



The University of Maryland
Center for Health & Homeland Security

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Director's Message

By Michael Greenberger, CHHS Founder and Director



*Founder and Director
 Michael Greenberger, JD*

On May 15, 2021, the University of Maryland Center for Health and Homeland Security (CHHS) entered our 20th year of operation. By becoming almost completely self-funded through our 'fee for service' contracts with governmental and educational clients, we have grown and prospered over these nearly two decades.

Under these contracts, CHHS provides planning, training, and exercise services designed to help state and local governments and educational institutions prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health crises, terror and cyber attacks, weather emergencies, and other catastrophic circumstances.

While CHHS has much to be proud about over its nineteen plus year history, these last sixteen or so months were, doubtless, among our most important. Beginning in March 2020, our clients began to ask us to supplement our existing emergency management work to address COVID-19 and to organize resources to assist their constituents in fighting the pandemic.

In so doing, our staff worked tirelessly with clients to write and implement plans and operating procedures on a round-the-clock basis to provide emergency public health services to our community.

We helped, for example, collect and distribute personal protective equipment and COVID-19 tests. We helped organize and run COVID-19 vaccine clinics. We developed and helped implement plans and distribution centers to fight the substantial food insecurity experienced by our clients' constituents. We assisted school systems in navigating the change from in-person to remote learning. We provided policy and legal guidance to organizations as they had to make decisions in real-time regarding evolving CDC best practices.

Nothing is more representative of our staffs' outstanding work than the "Champions of Excellence Award" presented by University of Maryland Baltimore President Bruce Jarrell, MD, FACS. Eight of our staff members received this prestigious award for their tireless dedication. These staff members worked, at the height of the pandemic 12 hour (and longer) 'in person' shifts,

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CHHS Staff



CHHS staff gather for our last in-person meeting, pre-pandemic shutdowns, in February 2020.

Director's Message (continued)

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seven days a week for months on end to provide COVID-19 support to the State of Maryland; Maryland's Montgomery, Prince George's, Howard, and Anne Arundel Counties; and the City of Baltimore. You can read more about the Champions of Excellence Award and our eight staff recipients on page 16 of this newsletter.

As is also highlighted in this newsletter, along with our field work, six CHHS staffers teach emergency management, public health and cyber courses for the University of Maryland Carey School of Law in the JD, LL.M. and Masters of Science in Law programs. CHHS also manages the Cybersecurity & Crisis Management Certificate program for JDs in the Law School. Each year, since its inception, well

over a dozen graduates of the law school obtain this Certificate.

As demonstrated in this newsletter, CHHS has not only been tested, but we have also grown and thrived during this very challenging period. We look forward to the challenges of the future. Thank you for your support.

Michael Buehner

This Is Why We Plan

It has been over a year since the truly extraordinary events of COVID-19 began unfolding. CHHS was active from the beginning of the pandemic, from initial conversations about the unknown virus circulating in China, to its eventual detection in the United States, and within Maryland and our regional clients' borders. Capturing the depth and breadth of CHHS's involvement in the pandemic response this past year is difficult to do; the work highlighted here serves merely as a snapshot.

From the beginning, the lack of personal protective equipment dominated the news and informed much of the initial COVID-19 response. As federal and state agencies worked to distribute much-needed masks and other PPE, CHHS Senior Law and Policy Analyst Hassan Sheikh and Senior Policy Analyst Kimberly Stinchcomb were critical in developing PPE management and distribution plans for the Baltimore City Health Department and the Prince George's County Health Department, respectively. From creating distribution rubrics to ensure equitable distribution of PPE, to fielding calls from leadership, to answering requests from a public desperate to protect employee and patient safety, Sheikh and Stinchcomb helped ensure that critical PPE reached healthcare partners. In Montgomery County, that critical role fell to Senior Policy Analyst Patrick Fleming. Novel challenges

call for new solutions, and Senior Law & Policy Analyst Netta Squires quickly activated the Montgomery County Volunteer and Donations Management Plan she had written three years earlier to set up a PPE donations collection and distribution process and mechanism. By doing so, Squires ensured Montgomery County was able to receive more than half a million masks, gloves, and face shields when supplies were scarce and redistribute them to organizations and healthcare providers. As volunteers stepped forward to help with all aspects of the evolving response, Law & Policy Analyst Jessica Pryor organized volunteers for the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, helping to credential, train, and place over 1500 volunteers who helped with call centers, PPE distribution, and eventually, testing and vaccine sites.

As the FDA approved COVID-19 tests, state and local jurisdictions ramped up testing and tracing capabilities. As Prince George's County Health Department's Testing Site Assurance Manager Senior Policy Analyst Jihane Ambroise ensured that all five of the county's testing sites were meeting public health best practices standards and incorporating changes as needed. In her role, Ambroise trained staff and developed Standard Operating Procedures for all five sites. She continues to serve as the Point of Contact for all testing initiatives.

