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News Release

IAEM-USA Names Andrew D. Friend, CEM, 2021 Emergency Manager of the Year

Oct. 8, 2021 (Falls Church, Va.) – The IAEM-USA Awards and Recognition Committee of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) has named Andrew D. Friend, CEM, the IAEM-USA 2021 Emergency Manager of the Year. The award will be presented at the President’s Banquet and Awards Ceremony on October 20 at the IAEM 69th Annual Conference & EMEX, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is being honored for his leadership during COVID-19 response in 2020.

Friend led the COVID-19 response in two states during the 2020. He was the chief of staff of the State Emergency Operations Center for the Maryland Emergency Management Agency from March through August 2020, before joining the Illinois Department of Public Health as deputy director.

In his Illinois position, Friend realigned and conducted quality improvement of the state’s Incident Command System Organizational Chart. Additionally, he identified areas for improvement and executed the improvements to the state Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Receipt, Stage and Store (RSS) warehouse. This occurred before the vaccine roll-out nationally. He oversaw and managed the state’s mass vaccination program and as of Dec. 31, 2020, Illinois led the nation with more than 150,000 vaccinations given. The structure/system that was put in place, led to more than 11.1 million vaccinations given by the end of May 2021. In addition, Friend ran operations/strategic command for the state and worked with the Illinois National Guard to develop the strategy to deploy more than 1,500 troops to 70 of the 102 counties across the state. He also oversaw issuing all missions, which led to the National Guard giving more than 1.7 million vaccinations by the end of May 2021. Finally, Friend built coalitions and brought all local, state, and federal partners to the table, and negotiated and built relationships to execute the states response.

The Emergency Manager of the Year Award recognizes an emergency management practitioner at any level (federal, state, tribal, local, academic, military, non-government organization, and private) for outstanding contributions to the overall field of emergency management.

IAEM-USA, the nation’s largest emergency management professional association, is a non-profit professional organization representing more than 5,000 emergency management and homeland security professionals for local communities, state and federal disaster officials, private sector, non-governmental organizations, and others involved in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from all types of disasters including acts of terrorism. IAEM provides access to the largest network of emergency management experts who can provide advice and assistance; the Certified Emergency Manager program; annual scholarships; a comprehensive monthly newsletter; and more.

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