Meta-Leadership's Impact on One Creates a Reverberating Effect on Academia and beyond

Contributor: Rob McDaniel

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Rob McDaniel, Chief of Operations and Faculty within the Center for Disaster Risk Policy at the Florida State University (FSU), values his involvement in the Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness for the impact it has made on his teaching, partnerships with university and non-university colleagues, and for the reinforcement it has had on community-wide initiatives.

The Summit was an Opportunity for Future Leaders

As a faculty member, McDaniel was thrilled that approximately 20 students were able to attend the Florida Capital Meta-Leadership Summit held in June 2011 on the FSU campus. McDaniel described, "There isn't always enough classroom time to share with students all we can, so providing them with the opportunity to attend the Summit, meet field practitioners, and see the enthusiasm in the room for emergency management and community preparedness was exciting." Following the Summit, McDaniel has begun integrating aspects of the Summit curriculum in his classes including material concerning the brain and one's reaction to disaster.

New Partners Lead to New Resources

The Summit also reinforced for McDaniel that no matter how closely one works with a partner, one may not have a full picture of the capabilities or resources that partner may have to offer. McDaniel described his experience with this in the context of his work on the Post-Summit Activity planning team. On the planning team, McDaniel spearheaded efforts to develop a hurricane-based, interactive table-top exercise. In efforts to make the exercise as realistic as possible, McDaniel gained content input from local and state emergency management as well as the American Red Cross and was interested in finding realistic video clips to accompany the written material. Rather than reverting to YouTube, McDaniel was able to gain access to the National Weather Service through his contacts in emergency management. Through this partnership, McDaniel was able to obtain updated hurricane information, as well as access to a public broadcast television station run by the meteorology program at FSU. In the end, McDaniel was able to film accurate and scenario-specific video clips with the assistance of the FSU meteorology program and the National Weather Service for the November 1st Post-Summit Activity. Until this experience, McDaniel admits that he did not have a full understanding of the breadth of capabilities of the FSU meteorology department, despite being a part of the same institution.

Meta-Leadership Boosts Enthusiasm for ESF-18

Another value of the Summit that McDaniel noticed was a resurgence of enthusiasm around the addition of Emergency Support Function (ESF 18) to the Emergency Operations Center since the Summit. ESF-18, which is being led by by John Cherry of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, will better integrate business and industry into government emergency management procedures. McDaniel is involved in the efforts to mobilize ESF-18. For example, the table-top exercise he developed for the Post-Summit Activity

was repurposed for an ESF-18 planning meeting shortly following the Post-Summit Activity to help leaders think through the nuances of the additional support function. Overall, McDaniel notices many similarities in the missions and players involved in the establishment of an ESF-18 and the Meta-Leadership Initiatives. McDaniel remains committed to increasing public/private partnership in Florida through the work of ESF-18 and other avenues.

The Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness empowered business, government and nonprofit leaders to act together in times of crisis. The five-year initiative connected 5,000 business, government and nonprofit leaders in 36 communities. For resources and more information about Meta-Leadership visit the [CDC Foundation Meta-Leadership Website](.).

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