As counties worked to test residents and help control the spread of COVID-19, jurisdictions also began to anticipate vaccine emergency use authorization, and began planning for mass vaccination sites. While logistics planning presented its own challenges, much of the planning conversation sought to ensure a swift, equitable distribution of the vaccine to help protect those on the front line of response—healthcare workers, emergency responders—as well as those most vulnerable to the Sars-CoV2 virus, such as the elderly and those in congregate living. Senior Law & Policy Analyst Michael Tennison lent his voice to this discussion, advising Anne Arundel County leadership in the Office of Emergency Management and Department of Health on the leading bioethics frameworks for vaccine allocation, as well as those frameworks' application to frontline essential county personnel. Stinchcomb, in Prince George's County, also created the county's vaccination prioritization schedule using ACIP and state guidance.

As 2020 came to a close, the U.S. announced the EUA of two vaccines in short succession, and yet again, CHHS staff were on the ground to ensure the safe, timely distribution of shots in arms. Sheikh, in Baltimore City, helped identify, plan, and stand up vaccination sites and coordinate the logistics of storing the vaccines. Stinchcomb, as the Planning Section

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This Is Why We Plan (continued)

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Chief for the Prince George's County COVID-19 Vaccination Operation, developed and updated vaccination plans and policies, including creating the county's pre-registration form. Ambroise served as the County's non-clinical vaccine site lead for the Sports and Learning vaccine clinics. As part of jurisdictions' push to make the vaccine available to all who would like it, many have turned to mobile vaccine clinics. Law and Policy Analysts Joseph White and Zachary Leibman have helped Baltimore City with its mobile vaccine deployment, which as of the end of May had distributed over 11,000 vaccine doses, and was offering 12-17 mobile vaccine clinics a week.

Although much of our public health work over the last year and a half took place at the local level, CHHS also worked with other entities facing challenges brought by the pandemic. In March 2020, CHHS helped the Denver International Airport work through emerging legal and policy issues with the pandemic and air travel, and has continued to work with other businesses and



Senior Policy Analysts Patrick Fleming and Myra Derbyshire help manage PPE supplies in Montgomery County.

organizations, including groups from bar associations, law firms, trade groups, industry representatives, and others to explain legal response frameworks and recommend policy changes and best practices—which evolved with the federal, state and local responses and knowledge about the virus.

By May 2021, much of Maryland and the National Capital Region had lifted emergency orders and many jurisdictions were shifting focus to recovery efforts, while still looking ahead to potential surges in COVID-19 due to variants, pockets of low vaccination rates,

or weather, with the return of fall. At the same time, public health emergency preparedness continues, taking the lessons we have learned—and continue to learn—from this global pandemic, and applying them to future challenges. From local emergency management offices being able to redistribute donations during a declared emergency—a change to Maryland law led by Senior Law and Policy Analyst Netta Squires—to helping clients understand the changed legal and policy landscape in this “new normal,” CHHS’ public health work continues.

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On February 17, 2020, just weeks before the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, Public Health Program Director Trudy Henson (left, with Maryland law faculty Peter Danchin, School of Medicine Associate Professor David Marcozzi, and Maryland Law Dean Diane Hoffman) participated on a faculty panel hosted by the Maryland Carey International Law Society on the novel coronavirus and COVID-19 outbreak. Photo credit: University of Maryland, Baltimore



Prince George's County set up mobile vaccine sites all over the County to ensure equitable access to vaccines. This is one such site, just before opening, at the Bladensburg Community Center.

CHHS in Social Media



CHHS maintains active social media accounts on a number of platforms. Follow us for updates on CHHS media appearances, webinars and blogs on current events, and all the information on CHHS special events.



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CHHS Aids in Inauguration Planning

For the fourth time, beginning with President Obama in 2008, CHHS partnered with the D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) to support the Presidential Inauguration. This year, the Inauguration looked a little different and the preparations were far from “normal” given the pandemic. Additionally, in the aftermath of the January 6th insurrection at the Capitol, Inauguration plans became even more carefully coordinated with a heightened sense of security. Throughout this process, six CHHS staffers were honored to work closely with HSEMA in supporting the city’s inauguration efforts.

Inauguration planning comprises three distinct committees that work collaboratively on the event: the Secret Service Inaugural Committee, the President Elect’s Inaugural Committee, and the D.C. Presidential Inaugural Committee. Together, these bodies produce a cohesive and comprehensive plan for all of the Inaugural events, including the Inauguration itself. HSEMA assumed a leading role in the city’s Inauguration planning and CHHS provided assistance to those efforts.

