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## News Release

### IAEM-USA Announces the 2024 Rising Star 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. Kesley Richardson for the IAEM-USA 2024 Rising Star Award. The award will be presented at the President’s Banquet and Awards Ceremony on Nov. 20 at the 72<sup>nd</sup> IAEM Annual Conference & EMEX in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

#### **Dr. Kesley Richardson IAEM-USA Rising Star Award Recipient**

In Dr. Kesley Richardson’s short career, he has achieved a few award-worthy accomplishments. Dr. Richardson was elected the chairman of the Bill Anderson Fund Fellowship (BAF), a one-of-a-kind disaster research fellowship geared toward connecting disaster-focused doctoral students and expanding the footprint of emergency management among underserved populations. As the first pracademic to serve in this role, Dr. Richardson combined and utilized his doctoral student, teaching, and professional experience to impact the graduate experience for students across the country. This election benefited his development individually but also closed the gap between practitioners and researchers or academia within the fellowship.

During the 2019 Coronavirus Disease Pandemic (COVID-19), Dr. Richardson led COVID-19 test sites for the State of Florida in its southwest region. This required him to maintain both response and recovery functions in the field, which included supporting local, state, and federal missions.

Dr. Richardson was also recognized by his alma mater, The University of West Florida, and presented with the 2023 Outstanding Young Alumni award for his contributions to his profession and community. Lastly, in alignment with this award, Dr. Richardson was previously awarded the Rising Star Award from the Governor’s Hurricane Conference in 2022. This honor designates one individual “whose primary responsibilities are in emergency management and for outstanding or substantial contributions and accomplishments in the field of hurricane preparedness, response, recovery, or mitigation in the State of Florida.” Due to his unique combination of professional and academic

experiences and his notable performance, Dr. Richardson has been requested to serve in mentor capacities for emergency management students and peers and sit on panels both for the Florida Higher Education working group events as well as nationally and internationally for conferences, workshops, and foreign delegations.

Due to these notable achievements, among others, Dr. Kesley Richardson is the 2024 IAEM-USA Rising Star.

**The IAEM-USA Rising Star Award** recognizes someone new to the emergency management profession who has displayed enthusiasm, innovation, and commitment, made significant contributions to the field, and worked in the field for five years or less.

*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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