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News Release

IAEM-USA Announces the 2024 Career Excellence Award

Oct. 22, 2024 (Falls Church, Va.) – The Awards & Recognition Committee of the U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA) has selected Dr. Bob Ditch for the IAEM-USA 2024 Career Excellence Award. The award will be presented at the President’s Banquet and Awards Ceremony on Nov. 20 at the 72nd IAEM Annual Conference & EMEX in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Dr. Robert L. Ditch, CEM
IAEM-USA Career Excellence Award Recipient

The 2024 IAEM Career Excellence Award is awarded to Dr. Robert (Bob) Ditch, Ed.D., CEM. Dr. Ditch has provided incredible service to the field of emergency management, including his tenure at the Civil Air Patrol. Currently, Dr. Ditch supports the National Headquarters of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP). His career has spanned over 50+ years as an emergency manager ranging from military service, federal, local, private, academic, and NGO. Whether in the field during dozens of disasters and other emergencies, in the collegiate classrooms of higher education and academia, or in the background researching, planning, and conducting preparedness/mitigation activities, he has continued his career as an EM leader, planner, educator, and champion. He is highly recognized in local, regional, and national-level field operations. Dr. Ditch is an asset to IAEM and the entire emergency management field.

He is the first Air Force officer certified as a CEM, and he served on the IAEM Certification Commission for 12 years. Besides his CEM credential, he has been certified as a State of Texas CEM and a Virginia Professional Emergency Manager. While in the U.S. Air Force, Colonel Ditch served in 14 EM/contingency planner positions for 32 years with six combat tours. He has been awarded numerous awards throughout the years, including:

- Three Governor of Virginia Awards in the field of emergency management, EMS, and fire service.
- The National EMS Instructor of the Year Award, two times.
- Texas Life Saver Award.

- Arizona Emergency Management Volunteer Award.
- Governor of Arizona Lifetime Achievement Volunteer Award (2023)

He has also received multiple awards in CAP for his work in emergency management, including National Incident Management Staff Officer of the Year and Regional Operations Officer three times. While in the military, he received many emergency management awards for heroism, disaster response, meritorious service, and personal achievement. During his career, he has covered the expansive field of emergency management from the local through the federal arenas. As such, Dr. Ditch's remarkable achievements epitomize the character and qualifications embodied in the IAEM Career Excellence Award.

The Career Excellence Award recognizes an individual who is a leader who has influenced emergency management throughout the nation or made a national impact due to their significant contributions and achievements throughout their career to promote and improve the emergency management profession in the USA.

IAEM-USA, the nation's largest emergency management professional association, is a non-profit organization representing more than 5,800 emergency management and homeland security professionals for local communities, state and federal disaster officials, the 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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