CHHS staff members, Peter McCullough, Zachary Fry, Zachary Leibman, Joseph White, Frank Maldarelli and Armon Mirian, were assigned to eleven subgroups that reported to an executive committee. The subgroups convened to address various challenges posed by the large-scale event such as security,



CHHS staff worked hand-in-hand with D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency staff in support of the D.C. Presidential Inaugural Committee (DCPIC). Top row: Law & Policy Analyst Zachary Liebman, Policy Analyst Zack Fry, Law & Policy Analyst Armon Mirian, DCPIC Program Managers Catherine Sims (HSEMA) and Shontae Harrell (HSEMA), Law & Policy Analyst Frank Maldarelli. Bottom row: Law & Policy Analyst Peter McCullough, DCPIC Chief Operating Officer Tanya Mitchell (HSEMA), Law & Policy Analyst Joseph White, DCPIC Program Manager Nikelle Adams (HSEMA).

transportation, telecommunications, etc. Staff members were tasked to produce presentations, compile scrupulous notes, and communicate pertinent information to relevant stakeholders.

Throughout the course of the planning efforts, CHHS personnel became subject matter experts for their assigned subgroups. This acquired knowledge was invaluable in the COVID-19 environment. CHHS staffers had to build strong and trustworthy relationships in a strictly virtual setting. Additionally, gatherings were limited and CHHS staff were relied upon to relay information from their subgroups to officials.

The challenges confronting Inauguration efforts intensified in the aftermath of January 6th. Security in Washington D.C. was tightened and some plans for the Inauguration needed to be quickly adjusted. CHHS staff adapted to the new challenge and aided HSEMA in altering the plans. Even with plans finalized, CHHS staff were on standby with members from HSEMA to confront any emergency. Luckily, the Presidential Inauguration proceeded without any incidents.

The unique position of CHHS staff in this process prompted a leading role in producing After Action Reports and information debriefs. The written reports will be relied upon in planning future Presidential Inaugurations.

Education in the Time of COVID-19

Graduation

It is difficult to imagine a more trying year than 2020; COVID-19 swept across the planet throwing all aspects of life into turmoil. One of the most difficult parts of the pandemic was the uncertainty it brought. With infection rates skyrocketing, the University of Maryland, Baltimore took the extraordinary step of moving nearly all university operations, including the vast majority of classes, to a virtual space. Faculty scrambled to convert residential programs into synchronous distance-learning and students had to alter their learning strategies to fit an online model.

At the same time, our MSL students who already participated in an asynchronous program, faced unique challenges too. While these students were accustomed to working online and faced little changes to the curriculum, many MSL students were involved with COVID-19 response operations; these courageous individuals committed themselves to combating the spread of the virus by day and furthering their education at night. It is difficult to imagine how our MSL students were able to achieve this balance at all, let alone at such an impressive level of excellence.



Few could have correctly predicted that when students departed for Spring Break 2020, not only would the majority of 2020 class members not return to campus to complete their coursework, but, almost inconceivably at the time, nor would members of the class of 2021.

The transition was not without difficulties, but with extraordinary perseverance by faculty, staff, and most especially students, we were able to advance not one, but two graduating classes operating nearly entirely within a virtual environment. It has been disappointing for

everyone that the dangers of this pandemic prevented us from reconvening for class or celebrating graduation in person.

The reality of this situation resulted in a strange dichotomy for many faculty members. On one hand, a sense that our inability to return and congregate with our students was at once the most disappointing moments in our careers, and conversely, the focus, dedication, and grit of our students trying to navigate the new realities of a pandemic-stricken world, was nothing short of remarkable. Witnessing our students rise to meet the moment has been among the proudest moments of our careers and speaks well to their

ability to handle the challenges they will face in their professional lives.

In addition to their coursework, numerous students also completed externships at CHHS throughout 2020 and 2021. These students worked on issues supporting the frontline COVID-19 response in Maryland, helping to turn the tide in the battle against the pandemic. These externs were able to apply their legal training to issues that practitioners were grappling with in real time; issues ranging from vaccine prioritization to medical supply

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Education in the Time of COVID-19 (continued)

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shortages to the legal boundaries or governmental emergency powers. All of these externs are to be commended for the invaluable assistance they provided to CHHS's staff and clients.

Though we were unable to conduct any graduation celebrations in person, CHHS conducted a virtual Certificate and Service Recognition Ceremony to honor those students who satisfied the requirements of the Certificate in Cybersecurity and Crisis Management, as well as students who provided exemplary public service through their work at CHHS. In all, we honored eleven JD students (Nathan Arnold, Melanie Babb, Alexander Batton, Zachary Birnbaum, Samantha Breeze, Shelby Brown, Spreeha Choudhury, Andrew Curran, Augustin Detres, James Welch, and Carly Yost) and two LLM students (Cheryl Gordon and Chang Won Kang) at the event.

CHHS would also like to recognize our MSL graduate classes. This includes our May 2021 (Tracy E. Barnes, Tania Golden Beldy, Monique Gainer, Thomas A. Leone, Jennifer Lynn Meyer, Christine Solange Ngo Bikoi, Marcos R. Romero, Larysa Sergiienko, Shaila Lynn Sherrill, Kemberlei Smith, Alanna



Law & Policy Analyst Ariel Neumann helps manage vaccination operations at a mass vaccination site in Germantown, Maryland.

