

Volume I, Issue I

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# PRIMORIS FACTUM

## The Premier Issue of the OΣΣ Newsletter

### The State of Affairs...

Honor Society Reaches “Mini-Milestone”, and more...

**Order of the Sword & Shield National Honor Society** for Homeland Security, Intelligence, Emergency Management and all Protective Security Disciplines is beginning its 5th year of operation. With more than 23 institutional chapters, 3 professional chapters, and a vibrant National Chapter, the Society has inducted academically superior students from 53 schools across the Country. Professor Jeffrey P. Grossmann, Chair of the Criminal Justice, Legal Studies, and Homeland Security Division at St. John’s University, the Founding Director and current Executive National Director of the Honor Society offers, “I think the success of our Society is the direct result of how the Homeland Security Academic Community has embraced us right from the beginning.” Honoring the academically gifted students from more than 25 diverse majors which compromise the Homeland Security Enterprise, Professor Grossmann has

his hands full. “We would not be celebrating this mini-milestone without the efforts of many talented people from several academic institutions and the professional

The Order of the Sword & Shield is the academic and professional honor society dedicated exclusively to Homeland Security, Intelligence, Emergency Management, and all Security Disciplines.

community at large. It is apparent, that the key to our success thus far, has been the overwhelming interest in becoming involved with the Society, from our Virtual Internship Program, Student Ambassador Program, and the many faculty members who have volunteered to be Chapter Coordinators at our chapter schools, together we make it all work.” The Order of the Sword and Shield, also known

by its Greek designation **Omicron Sigma Sigma**, will be reaching another milestone this year as it inducts its 500<sup>th</sup> member.

-Staff Correspondent

Several members of the St. John’s University Chapter pose with members of the National Office at the recent St. John’s University Induction Gala 2014.



### Honor Regalia Redesigned

The National Office announced the completion of “**Operation Redesign**”, which resulted in a completely new branding of Society graduation regalia and the addition of new merchandise available for the Induction Season 2014-15. After the



completely redesigned stole, cord, and medal; the Society welcomed the addition of a brand new induction pin and challenge coin. “These new items are exciting and help further legitimize our efforts”, stated Professor Jeffrey P. Grossmann.



# The Society is more than just honors...

## Chapters Making their Mark

The Order of the Sword and Shield supports many kinds of volunteer charitable efforts that chapters may wish to pursue. In addition to striving for the best academically, the Honor Society is equally dedicated to making a positive impact in our communities. For 2015, OΣΣ wants to continue these efforts by helping communities prepare for all types of emergencies. Recently, the National Chapter, along with the Adelphi University Chapter, participated in a joint educational program geared towards elementary schools. Members of both chapters visited St. William the Abbot elementary school in Seaford, NY and presented to children in grades 1-3. The children were very receptive to the emergency preparedness games and lessons presented. Each member of OΣΣ left the session with a complete sense of satisfaction and pride after spending time with the children.

Our goal is to bring Safety and Emergency Management lesson plans to many more elementary schools and to introduce these important topics to our younger generation. *The Do's and Don'ts in an Emergency* provides safety information suitable for children. These children will then know what to do in an emergency, and possibly, share this information with their families. Children comprise approximately 25 percent of our population and they are the future of our communities. They can play an important role during emergencies, but many programs do not consider children in their planning. It is important that children know what to do in an emergency and that all disaster planning, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts include a child's unique needs and capabilities. If you or your chapter

would like to become a part of this effort, please contact Ms. Hartofilis Rosemary.Hartofilis08@stjohns.edu for more information about the important Society initiative. OΣΣ cares, and together, we can make a difference.



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### Adelphi University Chapter

In September (FEMA's National Preparedness Month), the OΣΣ Chapter at Adelphi University hosted its annual "Preparedness Day" event in its University Center on campus, in collaboration with the Center for Health Innovation. While the preparedness program targeted mainly students, faculty, and staff, it also benefited the community as a whole. The Chapter offered a plethora of emergency management training tips such as advice on how to make a "go-bag," how to prepare families from a medical standpoint, and even how to prepare pets for disaster. They held several raffles, prizes of which included a solar-powered crank radio that can charge a USB for a cell phone, a two person "go-bag," and a AAA vehicle emergency bag. Ms. Meghan McPherson, Advisor of the OΣΣ Chapter and Coordinator of the graduate program in emergency management at Adelphi, explained how the honor society has impacted the students at her University. "For

us, being affiliated with OΣΣ has been really beneficial for our students. It has become something they strive for." The OΣΣ chapter at Adelphi has grown exponentially and has become something that has brought an entirely new dimension to the Emergency Management programs. "It has become something the students congratulate each other for... something where they feel so proud of themselves as well as proud to show their families what they have achieved when they come to the induction ceremonies." OΣΣ has become a goal for these students and it is a real inspiration for other chapters. It has instilled a sense of camaraderie in the students who join it where they may have not found otherwise, especially for the older students. This sense of community has encouraged students to strive for other distinctions such as the AEM/CEM and business continuity certifications. We all hope to see great things from this chapter in the future.

