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## News Release

### IAEM-USA Announces the 2023 Technology & Innovation Award

**Oct. 19, 2023 (Falls Church, Va.)** – The IAEM-USA Awards & Recognition Committee of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) has selected the Montgomery County Virtual Emergency Response Team for the IAEM-USA 2023 Technology and Innovation Award. The award will be presented at the President’s Banquet and Awards Ceremony on Nov. 8 at the 71<sup>st</sup> IAEM Annual Conference & EMEX in Long Beach, California.

#### **Montgomery County (MD) Virtual Emergency Response Team 2023 IAEM-USA Technology & Innovation Award**

The Montgomery County Virtual Emergency Response Team (VERT) was selected for this award for its exceptional technological innovation. It was a Montgomery County Community Response Team (MCCERT) project. With its diverse range of initiatives and partnerships, VERT has made significant contributions to local, national, and international emergency management efforts.

VERT encompasses a range of initiatives focused on leveraging technology to improve emergency management practices. The four key areas of the project, which involve developing electronic situation reports and maps, social media monitoring and disaster research, data contribution to emergency management agencies, and artificial intelligence integration, showcase the project's commitment to staying at the forefront of technological advancements.

What sets VERT apart is its inclusivity and adaptability, allowing individuals from diverse backgrounds to contribute effectively. The project's measurable impact and success indicators, including positive feedback from partnering agencies, volunteer engagement, retention rates, and collaborations with various organizations, demonstrate its value to the emergency management community.

The non-proprietary nature of the VERT project and its low operating costs make it accessible and replicable for other emergency management agencies. The willingness to freely share knowledge and resources is highly commendable and aligns with the spirit of collaboration in the field.

In conclusion, the VERT project's exceptional technological innovation, commitment to inclusivity, measurable impact, and replicability serve as a model for other emergency management organizations seeking to enhance their capabilities through technology and innovation while promoting diversity and collaboration.

**The Technology and Innovation Award** recognizes the development of technology and innovation to improve emergency management operations, public education, and the emergency management/homeland security field.

*IAEM-USA, the nation's largest emergency management professional association, is a non-profit professional organization representing more than 5,800 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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