Watkins, and Toni Marie M. Woods) and December 2020 graduates (Jonathan Baldwin, Michael D. Block, Angela Redmond Debro, Gbolahan Fatoyinbo, Matthew Johnson, Robin W. Jones, Lauren B. Kallins, Stephen P. Matthews, Marcia Thorpe-Johnson, Robin Tim Weis, and Ross W. Wheelwright).

The COVID-19 pandemic also prohibited most graduation celebrations in 2020 (as well as the CHHS newsletter). As such this is our first opportunity to recognize our 2020 JD Cybersecurity and Crisis Management Certificate recipients (Susan Ansari, Bradley R. Beard, Joelys A. Gonzalez Mendez, Kaitlyn Taylor Holzer, Kevyn Jorgenson, Felicia

Langel, Zachary Leibman, Jaime D. McCoy, Peter A. McCullough, Raphael H. Park, Kathleen Marie Petrie, Hillary T. Pham, Nicole Sakin, Alison Venable); May 2020 MSL graduates (George Aduhene, Tania Golden Beldy, Angela Herron, Kelly D. Johnson, Ann Melleive Marce, Allysa M. Mpofu, Zinob O. Olayinka, Amanda Ri'Chard, and Olawunmi Saliu); and December 2019 MSL graduates (Alexandra Alizadeh Paulson, Reward Asonye, Joseph D. Dogan, Christopher W Meyer, Sirila Ray, Araba Samassekou, Brenda F. Sandoval, Tessa G. Smith, and Kendra Whitted).

Funds for the Center for Health and Homeland Security are administered by the University of Maryland, Baltimore Foundation, Inc.



Senior Policy Analyst Patrick Fleming (second from left) receives his award for completing the FEMA National Emergency Management Basic Academy.

Our graduates move on to a diverse array of opportunities after graduation. Some move on to traditional legal employment, joining firms, governmental employment, and judicial clerkships, while others have joined the CHHS team to continue the important work they began in law school. We are also proud to announce our first student enrolled in the strategic partnership program developed between the law school and the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). First announced in 2019, this program allows law students who obtain our Certificate in Cybersecurity and Crisis Management may transfer up to 12 credits toward the UMBC Master's of Professional Studies in Cybersecurity.

CHHS congratulates all of our graduates; we are confident that they are ready to face any challenge!

Special Course: "COVID-19 and the Law"

Founder and Director Michael Greenberger again participated in the MLAW program; a state-led initiative intended to foster greater collaboration between the University of Maryland Baltimore and the University of Maryland College Park (UMCP). To that end, Professor Greenberger taught several undergraduate courses at UMCP targeted towards elite undergraduate students who are considering law school. In response to overwhelming student

demand, Professor Greenberger created a novel undergraduate course entitled, "COVID-19 and the Law."

This course educated students regarding the legal, policy, and operational considerations that are involved with the pandemic response. In addition to the course's focus on public health and emergency law, use of federal resources, and tort and other liability issues, CHHS staffers spoke about setting up vaccine clinics to reach historically underserved populations, vaccine operations, food insecurity issues, and Strategic National Stockpile supply concerns.

In fact, it was not uncommon for one of these speakers to gain an insight or be privy to a legal development during their workday only to bring this information to the students the same day! In addition to the legal topics taught by Professor Greenberger focused on public health and emergency law, use of federal resources, and tort and other liability issues, CHHS staffers were able to speak about setting up vaccine clinics to reach historically underserved populations, vaccine operations, food insecurity issues, and Strategic National Stockpile supply concerns.

Based on the enthusiastic response of the students it is likely that this course will become a regular offering in the MLAW curriculum.

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Cyber Incident Response Planning is a Must...No Matter What



Cybersecurity Program Director Markus Rauschecker and Senior Law and Policy Analyst Netta Squires were invited to present virtually at the annual MDERS Symposium as part of a cybersecurity panel on April 28, 2021, alongside federal partners and leaders from CISA and the Naval Academy. The panel was moderated by Public Policy and External Affairs Program Director Ben Yelin.

Over the past year, the world was clearly focused on the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, there was no accompanying lull in the scale and frequency of cyber incidents. Indeed, cybercriminals took full advantage of the newfound circumstances and launched devastating cyber attacks against individuals, businesses, and government institutions. Taking advantage of people's fears and the general uncertainty about the pandemic, cybercriminals defrauded victims out of millions of dollars through online scams promising virus cures. Pharmaceutical developers and research agencies were the targets of sophisticated cyberespionage attacks seeking to steal the latest information on vaccine developments. Businesses and government agencies were hit with ransomware attacks like never before.

