

Beyond the Textbook: Real-World Learning from the IAEM

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Competitive Division –
Undergraduate Student

Poster Showcase

#iaem25

Annual Conference and EMEX 2024

Introduction or Purpose of Presentation

- Sought real-world experience to enhance learning as an Emergency Management student.
- Attended IAEM Annual Conference & EMEX 2024 to explore professional practices in disaster response, policy, and collaboration.
- Participated in presentations, hands-on workshops, and networking events to bridge classroom knowledge with practical application.

Breakout Session Highlights

- Healthcare Emergency Management:
- Attended a healthcare-focused breakout session independently.
- Asked targeted questions to explore student involvement in the field.
- Left with 10 professional contacts after demonstrating initiative and curiosity.
- Discovered potential career paths in hospital preparedness and school district emergency planning—options I had not considered before IAEM & EMEX 2024.

Impact on Academic & Professional Growth

- Became more proactive in coursework and student leadership roles.
- Applied lessons learned to improve engagement in class and professional projects.
- Reinforced the value of continuous learning and professional involvement.

Future Goals / Career Application

- Continue attending conferences to gain real-world insights throughout my career.
- Apply acquired skills and knowledge to future Emergency Management roles.
- Strive to bridge academic learning with professional practice.

Professional Growth

- Demonstrated initiative by attending sessions solo and engaging directly with speakers.
- Built a professional network through meaningful conversations and follow-up questions.
- Identified personal career interests in healthcare emergency management and school-based preparedness, areas previously unknown to me.

Inspiration & Motivation

- Hearing real-life community care stories—like Whataburger's disaster response—reinforced the human impact of emergency management.
- Inspired to pursue a career where I can support vulnerable populations in critical moments.

Acknowledgements

I want to say thank you to the student chapter at Millersville University for giving me the opportunities to go to the IAEM Conference & EMEX in 2024. Thank you Dr. Hagelgans for pushing me to do this poster

Key Takeaways

- Disaster Response Strategies: Gained deeper understanding of planning and operational execution.
- Policy Implementation: Observed practical approaches to applying policies in real-world scenarios.
- Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Learned the importance of teamwork across emergency management roles.
- Leadership Skills: Enhanced ability to take initiative and coordinate projects.
- Networking: Expanded professional connections for future career development.

- Real-World Scenarios:
- Participated in multiple breakout sessions covering real incidents and response strategies.
- Gained firsthand insight into decision-making by seasoned emergency managers.
- Learned how private-sector partners like Whataburger care for their communities during crises—an inspiring example of corporate social responsibility.



Photo showing me and two of my other classmates networking at the IAEM Conference & EMEX 2024



A session based on Emergency Management in the Private Sector

International Association of Emergency Managers. (2024, November 17–20). 2024 IAEM Annual Conference Photography: General Conference Photography [Photograph gallery]. Lightfolio. <https://577826.lightfolio.com/gallery/2024-iaem-annual-conference-photography-copy-general-conference-photography>