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News Release

Leslie Luke Appointed IAEM-USA Diversity and Equity Advisor

June 16, 2020 (Falls Church, Va.) – Today, IAEM-USA President Teri Smith, CEM, CPM, appointed Leslie Luke, deputy director of the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office, Office of Emergency Management, as IAEM-USA diversity and equity advisor. The IAEM-USA Board of Directors approved the appointment during its meeting held today. Mr. Luke is the current chair of IAEM-USA’s Diversity Committee, which formed in 2011.

As an association that values diversity, the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) is committed to equality and justice. The Diversity Committee recently issued a statement that provided actions necessary to lead the organization and our members’ organizations to social equity. The new IAEM advisory position further elevates the importance of diversity and equity throughout IAEM programs.

“As a board, we play a critical role in creating an organization that prioritizes, supports, and invests in diversity, inclusion, and equity,” stated IAEM-USA President Teri Smith, CEM, CPM. “We believe that we are better able to do this work effectively and with authenticity by having a diversity and equity advisor who advises the president, executive director, and board members on equity and diversity issues. The new advisor will suggest ways to promote diversity and develop a welcoming and inclusive organizational climate.”

“Today’s decision by the board to add a diversity and equity advisor demonstrates the board’s commitment to making their processes, discussions and decision-making more inclusive, open and representative of the membership,” said Mr. Luke. “Strategically and operationally a board that is open to change and embraces diversity leads from a position of strength and sets itself up for future success and growth.”

Mr. Luke joined Los Angeles County in 2013 after spending 25 years in San Diego County where ten of those years were with their Office of Emergency Services. He has been the Recovery Operational Area lead for seven federally declared disasters and numerous State of California declared disasters. He was a member of the FEMA Innovation Team and responded twice following Superstorm Sandy.

Throughout his career, Mr. Luke has served on and participated with numerous Department of Homeland Security and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Task Forces, projects and initiatives. He has worked closely with the California Office of Emergency Services on various statewide initiatives. He is a member of the California Emergency Services Association (CESA), a member of the CESA Legislative Committee, and past vice chair of IAEM Region 9.

Mr. Luke holds a bachelor’s degree from the Union Institute and University. He is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School and Harvard School of Public Health National Preparedness Leadership Initiative, and the FEMA National Disaster Recovery Leadership Academy.

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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