Here in Maryland, we saw these cyber incidents first-hand. In November 2020, Baltimore County Public Schools were hit with a ransomware attack. Given that students were already learning remotely due to the

pandemic, this attack caused significant disruption. Luckily, no personally identifiable information from staff or students was stolen as part of the attack and online instruction was resumed within a few days. Nevertheless, the attack was extremely concerning and

demonstrated how critical it is to be prepared for cyber incidents with thorough planning.

Recognizing the significant ransomware threat, Maryland passed a new law that makes the mere possession of ransomware malware a crime. The law also increases penalties for anyone convicted of directing a cyberattack against schools or hospitals. CHHS Cybersecurity Program Director Markus Rauschecker was pleased to provide testimony on this bill during the committee hearings.

To better prepare the entire state, Maryland also considered another consequential piece of legislation (SB69), which aims to designate a lead agency for coordinating state-wide responses to cyber incidents. Importantly, this proposed law would also establish a framework for how the state would coordinate with local jurisdictions. Again, on account of our expertise, CHHS was asked to provide input and Public Policy and External Affairs Program Director Ben Yelin provided

testimony during the bill's hearings. It is clear that local jurisdictions across the country need more support in their efforts to plan for, respond to, and recover from cyber incidents. While this Maryland bill did not pass during the 2021 legislative session, all signs point to it being reintroduced next year and likely becoming law then. If passed, this law will be another example of the significant steps Maryland has taken on cybersecurity issues.

The importance of planning and coordination was a message that Senior Law and Policy Analyst Netta Squires, Ben Yelin, and Markus Rauschecker also recently highlighted on a panel at this year's Maryland Emergency Response System (ERS) Symposium. CHHS continues to stress that cyber incident response should be understood to be part of emergency management's "all-hazards" approach to planning. So even if an emergency manager is not a technology expert, he or she still has the tools to coordinate an effective response to a cyber incident. CHHS has worked to turn that message into practice by assisting clients with their cyber incident response planning.

The pandemic has shown that we need to always be mindful of cybersecurity threats despite other major emergencies. Cybercriminals will seek to exploit any situation to their advantage. Planning, training, and exercises are the key to cyber incident preparedness and response and CHHS stands ready to help clients on any of these efforts.

Maintaining Continuity During a Pandemic

As CHHS approaches its 20th anniversary, it continues to serve as a nationally recognized leader in the development of Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government (COG) Plans for governmental and institutional organizations.

It is unlikely that any natural or manmade emergency in recent history has necessitated the utilization of COOP and COG plans nationwide more than the COVID-19 global pandemic.

In a fundamental sense, continuity plans prepare an organization for three scenarios: the incapacitation of a facility, the incapacitation of key systems or resources and/or the reduction in available staffing. COVID-19 is unique in that it contains elements of all three aforementioned scenarios.

- As we have continued advising clients over the last year it has become clear that there are some key aspects of continuity planning that specifically relate to functioning in a pandemic. Organizations (when applicable) should have a clear, comprehensive and properly socialized Telework policy that articulates who is authorized to work from home, which essential functions they're expected to perform, and what resources they require to carry out their responsibilities.



Two weeks before Maryland schools closed in March 2020, Howard County Public Schools conducted a tabletop exercise to prepare for possible closures and the shift to remote learning. Senior Law & Policy Analyst Christine Gentry worked with the School System to organize and plan the exercise.

- Organizations should have procedures in place for being able to absorb unanticipated reductions in available staffing. For example, if 30% of a workforce were too sick to come to work, would certain non-essential functions be temporarily postponed?
- Organizations should have strong support mechanisms for personnel working off-site, particularly within the realm of Information Technology. If staff have complications with things like hardware, software or remote access, services should be available as expeditiously as possible as not to disrupt essential functions.
- A global pandemic takes a considerable toll on the mental and emotional health of human beings. Organizations, when possible, should socialize support services for things like grief counseling and encourage staff to use all their vacation time.
- At some point, when appropriate, all organizations should conduct an After Action Report (AAR) and Improvement Plan (IP) of their response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. An AAR and IP identify the strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations going forward to strengthen its ability to effectively respond to future complex emergency events.

Critical Lessons from the Pandemic Food Access Crisis



Senior Policy Analyst Myra Derbyshire assists with the prepared meal and blanket distribution hosted by Guru Gobind Singh Foundation – Sikh Spiritual Center on November 30, 2020 in Montgomery County. About 2,000 prepared meals, desserts, other food items and blankets were distributed to vulnerable populations as part of the event.



Montgomery County Food Security Task Force leadership meet virtually as part of the County's response to the food access crisis triggered by the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent economic crisis, triggered a global food access crisis. In Montgomery County, Maryland, like many other localities across the country, the pandemic deepened inequities, increasing unemployment and health disparities. Montgomery County's existing decentralized food security network struggled to meet the rapidly expanding need. Growing lines for food support, emptying food pantry shelves, and disruptions in the "just in time" food supply chain, presented unique challenges to local emergency managers. The food security crisis disproportionately impacted minority and immigrant communities, raising important issues of equity and social justice in preparedness, response, and recovery.

