



Association of Contingency Planners
Dedicated to the Evolution of Business Continuity

Garden State Chapter Newsletter

“DAY OF THE DELUGE”

Reprint from the Winter-2013 Edition of CUNY Matters

Fine-tuned readiness and response plans prepare the University for virtually any emergency— even an unprecedented superstorm and its aftermath.

At 3 a.m. on Oct. 30, G. Scott Anderson looked out a window of Borough of Manhattan Community College and saw the Hudson River churning and swelling just 100 feet away. It was only minutes later, in the first dark hour of the assault of Superstorm Sandy that the suddenly ferocious river came surging across the West Side Highway, heading straight for BMCC’s four-block-long building on West Street.

“We saw the water cross the highway and come at us in one motion,” recalls Anderson, BMCC’s vice president. “The first onslaught took out all our cars, and it just kept rising and getting closer until it was just us and the river.”

The building’s staff had worked round-the-clock for five days, girding for the floodwaters with sandbags, plastic sheeting and miles of duct tape — “as if we put the entire western face of the building in a giant fishbowl,” Anderson says. But it wasn’t enough — the water slamming the building, seeping through the seams of windows and doors until the college was three feet under water.

Anderson used his cellphone to call CUNY Executive Vice Chancellor Allan Dobrin. “I just lost BMCC,” he told Dobrin. “We’re in the river.” And in the dark. As he recalls, “It was pitch-black, eerie, almost like a post-apocalyptic movie.”

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2013 ACP Garden State Executive Board

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NEW CHAPTER ADVERTISING SECTION!

Our chapter newsletter now includes a section for vendor advertising!

*This month we will again feature:
New Jersey Institute of Technology*

Over the years NJIT has been a wonderful partner and worthy of inclusion in our new advertising section!

Newsletter monthly features:

**“Emergency Management, Business Continuity, and Disaster Recovery “Tid-Bits”
& “5 Questions”**

ACP Garden State Chapter Advertising Page

New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)*154 Summit Street, Newark, NJ 07102. Here is the campus area map on [Google](#)***“Enroll in the NJIT MS Degree in Emergency Management and Business Continuity!”**

The NJIT M.S. in Emergency Management and Business Continuity is designed to enhance critical skills and knowledge among corporate and public sector professionals working in the area of emergency management and business continuity. The major program objectives are:

- Increase the professionalism of the Emergency Management and Business Continuity field, which is evolving in importance and societal needs, by increasing its presence in academics, research, and professional communities;
- Meet the new policy of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), which require, an academic degree in addition to just the current four years of experience requirement, beginning in 2010;
- Integrate the areas of Emergency Management and Business Continuity in one academic program, demonstrating how public and private sector-focus activities may be brought to bear in building organizational and community resilience;
- Support the educational requirements suggested by NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) 1600, Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs (2007), thus putting the program in line with national priorities and best practices and;
- Demonstrate how research innovations may be coupled with current best practices to advance the state of the art and best prepare our students.

Why study Emergency Management and Business Continuity at NJIT?

The M.S. in Emergency Management and Business Continuity is managed and directed as an interdisciplinary program by NJIT's Department of Information Systems. A university-wide program committee will keep the structure, guidance and direction to courses, course development, and specialty area development on the leading edge.

Dr. Michael Chumer***Contact: chumer@njit.edu, Phone #: (973) 596-5484 – NJIT MS-EMBC***

Dr. Chumer is a Research Professor within the Department of Information Systems at New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) specializing in Homeland Security and Emergency Management. He is also a faculty member in the State of New Jersey's Preparedness College, Advisory Board Director of the Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) Alliance, and Director of the NJIT MS Emergency Management and Business Continuity program.

Dr. Chumer, as a Homeland Security private sector advocate and subject matter expert (SME), is called upon to provide guidance on collaborative communication models that engage the private sector with the public sector during all dimensions of Homeland Security emergency management. He is a participant in the Highland's Forum a Department of Defense think tank that advises the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Networks and Information Integration. His research focuses on command and control as used in the military and its application to emergency response during multi-agency collaboration such as

experienced in Katrina and the recent Tsunami disasters.

Dr. Chumer has written about command and control and is incorporating that knowledge into command center operations that benefit the public and private sectors during Homeland Security enabled emergency management.

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Grim as it was in the moment, Anderson’s call marked the beginning of a remarkably agile response by the University and many of its campuses to a storm of unprecedented destruction and disarray. In BMCC’s case, painstaking preparation prior to the storm and a well-planned and organized effort in the aftermath allowed the college to reopen a week later — the same day as campuses far less impacted.

