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Twenty-nine earn security master's degrees from NPS Center for Homeland Defense and Security

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Graduation ceremonies at the Naval Postgraduate School on September 23 included 29 homeland security professionals who completed a Master of Arts in Security Studies from the NPS Center for Homeland Defense and Security.

The graduates comprise professionals from law enforcement, fire safety, homeland security, emergency management, the military and intelligence (see list below). 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](#) in homeland security. Graduates are encouraged to write theses pertinent to their employing agencies.

"These graduates will join a national cadre of cohorts who are helping keep our nation safer," CHDS Executive Director Glen Woodbury said. "We are proud and look forward to their contributions to the homeland security enterprise in the coming years. They reflect the professionalism and dedication our nation deserves."

Four CHDS graduates earned special recognition:

- **Outstanding Thesis Award:** Michelle Tonelli, Attorney with the Department of Homeland Security, for her thesis, "Your Criminal FICO Score." The honor is based 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.
- **The Curtis "Butch" Straub Award:** John Flynn, Assistant Chief, Yonkers Fire Department. The Straub Award is based on grades, thesis and classroom leadership. The award is in memory of one of CHDS' founders.
- **The Mark Carr Esprit De Corps Award:** Michael Baker, Director of EMS with the Tulsa Fire Department and Captain Eric Dayley of the Idaho State Police. This award recognizes students whose actions instilled, sustained and created a spirit of unity and pride within the cohort. The Mark Carr Esprit De Corps Award and is named in honor of Mark Carr, a former CHDS student who died in August 2014.

Graduates include:

- Michael Baker, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Fire Department
- Dan Bout, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Sacramento, California
- Andrew Brock, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Washington, D.C.
- Paul Burke, Boston Fire Department
- Catherine Chiang, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Washington, D.C.
- Eric Dayley, Idaho State Police, Pocatello, Idaho
- Joseph Finch, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department
- John Flynn, City of Yonkers, New York, Fire Department



- Douglas Gavin, Department of Homeland Security, Washington, D.C.
- John Gordon, NYPD Counterterrorism Bureau
- Anthony Hilton, Ninth Coast Guard District, Cleveland, Ohio
- Thomas Lakamp, Cincinnati Fire Department
- James Martin, Office of the Chief Counsel, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Washington, D.C.
- Dylan McCulley, Northern California Regional Intelligence Center/ San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, San Francisco
- Deanna McDevitt, Boston Fire Department
- Timothy McNamara, Fire Department of the City of New York
- Brandi Monroe, United States Secret Service, Washington, D.C.
- Matthew Morin, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D.C.
- Matthew Murphy, Massachusetts State Police, Maynard, Massachusetts
- Cedric Novenario, City of Los Altos, California
- Melissa Nussbaum, New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Albany, New York
- Marilee Orr, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Arlington, Virginia
- Tricia Quirk, Seattle Department of Transportation
- María Rosa Castañer, Department of Homeland Security/ Transportation Security Administration, Arlington, Virginia
- Marc Thibault, United States Coast Guard, Washington, D.C.
- Michelle Tonelli, Department of Homeland Security, Office of General Counsel, Washington, D.C.
- Cynthia Vargas, Houston Fire Department
- Stephen Vollbrech, Texas State Office of Risk Management, Austin Texas
- Ronald Watson, North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command, Peterson AFB CO

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