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Millersville’s CDRE updates the University’s Emergency Operations Plan

Millersville, PA – Millersville University’s President’s Cabinet recently approved a major update to the University’s Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP guides how the University will handle emergency situations. The goal is to lessen the impacts of disasters by planning response procedures for hazards that may impact the campus community. The plan establishes communication, logistics, and cooperative networks to be utilized in any emergency, both internally and in conjunction with surrounding community resources.

Updating the EOP allows Millersville University to prioritize the safety and security of students, faculty, and staff.

In addition, the LiveSafe app is one example of the University’s investment in campus safety. It’s a free, new tool individuals are encouraged to download on their smart phones. “The LiveSafe app has improved how quickly we communicate information before and during emergencies,” stated Pat Weidinger, Millersville University Director of Environmental Health and Safety. LiveSafe allows students to access the EOP, MU Alert notifications, and a SafeWalk program which enables friends and family to virtually walk a student home.

Millersville’s own Center for Disaster Research and Education (CDRE) played an integral part in revising the EOP. The students in the Master of Science in Emergency Management (MSEM) program were directly involved with the update process, including the addition of a hazardous weather plan.

“This project was a collaboration between academic affairs and the administrative division of the University. It is a clear example of how the University can benefit by giving students real-world problems to solve,” explained Sepideh Yalda, PhD., CDRE director and coordinator of the MSEM program.
Daniel Berndt, a 2015 MSEM graduate, worked on the EOP update. “It was a great experience to be part of a process that will make a tangible difference for the University for years to come,” said Berndt.

Weidinger applauds the assistance from the CDRE stating, “This is our best, most concise and readable EOP so far and I give a lot of that credit to members of the CDRE.”

The CDRE has been a strong proponent of designating Millersville University as a National Weather Service StormReady university. The approval of the new EOP by the President’s Cabinet is a big step toward obtaining the StormReady designation, which is only given to universities that demonstrate they are prepared for hazardous weather. The National Weather Service and state emergency managers certify communities as being StormReady. The CDRE will now be assisting Millersville University with the StormReady application process.

**About the CDRE:** The Center for Disaster Research and Education was established in 2006 to provide multi-disciplined education, research, & internship opportunities for current students interested in the field of environmental hazards and emergency/disaster management. The Center contributes to the education and training of the next generation of disaster researchers, emergency managers, and knowledgeable community members. The Center conducts a number of community-based research projects in addition to research on behavioral and organizational response to disasters and terrorism, including the media and risk and hazards assessment. These research findings are disseminated in a language and format useful to the general public, mass media personnel, and emergency management personnel, as well as researchers, to develop disaster resilient communities. The MSEM program associated with the CDRE offers a formal graduate education with a focus on theoretical and applied components of emergency management and to date has over 100 graduates. Visit [http://millersville.edu/cdre](http://millersville.edu/cdre) for more information.

**About Millersville University:** Millersville University of Pennsylvania is a top-ranked, public university located in the northeast region of the United States. It is committed to offering students a high quality, comprehensive university experience of exceptional value. Dedicated to providing nationally recognized programs that embrace the liberal arts, Millersville offers academic opportunities that are supported by outstanding faculty who are accomplished scholars and practitioners. Founded in 1855 as the first Normal School in Pennsylvania, Millersville University is one of 14 universities within the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Visit [http://millersville.edu](http://millersville.edu) for more information.

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