In fact, University officials and campus emergency managers say the storm’s consequences would have been far worse, in big and small ways, if not for the University’s heightened focus the last few years on its response to emergencies of all kinds. Whether it is a violent storm or a violent student, a chemical spill in a science lab, an attack on the University’s computer security or a threat of swine flu, CUNY has put in place a meticulous, highly collaborative system to minimize the many threats to health, safety and smooth operation that any large university in the modern world might face on any given day.

Led by Dobrin and Howard Apsan, director of environmental health, safety and risk management, campus operations managers have created a University-wide culture that embraces the high value of being ready for anything. “The one thing you can be sure of is you’re going to have emergencies,” says Dobrin. “You just don’t know what they’re going to be. So it’s very important to have processes in place that cover everything you can imagine, and to make constant improvements.”



Executive Vice Chancellor Allan Dobrin inspects damage from Hurricane Sandy at Kingsborough Community College.

Sometimes experts from police agencies or counterparts from other universities are invited in to discuss their own experiences and best practices. It’s part of an overall approach that preaches the importance of developing and maintaining relationships with agencies and people — from the local police precinct commander to contractors and suppliers — who can become instantly vital in an emergency.

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Once or twice a year, CUNY brings people together for an exercise in What If: day-long “table-top exercises,” in which a specific crisis is simulated and managers practice their responses to layers of possible scenarios, with experts evaluating their actions. Most recently, the scenario was a complete and mysterious loss of Internet and phone connection at Lehman College that lasts three days, extends to York College and includes a scene of angry students at the registrar’s office.

Apsan’s job is as close to 24/7 as it gets. He is in the loop on every sort of incident or mishap on every campus, and spends much of his time on the go, visiting campuses and meeting with their safety and emergency managers. When something major happens — such as last year’s shooting outside the Empire State Building, across the street from the Graduate Center — Apsan is there.

“We have half a million people we have to be concerned about,” he says, “and there’s no end to what can possibly happen on any campus on any given day. What’s the line from ‘The Hunger Games’? ‘May the odds be ever in your favor.’ We try to improve our odds by getting people to think about these hazards in an organized way to avoid them and, if they do happen, to minimize the effects.”

“The breadth of issues is incredible,” says Robert Santos, City College’s vice president for campus planning and facilities management. “Whether it’s health, safety, environmental or business continuity, every challenge has a set of reactions that are distinct but overlapping. Howard is uncanny in how he blends them and in the people he brings in. He always seems to be ahead of the curve.”

It plays out in many unseen ways. The safety and integrity of oil tanks, for instance, is a prime concern, especially on campuses with older buildings. Apsan’s office instituted a peer-review approach to ensure that every college is meeting government regulations. “We used to go through the checklist on our own and we were good,” says Peter Jayasekara, environmental, health and safety officer at LaGuardia Community College. “Now we do internal audits on a regular basis where a team from one campus will go with Howard’s office to another campus.”

Some might think the University’s size would make it unwieldy when it comes to emergency management, a challenge to the kind of “integrated university” that has become part of the fabric under Chancellor Matthew Goldstein. But Dobrin sees it differently. “Compare us to SUNY. All our campuses are close together so we have the opportunity to work together, moving assets and marshaling resources. We have a communications system that no other university system in the United States has: A number anyone can call from any campus in any situation and the right person will be alerted.”

The response to Superstorm Sandy in late October was considered by many a triumph of just that sort of unity and collaboration across the boroughs. “What we were facing the morning after the storm was three campuses underwater and 10 that were turned into city shelters,” said Dobrin, who is both executive vice chancellor and chief operating officer. “I told everyone, ‘This is going to be a marathon.’ ”

Are you interested in hosting a Chapter meeting at your facility?

Contact your ACP Garden State Chapter Program Director: Michael Beninato at michael.beninato@bankofamerica.com for a complete list of 2013 available dates.

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Indeed, dealing with the aftermath of a storm that canceled the actual marathon meant weeks of grinding 16- and 20-hour days for hundreds of administrators, facilities managers, electricians, plumbers and maintenance workers on the campuses hardest hit. Many put CUNY first, volunteering to stay as the storm approached the waterfront campuses — BMCC and Hunter College’s Brookdale campus in Lower Manhattan and Kingsborough Community College on Coney Island — and working in the dark when the floodwaters came.

