



News Release

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ECBC Joins HSEP in Celebrating First Graduating Class

Employees Helped Develop Course Curriculum, Served as Mentors for Nation's First Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness High School Program

Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. — Hoping to help meet the nation's increased need for a workforce experienced in homeland security and emergency preparedness, employees from the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC) lent their support and expertise to the creation of a school that would prepare students for the professional needs of the current job market.

More than two years later, ECBC volunteers and mentors from the nation's premier resource for chemical and biological defense celebrated the fruits of their labor — the first graduating class from the Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (HSEP) program at Joppatowne High School.

"What you have accomplished means progress for Harford County and our nation and is a result of commitment and determination," Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) Superintendent Robert Tomback said during a ceremony celebrating the graduating seniors and the successful completion of their research projects. "Today, we are celebrating the crop of the seed that has been planted two years ago."

Dedicated to offering students career skills and technological expertise in the areas of homeland security and emergency preparedness, ECBC's workforce contributed to the development of the program and briefed curriculum committees at the county and state levels.

"Our subject matter experts have served as members of the Program Advisory Committee since 2005 and helped shape the program's curriculum by transferring technologies based on the needs of the private and government sector," said Mary Doak, ECBC community and educational outreach manager.

In addition, ECBC staff provided teacher and student refinement, student mentors, guest lecturers, career day support as well as tours of the Center's facilities.

"The true hallmark of this program is that students graduate with specific ideas and plans of what they want to do professionally," said HSEP Coordinator Leah Skica. "One of our keys to success was pulling in mentors from sponsoring organizations like ECBC to guide and motivate our students through the program."

With a focus on effective communication, prevention, response and recovery techniques, ECBC mentors helped students investigate solutions to protect the United States against public health and safety threats for their final capstone projects.

“It was an amazing experience to work with my mentee and watch him generate effective results for the simulation of a real-life health center in response to a potential disaster,” said ECBC Chemist Shawn Bowen, who served as one of the program’s seven mentors. “He was able to learn a complex software package and how to apply it to a meaningful problem.”

For more information about ECBC, visit <http://www.ecbc.army.mil/>.

ECBC is the Army’s principal research and development center for chemical and biological defense technology, engineering and field operations. ECBC has achieved major technological advances for the warfighter and for our national defense, with a long and distinguished history of providing the Armed Forces with quality systems and outstanding customer service. ECBC is a U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command laboratory located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. For more information about the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, please visit our web site at <http://www.ecbc.army.mil/> or call (410) 436-7718.

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