To help tackle these challenges, CHHS staff helped Montgomery County apply a novel Incident Command System (ICS)-based approach to its food insecurity response. Montgomery County established a Food Security Task Force using the principles and concepts of Unified Command, organized into branches focused on operations, finance, and planning. The response that grew from this strategy was a public-private partnership among four important groups: 115 local food access providers who desperately needed resources and support; four different Montgomery County government agencies working in the food response area; the food service and agricultural industries who were suffering the effects of the shutdown; and generous private donors who were

eager to help. Since May 2020, the Food Security Task Force administered 25 distinct programs, guiding the expenditure of roughly \$25 million in disaster relief funding; brought together hundreds of stakeholders; and crafted, revised, and implemented a strategy to sure-up the food system in the County.

We learned critical lessons that can be used to improve our food systems and prepare us for future economic and supply chain disruptions.

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Scale is Important, Supply Chains are Brittle

Early on in the disaster, plummeting food donations and runs on the grocery stores revealed just how brittle food supply chains are — with many local food access providers unable to get food to distribute. Much of the food that traditionally stocks pantry shelves is recovered from retail and wholesale donations of unsold products, so when a concerned public bought out all the pasta, beans, rice and other staple items, grocery stores had no unsold items to donate. As a result, large food banks had to seek food from other sources and faced weeks-long delays in delivery. From January through December, the Capitol Area Food Bank bought over 771 truckloads — 26 times more than the year prior — to keep inventory levels consistent with demand.

It is not always easy to turn money into food. Even after federal and local response dollars started flowing, it remained challenging to get food. Pre-pandemic Americans consumed 51% of their calories away from the home, so when restaurants closed an enormous amount of food was “stuck” in the wholesale supply chain, packed

in sizes too large for distribution via food pantries (like 5-gallon bags of milk, or 40lb bags of rice). The Food Security Task Force coordinated bulk purchasing, repacking, and distribution efforts in Montgomery County, which maximized the impact of response dollars and ensured that pantry shelves did not empty.

As supply chains begin to heal, and the economy reopens, emergency planners need to think carefully about how to build more resilient supply chains, focusing on diverse sourcing, local agriculture, and sensible stockpiling.

Food System Partners need to be included in Emergency Plans - The Food and Agriculture Sector is commonly recognized as critical infrastructure, but local food assistance providers who have a critical response role during any food crisis often lack the same formalized emergency management role as other critical infrastructure providers (like public utilities). While engagement and partnerships are critical to effective response, these can be hard to build with local food access provider systems made of large, diverse, distributed networks of nonprofits. Emergency Managers need to make sure the full range of food system participants, from farms, restaurants and wholesalers, to food banks and neighborhood food access providers, are all engaged in planning, response, and recovery efforts.

It Takes Local Effort to Get and Use Federal Dollars

While the federal government provides a critical source of funding and support in this area, putting those funds to work takes an organized effort. While many residents might be eligible for programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), it does not make a difference in their lives until they are signed up and know how to use their benefits. This is true of many federal grants and programs - It takes local effort to bridge the gap between Washington aid and main street impact.

CHHS is proud of the work it has done helping Montgomery County Maryland respond to the food access crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that the Unified Command model adopted by the Food Security Task Force worked well and should be a model for future responses. Moreover, we think important lessons have been learned to inform future changes to our local food systems as we enter the recovery phase of this pandemic. Specifically, emergency managers need to understand their local food supply chains, and not take for granted that food will always be available. Food system stakeholders at all levels need to be included in planning, response, and recovery efforts. With climate change impacts looming, now is the time to start planning for the next food access crisis.



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CHHS Helps the Maryland Emergency Management Agency with Legislative Tracking



Senior Law & Policy Analyst Netta Squires and Public Policy & External Affairs Program Director Ben Yelin testify virtually to the Maryland General Assembly in support of HBD0831. The bill, which passed, proposed the establishment of a Maryland Food System Resiliency Council to address the food insecurity crisis due to the pandemic.

For 90 short days each year, Maryland Delegates and Senators consider and vote on thousands of pieces of legislation. For emergency management stakeholders who have significant day-to-day responsibilities, it can be impossible to keep up with the activity in Annapolis. The policy choices that legislators make at the State Capital, however, can have profound impacts on emergency personnel, particularly those who work at the county and municipal level.

CHHS is proud to help these very stakeholders by assisting the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) in legislative tracking for both the 2020 and 2021 sessions of the General Assembly. CHHS staff, led by Public Policy & External Affairs Program Director Ben Yelin, closely follows hundreds of pieces of active legislation important

to the emergency management community. In coordination with MEMA, CHHS hosts biweekly conference calls with representatives from the Offices of Emergency Management across all 23 Maryland Counties and Baltimore City, to provide concise, pertinent updates on the progress of tracked legislation. CHHS staff also maintains a publicly available database tracking the progress of legislation as it makes its way from committee rooms to the House and Senate floors.