Uptown and inland, meanwhile, staffs at 10 colleges quickly transformed gymnasiums and dining halls into emergency shelters, rolling hundreds of cots into place and setting up makeshift kitchens and infirmaries with supplies from the city’s Office of Emergency Management. The University provided refuge to nearly a third of the 9,000 people who used the city’s emergency shelters after the storm.

“What we learned from [2011 Tropical Storm] Irene was that we needed to be in charge of the shelters, instead of the city sending people in to run them as they did last time. We said, ‘These are our campuses, we know them, there has to be a CUNY person with ultimate authority.’ They agreed to that, and it worked very well for us. Everything at the shelters was pre-positioned—food, medical supplies, all the cots were waiting when people came in,” Dobrin said.

In all, the University took in 2,700 displaced city residents, including 1,000 from hospitals and nursing homes — and, for one night, guests of the Parker Meridien hotel who were evacuated when a construction crane snapped and dangled 70 stories above West 57th Street. They were bused to the nearest city emergency shelter — the Nat Holman Gym at City College. Some of the 10 shelters were still running when classes resumed a week later; the last of the displaced didn’t go home until the Thanksgiving weekend a month later.

“I think we got through it wonderfully,” Dobrin says. “We’re an educational institution, and for campuses to go weeks running hospitals and homeless shelters at the same time was very taxing.” York College alone took in nearly 1,000 people, including many who needed medical care or were mentally disabled. “There were remarkable heroes, many working 20 hours a day. We got students back in classrooms; even the campuses that were underwater didn’t miss much.”

East 80th Street was the central command but Dobrin and Apsan each also visited several campuses a day in the week after the storm. They were struck not only by the dedication of the staffs to their own campuses, but to helping others. “We were moving clothing from one place to another to get to Kingsborough,” Dobrin says. “At one point Hunter asked if they could get 45 volunteers for the next day — engineers and plumbers to help get Brookdale back. And people really rose to the occasion. “You saw the absolute best of the integrated university. If this were 10 years ago it would have been chaos.”



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There may be no better a case in point than BMCC. “We prepared our building for five days round-the-clock,” says college vice president Anderson, “but when I made that call to Allan I thought it had made no difference. We got socked by the surge coming across the highway and it took out the basement and first floor. But what I didn’t realize yet was that our precautions held it off enough to prevent sustained flooding. The plastic created a fishbowl around the western face of the building, and that saved us.”

The wet-vacs and water pumps came out when the river receded, and in the days that followed BMCC was the beneficiary of many helping hands. “We had emergency contractors on call, and whatever we needed our colleagues were there. That’s where the University shines. We needed food and water and cots, and we got them from John Jay and Hunter when they were in the middle of their own emergencies. At one point I said we were running low on fuel for our emergency generator. They had a truck here in three hours.”

Emergency Management, Business Continuity, and Disaster Recovery “Tid-Bits”

[How organizations are improving business resiliency with continuous IT availability](#)

This Forrester technology white paper, which was commissioned by EMC Corporation, has been made available to Continuity Central readers.

[Communications lessons from the Boston Marathon bombing](#)

One clear lesson from Boston is that once again the cellular network proved to be vulnerable during a major incident. Steve Dance highlights lessons that business continuity managers should take on board.

[Crisis communications: an organizational balancing act](#)

Achieving the ideal nexus of operational and communicative responses during a crisis is no easy task. Michael Bratton offers some advice.

[The 3 R’s of resilience for small businesses](#)

Resilience is the vision of business continuity says Jan Decker and the 3 R’s, RTO, RPO and ROI, are the heart of resiliency.

[Choosing a data disaster recovery strategy](#)

Nick Mueller provides some advice for companies considering the best route to take for data disaster recovery.

[Work starts on 2016 edition of NFPA 1600](#)

NFPA is now accepting electronic submission of public input via its online reviewing process.

More BC, EM, and DR “Tid-Bits” will be provided here each month!

5 Questions

Each month a member of our Garden State Chapter will have an opportunity to answer 5 questions about our profession. Our hope is that the questions and answers will stimulate further discussion among our chapter members on various DR/BCP/EM “topics of the day”.

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This month's chapter member: **Bernard Jones**

Bernard Jones, our Newsletter Editor, normally does this session, but this month our ACP Garden State Chapter President, Stan Carlstadt presented the following "5 questions" to Bernard!

