson and Brachman.

NDSU students help establish Flood Central Call Center

By Joel Hagen

Editor's Note: This article was originally published in NDSU's "It's Happening At State" newsletter on 3/26/2009. The article is being printed with permission in its original format.



Ryan McEwan, NDSU graduate student in Emergency Management, volunteers at Flood Central. (Photo courtesy of Marc Khatchadourian)

Emergency management students responded to the call for help on Monday from Carol Cwiak, faculty and internship coordinator for the emergency management program at NDSU's Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Emergency Management. The students got a crash course in using the skills they have learned in the classroom by helping set up Flood Central Call Center and volunteer registration sites.

Cwiak said it is a great opportunity for the students to experience the dynamics of a real event and learn how to work with many agencies to fill different flood control directives. She held back tears while talking about the students.

"They've stepped up. They've become leaders. They are basically leading these volunteer registration sites. They are leading at the call center," she said. "I could not be prouder. They delivered."

Phone lines stretched across the floor at Flood Central Call Center, and tables and phones filled the

room. Coffee and thermoses were ready for volunteers answering the phone lines to take information on sandbag requests, determine where volunteers are most needed and provide any information needed on flood resources.

Ryan McEwan, a graduate student in emergency management, has been at the call center almost nonstop since Monday morning. He is volunteering 16 to 18 hours a day as the overnight manager.

"This is like an extension of the classroom. We get to fulfill roles where the greatest need is," he said. "It's tiring, but because the need is so great, that alone energizes me."

McEwan expects to continue working phones and inputting requests for sandbags into next week. He said the phones slow down overnight, but at 7 a.m., they start to ring non-stop until 10 p.m. All of the emergency management students are helping in some capacity either at the phone center, at volunteer sites or on the front lines at the dikes.

Large sheets of paper attached to the walls around the room provided numbers for various churches, daycare, showers, hotels, buses, storage and where to send volunteers when they call. Each volunteer also had a cheat sheet of numbers for emergency contacts, food donation sites for restaurants and evacuation information.

The room buzzed with chatter from volunteers on the 20 phones that constantly rang. Thousands of calls go through the center each day.

Natasha Conway, director of hotline operations at FirstLink, was managing Flood Central on her own from Friday to Sunday. When the emergency management students and faculty joined the team on Monday, she said a huge weight was lifted off her shoulders.

"Words cannot describe how much they have helped," she said. "Without their help, we would not be able to run 24 hours a day."

NDSU creating change in Ghana's emergency management system

By Joel Hagen

Editor's Note: This article was originally published in NDSU's "It's Happening At State" newsletter on 3/11/2009. The article is being printed with permission in its original format.



Pictured from left to right are Doug Friez, ND National Guard's State Partnership Program; Kofi Portuphy of Ghana's National Disaster Management Organization; Carol Cwiak, NDSU emergency management program; Eunice Osae and Diana Boakye of the National Disaster Management Organization; and Mike Holly, ND National Guard State Partnership Program in-country representative.

When Ghana needed help to develop its higher education disaster management capability, the country got it in the form of Carol Cwiak, faculty and internship coordinator for the emergency management program housed in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Emergency Management.

Cwiak's mission was through the North Dakota National Guard's State Partnership Program, which has been working specifically with Ghana since 2004. In Ghana, the National Disaster Management Organization asked for assistance in building a higher education program in emergency management. The State Partnership Program turned to NDSU, a leader in the field of emergency management education.

"It allows us to take the collective brain power that has been built and apply it in this type of global outreach in a way that we can really create some change," Cwiak said. "There is no other emergency management higher education program in the U.S. doing what we're doing right now with the State Partnership Program Model. We're it."

Cwiak worked with the National Disaster Management Organization and the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, a university located in the country's capital, Accra. In February, she spent a week in Ghana reviewing their existing disaster plans and building what she believes will be an enduring relationship with Ghana's higher education system.

"They were invested in producing the highest quality product with the limited number of resources they have," Cwiak said.

While the United States pushes citizen preparedness as a large part of emergency management, Ghana's primary focus is on response and recovery. People in Ghana cannot wait a week for needed supplies after a disaster. Most can only buy enough food for the day and don't have supplies to make it through much more than that.

