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## Homeland Security Master's Degrees Awarded to 30 at Naval Postgraduate School

Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School

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# Homeland Security Master's Degrees Awarded to 30 at Naval Postgraduate School

Monterey CA - April 2014



The Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) at the Naval Postgraduate School awarded a Master of Arts in Security Studies to 30 professionals during a March 28 ceremony.

The graduates comprise professionals from law enforcement, fire safety, homeland security, the military and academia. The first program in the nation of its kind, CHDS provides a cutting-edge, multi-disciplinary curriculum in its 18-month master's degree program. Graduates are required to write theses pertinent to their employing agencies.

Three students were honored for exceptional work during the program:

- Jeanie Moore Acting Director, Private Sector Division, FEMA Office of External Affairs, was awarded the [Outstanding Thesis Award](#) for her thesis, "DaVinci's Children Take Flight: Unmanned Aerial Systems in the Homeland." Theses were evaluated on: overall academic rigor; quality of the literature review; impact of the study on homeland security strategy and future research implications; quality of analysis and conclusions; quality of organization, writing and overall presentation of thesis.
- Trevor Womack, Deputy Chief of Police, Stockton (California) Police Department earned the Philip Zimbardo Award. This award honors a student who demonstrates the best understanding of the psychological aspects of terrorism and whose performance in the master's program embodies the highest levels of academic achievement. The honor is named after Stanford University psychologist and professor emeritus Philip Zimbardo, who also formerly taught at CHDS.
- Stephen Max Geron, Lieutenant, Dallas (Texas) Police Department, earned the Curtis H. "Butch" Straub Award, which is based on grades, thesis and classroom leadership. The honor is in memory of one of CHDS' founders.

An honorary degree was awarded to Dawn Mehlhaff, who died November 5, 2013, while nearing completion of the program. Mehlhaff was Director, Legislative and External Affairs with the California Emergency Management Agency, at the time of her passing.

In addition to its Master's Degree, the Center offers graduate-style education through its [Executive Education Seminars](#), [Executive Leaders Program](#), [Pacific Executive Leaders Program](#) and the [Fusion Center Leaders Program](#). Through the CHDS [University and Agency Partnership Initiative \(UAPI\)](#), the Center shares curriculum and promotes faculty development in the homeland security field at more than 300 institutions nationwide. The CHDS is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), National Preparedness Directorate, within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Graduates are:

- Damon Arnold, Director, Master of Public Health Program, Chicago State University.
- Lorna Atmore, Deputy Inspector, Nassau County Police Department, Mineola, N.Y.
- Niurka Calcaño Detention and Deportation Officer, Department of Homeland Security/U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) - Enforcement & Removal Operations (ERO), Washington, D.C.
- Eileen Decker, Deputy Mayor, Homeland Security and Public Safety, Office of Mayor Garcetti, Los Angeles.
- Payton Flynn Sr., DHS Liaison to NSA, DHS / National Protection and Programs Directorate, Washington, D.C.
- James Gehring, Project Manager, Transportation Security Administration Pre-Check Program Expansion, TSA Office of Risk Based Security, Arlington, Va.
- Max Geron, Lieutenant, Dallas (Texas) Police Department.
- Christina Hamilton, Division Chief, National Security and Benefits Integrity Division, Office of Policy and Strategy, DHS/U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Washington, D.C.



## Related Information

[CHDS Master's Degree Program](#)

[CHDS Master's Thesis Repository](#)

Stockton Police Department



- Thomas Healy, Lieutenant, New York City Fire Department, Fort Totten, N.Y.
- Sydney Hoffman, Senior Interagency Liaison FEMA Corps, DHS/FEMA, Washington, D.C.
- Glen Holder, Battalion Chief, San Diego (California) Fire Rescue Department.
- Kelly Huston, Director of Crisis Communications, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Sacramento, Calif.
- Keith Johnson, Deputy Chief, Fairfax County (Va.) Fire and Rescue Department.
- Paul Johnson, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service, Louisville, Ky.
- Danielle Lehman, Supervisory Asylum Officer, DHS/USCIS, San Francisco.
- Monica Mapel, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, DHS/Immigration Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, San Antonio, Texas.
- Sam McGhee, Deputy Director, Colorado Information Analysis Center/Lieutenant Aurora (Colo.) Police Department.
- Jeanie Moore, Acting Director, Private Sector Division, Office of External Affairs FEMA, Washington, D.C.
- Kirk Nichols, Lieutenant - Homeland Security and Training, San Diego Unified Port District Harbor Police Department, San Diego, Calif.
- Ed Pearson, Deputy Fire Chief – Operations, D.C. Fire and EMS Department, Washington, D.C.
- Chérie Penn, Assistant Chief, Minneapolis (Minn.) Fire Department.
- Lori Pesci, Justice Affairs Senior Administrator, Summit County Public Safety, Akron, Ohio.
- Serge Potapov, Supervisory Federal Air Marshal, Federal Air Marshal Service, Chantilly, Va.
- Marc Shaw, Assistant Chief, California Highway Patrol - Southern Division, Glendale, Calif.
- Martin Tierney, Captain, Field Operations, West Palm (Fla.) Beach Police Department.
- Todd Tuggle, Fire Battalion Chief - Technical Services, Fresno City (Calif.) Fire Department.
- Tim Wendt, Chief, Planning and Force Readiness Division, U.S. Coast Guard 8th District, New Orleans, La.
- Mathew Wenthe, Branch Chief, Personnel Recovery and Special Missions, Air National Guard, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.
- Trevor Womack, Deputy Chief, Stockton (California) Police Department.
- Rudolph Zupanc, Watch Commander, Critical Information and Communication Center, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Columbus, Ohio.