In both the 2020 and 2021 sessions, legislators considered bills relating to nearly all areas of emergency management. During the 2021 session, for example, the General Assembly passed SB658, which renames the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) as the Maryland Department of Emergency Management, and makes the new Department its own agency as part of

the Executive Branch. Legislators also enacted a law to create a revolving loan fund for local resiliency projects, established a Statewide Food Security Council, and made substantive changes to the state 9-1-1 system. CHHS staff also monitor allocation of state funds to both MEMA and state local emergency management departments, as part of the state's operating and capital budgets. During the 2021 session, additional funding became available to local agencies as part of both State and Federal COVID-19 recovery packages. CHHS staff advised both MEMA staff and local stakeholders on the status of economic relief legislation, and potential funding available for the emergency management community.

In addition to legislative tracking during the session, CHHS staff also drafted a policy paper after the General Assembly adjourned Sine Die. This paper offers concrete recommendations for emergency management-related bills for the subsequent legislative session, based on feedback and collaboration with state and local stakeholders. Hopefully, with CHHS' help, the emergency management community can hit the ground running when the whirlwind 90 day session begins next January. CHHS is looking to expand its public policy portfolio. If your agency or department is looking for legislative tracking services in Maryland or any other State, our team now has the institutional knowledge and experience to meet your needs.



Prince George's County pilots a Mass Testing Site in March 2020



Senior Policy Analyst Patrick Fleming takes a shift in the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center during the Presidential Inauguration.



CHHS the Video

Learn more about who we are and what we do:



www.youtube.com/MDCHHS

UMB Champions of Excellence

Center for Health and Homeland Security Team

Crisis Consulting: On-Site and On-Task

On the Front Lines:

UMB Champions of Excellence
Center for Health and
Homeland Security Team
University of Maryland, Baltimore

When many Marylanders retreated to their homes in mid-March after Gov. Larry Hogan announced a statewide lockdown to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, eight employees from the University of Maryland Center for Health and Homeland Security (CHHS) did the exact opposite. They began working 12-hour shifts, seven days a week at emergency operations centers across the state and became a vital component of Maryland's pandemic response and recovery.

Michael Greenberger, JD, has seen this type of dedication since the 2002 founding of CHHS, a University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) center that partners closely with the Francis King Carey School of Law to provide governmental and institutional organizations with tailored and comprehensive consulting services on emergency management and homeland security. He says the eight-person team went "above and beyond" the call of duty, leaving the safety of their homes to work grueling hours during an unprecedented health crisis.

"These people shifted into these responsibilities and never said a word about the fact that this was not what they signed up for," said Greenberger, founder and director of

CHHS. "They just went and did it — and did so without complaint. Our partners have offered nothing but the highest of praise for their work."

For these efforts, the team members were named UMB Champions of Excellence: Hassan Sheikh, PharmD, JD; Jihane Ambroise, MPH, CPH; Joseph Corona, CEM; Samantha Durbin, MS; Patrick Fleming, MPA, MSL; Ian Hamilton, MS; Netta Squires, JD, MSL, CEM; and Kimberly Stinchcomb, MPH, CPH. Their work — which involves everything from finding ventilators to developing policies — provides direct support to emergency management agencies and health departments coping with COVID-19 throughout Maryland.

HOTWASH: Law & Policy of Emergencies Podcast



Trudy Henson and Christine Gentry, legal & public health experts working in emergency management & public health preparedness, began a podcast series – Hotwash: Law and Policy of Emergencies. The series sheds light on legal and policy issues that arise during emergencies, delves into planning & operational areas that do not always make headlines, and tackles emerging issues in public health and emergency management. You can find episodes of Hotwash at <https://www.mdchhs.com/media/podcasts/>



CHHS Public Health Program Director Trudy Henson (left) and Senior Law & Policy Analyst Christine Gentry record an episode of CHHS' new podcast, "Hotwash."

Each team member can recount stories about how they responded to the emergency health needs of Maryland's citizens, and Sheikh's work hits home in Baltimore. A former pharmacist and 2018 Carey School of Law graduate, he's using his expertise in pharmacy and law to help the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) procure and distribute personal protective equipment to health care facilities. He's also developing mass vaccination guidance and trainings to help ensure a smooth rollout once a COVID-19 vaccine becomes widely available.

Sheikh, who quickly pivoted his role at BCHD from planning to response, said the work is extremely gratifying.

"I've had health care providers call me sometimes crying and upset," he said. "We've been able to come up with a game plan about how we're going to tackle these challenges. I feel like every day is an exercise in how I can give back to our community."

Greenberger said the exhaustive efforts of Sheikh and his seven colleagues are "remarkable."