The link between Ghana and NDSU will continue to be facilitated by the State Partnership Program. The goal is to start week-long courses in September with members from NDSU, the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration and the National Disaster Management Organization. Educators in Ghana will work with NDSU instructors for the first course delivery, so in the future they can present the courses themselves. During the next five to seven years, Ghana will move toward providing a higher education degree. NDSU faculty in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Emergency Management with other focus areas also may help expand the courses in the future. Emergency Management has a strong base in sociology, Cwiak noted.

"The university's commitment and support for our outreach efforts has been very good and evidences the fact that they value contributions from the community by way of service," Cwiak said. "That contribution piece is what will keep us going out to do this type of work. The point is to use our program's collective expertise to create the change that needs to occur in the larger community – be it local or global."

Cwiak Accepts Tenure-track Position At NDSU



Carol L. Cwiak, J.D.

Carol L. Cwiak recently accepted a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor in Emergency Management, and will continue teaching at North Dakota State University (NDSU). Cwiak has been a full-time faculty member with NDSU's Emergency Management Program since 2006. She is a part of a dynamic team at NDSU that believes that the best

educational model for emergency management is a three-pronged approach that includes academic coursework, functional application, and internships out in the field.

Cwiak is an integral member of the FEMA Higher Education Project's Emergency Management Roundtable, which is a working group of emergency management practitioners

and academics to consider principles of emergency management. She is also a FEMA/DHS certified trainer for Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Disaster Resistant Jobs, and Multi-hazard Emergency Planning for Schools. She has been a member of the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services Boy's State Exercise Development and Facilitation Teams. She has also served on the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services Advisory Committee (DESAC), as the President of North Dakota InfraGard (an FBI sponsored organization that seeks to protect critical infrastructure and enhance homeland security efforts via private sector partnering), has worked on a number of mitigation grants and preparedness projects, and is a member of many professional committees and groups.

Cwiak also plays a central role in the newly organized Emergency Management Higher Education Community Consortium where she currently serves as the executive director.

EM Higher Education Community Consortium Formed

The Emergency Management Higher Education Community Consortium was recently formed to represent the interests and concerns of the emergency management higher education community.

The consortium board is comprised of three practitioner community representatives, five academic representatives (one for each of the degree levels represented on the FEMA Higher Education college list), and an executive director.

All emergency management higher education programs have been invited to join the consortium. Each member institution has a vote, and there is no cost to join. All member institutions will be listed on the consortium's web page at <http://www.ndsu.edu/ndsu/em/consortium.htm>.

Carol Cwiak, Assistant Professor of Emergency Management at NDSU, is currently serving as the executive director.

Board Members and Executive Director

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Executive Director

Carol Cwiak

As North Dakota State University (NDSU) resumed operations on April 6, 2009, after a record setting flood, NDSU's IEMSA chapter resumed activities soon after by electing a new executive council. On behalf of the entire chapter, I would like to announce Blake Bennett as President; Patrick Wilson as Vice-President; Jeanna Sommers as Secretary; Kevin Helland as Treasurer; and Ignacio Sanchez as the Student Congress Representative. I am both excited and confident the new council will continue to lead the group into the future. This is a bittersweet farewell for me as I am happy to be finishing my undergraduate degree, but sad to leave the council. I have been President of the

IEMSA: A Final Farewell

NDSU chapter for the past two years, and along with the leadership from past councils, have been able to transform what was once a chapter with four members into a thriving group that provides professional development to both students and the community. It has been an honor and a privilege to be part of NDSU's IEMSA chapter, and I plan to continue my involvement with the organization during my graduate career at NDSU.

Sincerely,

Breanna Koval
NDSU IEMSA Past-President

Jensen named Assistant Director of the Center for Disaster Studies and Emergency Management

Jessica Jensen has been named assistant director of the Center for Disaster Studies and Emergency Management.

Jensen, who has a Presidential Fellowship, earned a bachelor's degree in political science from California State University-Northridge and a master's degree in emergency management from NDSU. A Presidential Fellowship provides a full tuition waiver and a \$16,000 stipend for four years. It is considered the top-funding category for graduate students. Recently, she was also awarded the Graduate School student research award for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

In 2008, she received a National Science Foundation-sponsored Quick Response Grant from the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado at Boulder. The grant allowed her to travel to a disaster site to immediately begin gathering data on response efforts. Most of her research has focused on the National Incident Management System, which was implemented after the World Trade Center attack.