Question #1: "Bernie, How long have you been working in our field - what got you interested in doing this as a career?"

Bernie: "I've been in the BCP/DR/EM field for over 10 years now. I became really interested in BCP/EM after completing an extensive mainframe DR project at a former organization. I found BCP/EM much more of a challenge and made it my career choice going forward. "

Question #2: "How long have you served on our Garden State Board of Directors and what positions have you held?"

Bernie: "Wow, Stan I started back in 2005 and remember my 1st ACP meeting like it was yesterday! Since joining I have served as Education Dir., Information Dir., and Publications Dir. It's been a ton of fun over the years working with all the great folks on the BoD and within our chapter."

Question #3: "I notice that beyond high school and college you still continue to advance your formal education by completing the NJIT MS Degree in EM and BC and are now studying for your PHD - what motivates you Bernie?"

Bernie: "Funny but my 10 year son Jared asks me that very question, time and time again. I still think I can learn more about this field and eventually I'd like to get up in front of a college classroom and teach BCP/EM as part of a formal curriculum. Obtaining my doctoral degree will help me in that regard!"

Question # 4: "In all the various aspects of DR/BCP/EM, what piece of all this do you enjoy doing the most Bernie?"

Bernie: "Stan definitely it would be BCP. I really enjoy the many components of BCP work and especially working with small businesses while facilitating both risk assessments and BIAs. All aspects of BCP that relate to the actual working with people are the most enjoyable for me."

Question #5: "I know you just joined the staff at City University of New York (CUNY) Bernie, what's your title and what do you feel is the greatest challenge for a University in our field of DR/BCP/EM?"

Bernie: "Stan my official title is Risk and Business Continuity Manager. The greatest challenge I see is the continued development and maturation of a comprehensive DR/BCP/EM program here at CUNY. We are the largest urban university system in the country (24 campuses, 500,000+ students), so my work here is quite challenging indeed!"

Stan Carlstadt thanks Bernie for being such a good sport in letting us turn the tables on him and interviewing him instead of vice versa!!

If any of you would like to volunteer for one of our upcoming newsletters, please contact Bernard Jones – Publications Director: bernienj@hotmail.com

Our Next Chapter Meeting Info:

Next Garden State Chapter meeting will take place in July with Windstream.

Additional Information including the meeting agenda will be provided soon.

Our Newsletter Needs Your Story!

Whether you are a Garden State ACP member or a vendor to our ACP Garden State community, we are looking for your input. If you have experiences, lessons learned, or have been through a DR/BC situation and have a story to tell, please share it with the rest of us. Even if you are not the greatest writer in the world, don't fret; the newsletter editorial staff will gladly massage your missive into something memorable. Photos are welcome too.

Don't be shy – it's your newsletter – and it's a great way to participate in our Chapter. And best of all – you qualify for continuing education points for your certification requirements

Email all items to Bernard Jones: bernienj@hotmail.com

Welcome, New and Renewing Members!

Please join us in extending a hearty welcome to new and renewing members!

Let's extend a big "shout-out" to the following new or renewing members for their continuing commitment to our stellar network of continuity professionals here in the Garden State:

Gregory Mele, Kerrie Heimbouch, Donna Singer, David Stuart, Patricia Palacio, Melissa Romagnoli

Renewals may be performed via the corporate website:

Book of the Month

Each month we plan to feature a book/publication within the field of Disaster Recovery, Business Continuity, or Emergency Management. If you would like to offer suggestions for an upcoming book to feature, please contact Bernard Jones – Publications Director:

bernienj@hotmail.com

Title: Business Continuity and Homeland Security: The Theory and Practice
Written by: David McIntyre & William Hancock, **ISBN-13:** 9781847202505

Summary: What should businesses consider in preparing for terrorist attacks, natural disasters, pandemic illnesses and other emergencies? What steps can a business take to ensure continuity during and after a crisis? What can we learn from past success?

This edited collection provides responses to these and other questions from prominent business executives and academics, drawn from their personal experiences with such crises as the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the Asian tsunami. Their analyses prove a major step forward in the emerging academic and professional field of homeland security.

In this first volume, The Challenge of the New Age, the contributors– noted authorities in security and risk management, technology, public health, political science and business – look at specific ways disasters can impact businesses, both in the short and long term. They recount their experiences with terrorist attacks and natural disasters, and explore the potential impact of other hazards, such as a biological event or pandemic. Intended for business practitioners, real world operators, students and faculty,