"They do it seven days a week, 12 hours a day, and they manage their family life on top of that," said Greenberger, who added that he's confident any of CHHS' 40 staff members could skillfully manage this type of COVID-19 front-line work. "This group reflects all of the great attributes of the center's staff, and for that reason we are very proud."

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the website for the UMB Champions of Excellence. The page features a navigation bar with links for HOME, DIRECTORY, EMERGENCY, THE ELM, CALENDAR, BLACKBOARD, SIFPS, and UMB SHUTTLE. Below the navigation bar is the University of Maryland Baltimore logo and a search bar. A yellow banner at the top of the page reads "COVID-19 Recovery, updated June 15 Read more...". The main content area is titled "UMB Champions of Excellence" and "Center for Health and Homeland Security Team". It includes a section for "Crisis Consulting: On-Site and On-Task" with a grid of team member photos. A quote from Michael Greenberger, JD, is featured, along with a list of team members and their roles. The page also includes a quote from Laura Le...

<https://www.umaryland.edu/champions/center-for-health-and-homeland-security-team/>

Recovery in the COVID-19 Era

The quicker the recovery efforts begin, the stronger the community will come out on the other side. Recovery in the COVID-19 era has provided the opportunity to understand societal inadequacies and faults in our systems and to collectively bring forth enhancements for a better future. With the American Rescue Program Act, jurisdictions need to identify the long-term infrastructure projects and programs for their communities that will create longstanding improvements, such as equitable healthcare systems, access to quality education and childcare, affordable housing, thriving business opportunities, and sustainable jobs. While the goal of recovery is to create a more resilient future, implementing a coordinated recovery effort is key to succeeding in this goal. Some of the critical features of a coordinated recovery include organizing missions into focus areas, creating a mechanism for community input, and implementing change from the lessons learned.

CHHS is intimately involved in COVID-19 recovery throughout Maryland. We are working with the emergency management agencies in Prince George's, Montgomery, and Anne Arundel Counties specifically on recovery planning, while many of our other projects touch on recovery through the lens of health department operations and community outreach.

Recovery from the COVID-19 global pandemic must include focus areas such as addressing health equity, childcare, housing, economic



CHHS staff pose post-vaccination at the Montgomery County Public Safety Training Academy. From left to right: Senior Policy Analysts Myra Derbyshire and Patrick Fleming, Tina Laboy (Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security), Cybersecurity Program Director Markus Rauschecker, Senior Law & Policy Analyst Netta Squires.

revitalization, and education. While some areas of focus will be resolved in a short period of time, it is a challenge to fully grasp the long-term impacts of the scale, duration, and complexities faced over the past year. For example, local governments quickly mobilized mass vaccination efforts to meet the immediate demand for COVID-19 vaccines, but the structural inequities revealed and exacerbated by the pandemic, such as access to quality healthcare in general, will take years to understand and address.

Community input is a foundational component in recovery. Involving the community provides officials with a comprehensive understanding of the true nature of the impacts from the COVID-19 global pandemic on the local community. A community-based approach will foster the alignment of priorities in a solutions-based approach. In addition to receiving community

input, collaboration and partnership between local government and the private sector has been essential - both to contain the spread of the virus and to help the community recover. This has been highlighted in the COVID-19 expansion of what recovery is and the importance of various sectors and perspectives needed at the table. The characteristics and social dilemmas are unique and vary by the local community, which may require groundwork to ensure the right organizations and players are involved.

Recovery efforts can coincide with understanding the lessons learned, and improvement items for moving forward. Now is the time for all organizations to reflect on and strategize what recovery will mean for them internally, as well as with partner organizations and their communities. The results will be worth it.

Give to CHHS

You can support our ongoing work by contributing to the **Center for Health and Homeland Security**. Our staff has grown to more than 40 experts and professionals, many of whom present at conferences, speak at symposiums, and offer commentary in the media – all outside the scope of their normal duties. Your contribution mirrors our dedication, and your generosity will open doors to exciting new projects and provide the essential resources we need to effectively work side-by-side with emergency officials to ensure the safety of every citizen.

There are three ways to make a gift to CHHS:

- (1) Online, at mdchhs.com/give
- (2) Phone, by calling Jeanne Stringer at (410) 706-0585
- (3) Mail, by sending a check made payable to **UMBF, Inc./CHHS**

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Newsletter Editors

Lisa Crow
Christine Gentry
Trudy Henson
Peter McCullough
Eric Oddo
Markus Rauschecker
Heather Shaivitz
Megan Timmins
Michael Vesely
Christopher Webster
Ben Yelin

Designer

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All correspondence including inquiries, events, and letters should be directed to:

Jeanne Stringer
Coordinator

Center for Health and Homeland Security
500 West Baltimore St.
Baltimore, MD 21201-1786

P: 410.706.0585
F: 410.706.2726

jstringer@law.umaryland.edu

www.mdchhs.com



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