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### Medaille College Chapter

Medaille College located in Buffalo, NY recently graduated its first class of students from the Homeland Security Program in the School of Adult & Graduate Education. Several of these students have been inducted into OΣΣ. According to Medaille Program Director and Chapter Coordinator, Professor Steven MacMartin, "the future of our industry looks bright as we add to the ranks of tomorrow's leaders in the Homeland Security profession." The program at Medaille is a mix of online and traditional courses focused on the issues that face our field every day, and is



# More Society News...

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particularly appealing to military veterans, as well as current security professionals who are looking to expand their knowledge base.” One of the biggest challenges for the program so far has not been the enthusiasm of the students or faculty, but simply attracting new students to the field” said Professor MacMartin. The introduction of OΣΣ to Medaille has resulted in the expansion of interest in studying Emergency Management and other security related fields. Professor MacMartin went on to describe how the honor society has provided a uniform standard for defining academically superior students in this field of study. “Traditionally there was more of a sense of satisfaction with their skills, today however, we have a sense of academic accomplishment as well.” Professor MacMartin also pointed out the networking opportunities for the students in his chapter and the society in general as major benefits associated with society membership. All said, the future of Medaille College’s Homeland Security program looks bright and we would like to wish all of their recent graduates the best of luck.

## A Professional Perspective

I was notified shortly after receiving my Masters Certification in Business Continuity Management that DRII’s Master ranks were now being inducted into the Order of the Sword and Shield. I was pleasantly surprised as I started to research the mission, values and charter of the society. To have earned a place beside such noble professions as Homeland Security and Emergency Management was truly an honor.

As an active professional in several circles, I feel I can speak for my fellow planners when I say that we’ve long believed in our purpose and mission. Often times our passion for bringing quality services to our employer is met with a lukewarm reception. Yet, we continue to drive forward a message of awareness, preparation and response that will ultimately enable a much greater sense of self-reliance during unplanned catastrophes. My induction into the Order of the Sword and Shield sends a message that our tenacity will bring about change and our efforts are recognized among other professionals that put the needs of others above their own.



*Inducted Member (DRI International Chapter)  
Patrick Ridder, MBCEP,  
MBCEP, CHPCP  
Business Continuity/  
Disaster Recovery  
DIRECTV, Inc.*

## 9/11 Remembrance and Inspiration

Members of the founding chapter from St. John’s University in Queens, NY represented the Order of the Sword and Shield at the 9/11 Tribute Center and Memorial Museum on Tuesday October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014. After a moving and informative tour of the 9/11 Tribute Center, members received a special presentation from one of the survivors of the 9/11 attacks. His heroics began after being stuck on the 70<sup>th</sup> floor of the first tower after it was hit, as he felt compelled to save his co-worker, who was confined to a wheel chair on the adjacent side of his floor. This hero

ended our tour by encouraging all of us to set goals in our lives because you never know what may happen. He urged us to work towards making a change in this world and to help people prepare for future attacks or threats on our nation. The story of this survivor was truly moving and inspirational. The words of advice he provided us and gives to others are sure to inspire future generations of Homeland Security students to set goals in their lives and to work hard to achieve each of them.

After this moving presentation, members of the Society visited the newly established 9/11 memorial museum, adjacent to the memorial fountains. A plethora of artifacts from ground zero was presented and were incredibly moving and overwhelming. One of the most massive and awe-inspiring artifacts in the museum was the “slurry wall”, which is a surviving retaining wall of the original World Trade Center that withstood the devastation of the 9/11 attack. It is an inspirational testament to survival and determination in the face of chaos and destruction. This trip truly put into perspective why we are in the field of Homeland Security and gave us a new and improved outlook on what goals we wish to pursue in our careers and in our lives.

*- Rosemary Hartofilis and Willy Gomez, Order of the Sword and Shield Ambassadors.*

