

## Risk Symposia Series: Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow Lloyd Mitchell

This outreach project will educate American Indian communities in risk awareness and management via symposia utilizing hands-on workshops related to risk analysis, risk assessment, and terrorism awareness.

Other Investigators - Dr. Anne Garland.

Brief Description - The purpose of this research is to improve the ability of American Indian communities to recognize and assess risk factors related to terrorism on or near the reservation thereby increasing the capabilities of tribal governments to prepare for the economic consequences associated with an attack. American Indian communities will be presented materials, information, and procedures related to risk factor identification, risk ranking, and economic costs associated with a terror event via a series of symposia with hands-on workshops. A series of three symposia a year are scheduled in geographic and culturally diverse areas in an effort to include as many American Indian tribal communities as possible.



Objectives - This research will (a) educate American Indian communities in risk assessment and reduction methods; (b) conduct three symposia annually: mid summer, late autumn, and late Spring; (c) and provide geographic distribution of symposia to assure tribal diversity and tribal inclusion.

### I. Introduction and Summary of FY2008 Activities

Year 1 of the Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow project highlights include the hosting of two well attended symposia in Washington State and Kansas designed to bring tribal officials together with representatives from neighboring communities to network and develop collaborations or working relationships related to risk of terrorism events; bringing together rural communities and governmental agencies in Alaska's North Slope region and providing recommendations related to terror event risk identification; providing terror event risk reduction guidance to tribal leaders of tribes with business enterprises; and participation in outreach activities to tribal communities.

As a direct result of Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow activities, several significant collaborations between tribal communities and their non-tribal neighbors were established to share resources and in several cases, work together toward seeking resources for joint projects related to terror event risk reduction, disaster preparedness, and related projects. Among these, the Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow project is pleased to confirm that one tribal--non-tribal collaboration developed in significant part by Working Together based networks and activities, was recently awarded a multi-year grant [to do what/from who/etc.]. Also, two other American Indian or Alaska Native community and non-tribal entity collaborations created directly as a result of Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow networking opportunities have been developing frameworks for proposals.

Education was a strong component of the Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow project, which integrated the "Next Generation of Homeland Security Professionals" at various levels in every major activity. Students attended, observed, supported, or participated in professional meetings, planning meetings, field visitations, and educational and outreach activities. Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow faculty are especially proud of one of our students, Mr. Juan Alcantar, who graduated with honors and was accepted into a professional medical academic program! He has expressed an interest to

maintain his affiliation with the Department of Homeland Security while continuing in school and is considering a career in providing primary care post disaster or terrorism events.

Another student, Ms. Carol Jo Evans, is scheduled to defend this year and has integrated her Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow experiences throughout her dissertation related to conflict resolution between U.S. government and domestic population groups. Ms. Evans has also expressed an interest in a career with the Department of Homeland Security.

Year One activities noted successes in symposia activities, identifying risks unique to indigenous populations, and providing a broad range of student experiences. All Working Together students in Year One have expressed an interest to continue in the program. Two primary areas in need of improvement were indicated: research presentations at national meetings by students and rate of expenditures.

## **II. Scope of Work Year Two**

The Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow Year Two Scope of Work will consist of three parts:

### **A. Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow Tribal Collaborative Risk Reduction Projects**

Completion of the first ever nation-wide list of existing and proposed collaborations between tribal and local communities showing cooperative projects related to terror and disaster event risk identification, event preparation, and event response. During this work, we will be asking if all the parties involved would consider their collaborative project(s) to be listed as a "Working Together for a Safer Tomorrow" project and allowing their experiences and expertise to be available to other communities interested in creating or enhancing collaborative projects.

### **B. Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow Symposia**

The symposia series will be continued with three symposia being in FY2009. A spring symposia, hosted by Haskell Indian Nations University tentatively scheduled early in May 2009, will be the national capstone event. Two other symposia are tentatively scheduled in January and March 2009. The January symposium foci are on risks related to casinos and tribal businesses. The March symposium foci relate to bioterror and disaster events. A smaller specialized meeting related to border security, specifically requested by tribal leaders, is also under consideration. This topic may be added into one of the symposia as a specialized track.

### **C. Collaboration with Other DHS University Centers of Excellence**

Year Two will see the development and strengthening of a unique relationship between two or more national centers and affiliated universities in a project designed to identify and reduce risks related to terror and natural events in extreme environments. Efforts will focus specifically on identifying and mediating historical or modern risks faced by indigenous populations who have traditionally or are permanently residing in extreme environments, and by 'forgotten' populations, such as scientists or laborers temporarily inhabiting extreme environments.

### **D. National, Regional, and Local Meeting Participation and Presentations**

In addition to the above tracks, Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow faculty and students will present and participate in at least two national meetings: The Department of Homeland Security's Summit tentatively scheduled March 2009, and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society's Annual Education Conference in autumn 2008. Invitations to present, speak, or participate at regional and local meetings are expected and will be evaluated on an individual basis. Invitations accompanied by travel grants, especially for students, will be highly considered.

### **E. Developing the “Next Generation of Homeland Security Professionals”**

The Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow Program will also continue its support and development of students at all higher education levels. A pool of freshman and sophomore students, first year graduate students, and continuing doctoral students has been completed. In order to assure increased student participation, especially at the national meeting presentation level, Dr. Anne Garland will expand her focus working with students in an effort to wholly engage students in basic and applied research as a member of a research team with critical duties.

Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow has been engaged in student recruitment since May 2008 placing a special emphasis on the recruitment of veterans and students from underrepresented groups, including first generation college attendees, rural low income students, older than average men and women returning to college, students with specialized skills such as fluency in foreign languages or unique background experiences such as being raised in culturally specific or culturally critical geographic areas, and students skilled in science, math, and technology.

Faculty have recruited a new set of twelve students from a wide variety of cultures, backgrounds, and geographic areas, including at least six from underrepresented groups. Four students are fluent in foreign languages, including Polish, Dutch, Spanish, and Russian. All students are also highly computer literate and several plan on projects that require engaging in data collection and analysis thus providing an opportunity to increase research skills. A group of students will develop a website to highlight accomplishments and FY2009 activities.

### **III. Products**

The products that will be completed in FY2009 include:

#### **A. Working Together for A Safer Tomorrow Tribal Collaborative Project List**

A nation-wide list of existing and proposed collaborations between tribal and local communities showing cooperative projects related to terror and disaster event risk identification, event preparation, and event response will be completed in FY2009.

#### **B. The Symposia Series**

Three symposia will be offered in FY2009. A spring symposia, hosted by Haskell Indian Nations University, and two other hosted symposia are tentatively scheduled.

#### **C. Student and Faculty Research Presentations and Participation at National, Regional, and Local Meetings**

Research results will be presented at the DHS Summit and other national, regional, and local meetings as resources permit. Quality work by students and faculty will be submitted for publication consideration.