

# News

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## **FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR LEARNS LESSONS ABROAD**

(DENVER, CO) – Fulbright Scholar Gary Gleason believes there are important lessons to be learned from the differences between emergency management strategies in the United States and those employed in Europe.

Gleason just returned from a three-month research project through the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (CEIS). During his time abroad he interviewed emergency managers in Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Portugal and Spain and conducted research on industry best practices and lessons learned. He also taught classes in the civil protection degree program at his host university, Instituto Politecnico de Leiria in Portugal.

“Because the European Union is an assembly of independent nations, rather than united states, they lack some of the standardization that helps emergency managers in America to come together quickly to manage major disasters. I also found that the mechanisms for providing aid from one jurisdiction, state or nation to another tend to be more fragile. Yet by the same token, each European nation seems to have things to offer that we have not yet fully addressed in this country,” Gleason said. “In the Netherlands, for example, they are already running national disaster exercises around modeling for the affects of climate change. In Portugal they have developed some very effective strategies for early detection and response to wildfires. Germany has a citizen emergency response corps that is more inclusive than some of the strategies employed here in the U.S. Greater international exchange on these issues could boost emergency preparedness on both sides of the Atlantic.”

Gleason is currently writing a white paper on these and other related issues. The paper is scheduled for publication this spring. Through publications, lectures and continued research Gleason hopes to help cultivate and share emergency management best practices from throughout the world with the goal of helping all nations better respond to the needs of citizens during emergencies and disasters.

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A 1986 graduate of the University of Colorado School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Gleason has emerged as an internationally recognized expert on emergency management issues. Most recently Gleason has been working with the Federal Transit Administration's National Rural Transit Assistance Program on interactive training products that help community transit systems develop better emergency response plans and procedures, for the California Department of Transportation on emergency planning guidance for the Golden State's transportation systems, and for the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA) on evacuation planning for people with disabilities and older adults in disasters. His career includes five years as a Disaster Assistance Employee with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), during which he responded to 20 federally declared disasters including fires, floods, hurricanes and tornadoes. Gleason spent a month at Ground Zero as part of the federal team coordinating media coverage for FEMA's search and rescue teams. He also helped develop FEMA's crisis communications plan for the 2002 Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, UT. Gleason continues to participate in drills and exercises with the U.S. Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) through Argonne National Laboratories.

Additional information about Gleason is available at [www.DisasterPrep.info](http://www.DisasterPrep.info). Information on the Fulbright Scholarship Program can be found at [www.cies.org](http://www.cies.org).

\*(Editors note: to schedule an interview with Mr. Gleason, please contact Jim Chesnutt at (303) 513-2389)

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