

## Phoebus Named Civilian Emergency Manager of the Year by Professional Organization

*--By Caree Vander Linden, USAMRIID PAO*

The International Association of Emergency Managers has selected Garth C. Phoebus of Fort Detrick as its 2021 IAEM-USA Civilian Emergency Manager of the Year.

Phoebus, who spent 12 years as emergency manager for the U.S. Army Garrison at Fort Detrick, recently accepted a similar position at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases. He said he hopes his installation-level experience will inform his role at USAMRIID and enhance coordination between the post and the laboratory, one of the largest tenants on Fort Detrick.

IAEM, which has more than 6,000 members worldwide, is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting the principles of emergency management, according to its website. It represents professionals who save lives and protect property and the environment during emergencies and disasters. The IAEM Awards Program recognizes and honors programs and individuals for significant contributions to the field of emergency management.

Phoebus said he was “surprised” by the award, adding, “There are so many deserving emergency management professionals within the Uniformed Services category that I cannot believe I was selected.” However, former colleague Raymond J. Wharton, operations director at USAG, said it came as no surprise to him.

“Garth is one of the most, if not the most knowledgeable emergency manager I’ve worked with in my 40 years of experience in this field,” he commented. “As the installation EM, he coordinated and integrated functional resources from internal and external organizations to reduce the risk of emergencies that would impact the Army community.”

During his USAG tenure, Phoebus was responsible for prevention, protection, and mitigation activities, developing response and recovery team capabilities to manage an all-hazard approach to protecting the installation. His team considered natural, technological, and human-caused threats, including terrorism.

Phoebus also managed the installation’s bi-annual full scale emergency exercise, designed to test strengths and weaknesses in preparation and identify any gaps that needed to be filled.

“Based on the severity of an incident, external support from local, State, regional, and/or Federal agencies is required,” added Wharton. “To ensure success, Garth established approved support agreements with those community partners who are critical to the overall success of the program.”

Phoebus, who spent almost 13 years as an intelligence analyst in the Marine Corps, calls himself “an emergency manager at heart.” A native of Frederick, Md., he says he has a strong sense of community and a desire to protect it. He is equally passionate about communication and connection.

“During my master’s program at The Johns Hopkins University, I would often brainstorm about how to bring about a culture in which the mantra would be, ‘who else needs to know?’” he commented. “The most critical element of any successful emergency management program is the relationships you make prior to an incident.”

Phoebus said working at USAMRIID gives him the opportunity to build on personal connections he established during his years with the Fort Detrick installation.

“The professionals within USAMRIID are amazing individuals,” he added, “and I am proud to be part of this history and this team. In the Marine Corps, my drive was to save lives by providing clear, accurate, and timely intelligence to protect the Warfighter. Now, as an Army civilian in the Emergency Management field, my drive continues by ensuring the protection of the Institute, the personnel and the mission. I wake up in the morning knowing that I’m part of a bigger picture, and that what I do is contributing to the success of the organization.”

###

Photo caption: Garth C. Phoebus, Emergency Manager at U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, Fort Detrick, Md., was named 2021 Emergency Manager of the Year by the International Association of Emergency Managers. (Courtesy Photo)