Jensen also is directing a research project for the International Association of Emergency Managers detailing the response infrastructure in 194 countries.



Dr. Daniel Klenow (right), professor and chair, and Dr. George Youngs (left), professor, present Jessica Jensen (center), a graduate student in Emergency Management, with \$1,000 for the Graduate School student research award for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

12th Annual EM Higher Education Conference

When: June 1-4, 2009

Where: Emergency Management Institute, National Emergency Training Center, Emmitsburg, Maryland

A number of students and faculty will be representing NDSU at the conference. NDSU, again, is expected to be the largest cohort to attend.

FEMA officials Meet with NDSU EMGT Students



Pictured from left to right are A.D. Hill, FEMA; Ian Becherer-Gerrie, FEMA; Carol Cwiak, J.D., assistant professor; Dr. George Youngs, professor; Dave Rogness, Cass County Emergency Manager; Dr. Daniel Klenow, professor and chair; and Dr. D.K. Yoon, assistant professor.

On April 21, 2009, students and faculty in the Emergency Management Program at NDSU had the privilege of learning from county and federal officials regarding their recent experience with the flood that impacted the Red River Valley in North Dakota and Minnesota.

A.D. Hill, who currently works for FEMA as a reservist and is part of an Incident Management Team, served as a branch director for operations while assisting FEMA and other state and local counterparts in North Dakota. Hill briefly reviewed the incident command structure with students, and shared his experience relative to his roles and responsibilities during the response phase of the flood. He said the

response to this incident initially began with 26 federal representatives and, at one point, expanded to include the participation of over 420 FEMA representatives.

Ian Becherer-Gerrie also addressed students, and came to Fargo as the FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison. His initial role was to assist with issues related to mass care. During the recovery phase, his role transitioned, which included providing assistance to volunteer agencies.

Becherer-Gerrie stressed that not all volunteers are the same, and discussed the different categories for volunteers. As part of this discussion, he indicated that the unaffiliated volunteers posed the greatest challenge during disasters because of the need for supervision, legal concerns/issues, and issues related to trust. He said the Fargo-Moorhead volunteer response was typical for the Midwest region of the United States, and he commended the community for its willingness to stick together. Becherer-Gerrie indicated that this kind of volunteer response does not necessarily happen in all parts of the country.

Dave Rogness, Cass County's emergency manager, told students, "You assume it is one flood, but it isn't." He explained that Fargo and Moorhead are in two different FEMA regions and two different states, resulting in different expectations. He also stressed that each community has different political leaders and capabilities, which can also affect how a community responds to such an event like the Red River flood of 2009.

Find Ways to Get Involved!

ND Emergency Management Association

Submit your 2009 membership dues. Students, you can join for just \$5.

Go to: <http://www.ndema.org/resources/2009+membership+dues+form.pdf>

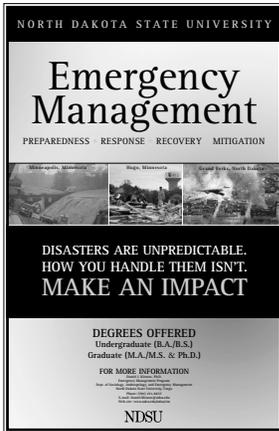
Upcoming Events

ND Emergency Management Association: 2009 Fall Conference

When: September 16-18, 2009
Where: Days Inn-Grand Dakota Lodge,
532 15th St W, Dickinson, ND 58601

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E-mail: Daiko.Abe@ndsu.edu
Founder: Jessica Jensen, NDSU Graduate Student

NDSU Emergency Management Program Poster Unveiled



The NDSU Emergency Management Program poster, which was recently unveiled, is available for purchase in limited quantities to both faculty and students. The purpose of this commemorative poster is to raise awareness for the program, and to also signal the continuing commitment of the program to help shape the field of emergency management through

higher education. Posters are 18X24. The cost without a frame is \$6. Framed posters are also available for purchase, but costs vary depending on the quality and type of frame selected.

If you would like a poster, please contact Daiko Abe at Daiko.abe@ndsu.edu or stop by the department's main office.

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