



Calhoun: The NPS Institutional Archive
DSpace Repository

News Center

News Articles Collection

2014-07

CHDS Fellow Takes Federal Tools Back to Local Government

Center for Homeland Defense and Security

Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California

<http://hdl.handle.net/10945/51302>

This publication is a work of the U.S. Government as defined in Title 17, United States Code, Section 101. Copyright protection is not available for this work in the United States.

Downloaded from NPS Archive: Calhoun



Calhoun is the Naval Postgraduate School's public access digital repository for research materials and institutional publications created by the NPS community. Calhoun is named for Professor of Mathematics Guy K. Calhoun, NPS's first appointed -- and published -- scholarly author.

Dudley Knox Library / Naval Postgraduate School
411 Dyer Road / 1 University Circle
Monterey, California USA 93943

<http://www.nps.edu/library>

CHDS Fellow Takes Federal Tools Back to Local Government

 chds.us/c/item/860

Measuring the effectiveness of preparedness programs on behalf of the Federal Emergency Management Agency is a tool that 2013-2014 Center for Homeland Defense and Security Distinguished Fellow Jody Woodcock will be able to utilize to improve local planning and response efforts.

Woodcock will complete her one-year CHDS fellowship in August. The fellowship sends Center alumni annually to work at FEMA headquarters, giving them insight into the inner-workings of the federal agency.

For Woodcock that involved the time-worn government mission of finding ways to measure the effectiveness of grant programs, in this case preparedness. While numbers and qualitative data are helpful, they may not always reflect the true picture.

“For the most part, FEMA has to rely on a variety of reports to gather data about preparedness,” Woodcock noted. “However, we completed a series of State and UASI case studies that showed while quantitative data is helpful it doesn’t always tell the real preparedness story. It is critical to get out and talk to people and see the impact of homeland security programs.”



Most of her fellowship was spent on an array of tasks, generally serving in a state and local advisory role for projects within FEMA’s National Preparedness Assessment Division. Along with measuring preparedness programs she worked with the non-profit Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) to develop standards and an assessment process for national Urban Search and Rescue resources and a proof of concept to improve the assessment methodology for the State Preparedness Reports (SPR).

Woodcock’s relationship with EMAP is not new, as Pierce County (Washington) was accredited in 2010. EMAP is a voluntary accreditation program that sets national standards for emergency management agencies and departments. Following her fellowship Woodcock accepted a new position with the King County (Washington) Emergency Management Agency and hopes to implement the standards there.

“EMAP has the only existing national emergency management standards that were created by practitioners in the discipline,” she said. “It will not only make our already great program the best it can be, it will create a framework to better measure our effectiveness in prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.”

Woodcock was formerly with the Pierce County for more than 20 years and said her D.C. experience helped her understand the crush of red tape and bureaucracy FEMA faces, which sometimes local and state officials are unaware of.

“Something I can take back to Washington State is perspective,” she said. “If we struggle with how to measure preparedness at the local level, just imagine how difficult this is at the national level. How can FEMA, in general terms, identify the difference emergency management programs are making when they are all so unique?”

The fellowship touched on many CHDS classroom concepts, she said, but one of the most important may have been the critical thinking skills nurtured in the master’s degree program.

Woodcock encourages fellow Center alumni to consider applying for the fellowship. The “right time” to apply may never arrive as most graduates are already busy professionals on a career trajectory.

“This fellowship has been one of the best experiences of my career,” she said. “I was placed in a division in which staff welcomed my point of view and made me feel like a valued member of the team. This experience has re-energized my passion for this business and has provided clarity as to what is really important – the people I serve and the responders I support.”

[Copyright/Accessibility/Section 508](#)