

TIEMS 2014 USA Conference

The conference was hosted by the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and this conference marked the return of a TIEMS conference to the USA after a number of years since the last conference of TIEMS in Washington D.C. in 1998 and a workshop same place in 2003. Attendees and organizers agreed that the conference was a great success – high-quality presentations, attendees from ten countries fully engaged in great discussions and networking, and a friendly, relaxed atmosphere to enjoy each other’s company in the hospitable Southern USA!



Group photo during the conference

Five prominent keynote speakers set the stage for in-depth discussions of the many dimensions of the conference theme: “Global Response for Capacity Building of Disaster Preparedness”. K. Harald Drager (Norway), TIEMS President, explained the driving force behind the conference - TIEMS’s mission to contribute to building resilient societies worldwide. Dr. Guosheng Qu (China), TIEMS Vice President, challenged us to participate, telling us how USA institutions, organizations, and industries can help third-world nations become better prepared. Kay Goss (USA), CEO for World Disaster Management, provided her unique perspective on how emergency management has evolved over the last ten years, and where it is headed in the next decade. Lt. Col. Martin Thomsen (Denmark), Chairman of Sahana Software Foundation, gave us a dose of reality from his recent experience with on-the-ground international relief efforts, and also led us in a Q&A session that left us wishing we could go on for a few more hours! Brent Woodworth (USA), President and Chairman of Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Foundation, shared his extensive experience and insight into global crisis relief, particularly engaging the substantial resources of global corporations.



Keynote Speaker Martin Thomsen



Keynote Speaker Brent Woodworth

And of course, the keynote presentations were just the beginning – the rest of the conference papers were truly high-quality and stimulating, covering a remarkable range from theory to practice, specialist to activist, and technology to politics. See the TIEMS website library to read the papers and presentation materials from the conference.

A particularly important goal of the conference was to establish the first TIEMS USA Chapter. We were extremely pleased to assemble a founding Board of Directors with eight very capable and energetic members: Kay Goss (President), Brent Woodworth (Vice President), Connie White (Secretary), Tom Robertson (Treasurer), Jim Hagen, Mike Martinet, Joseph Pollack, and Tom Stahr. The group is already talking about exciting opportunities and initiatives for the Chapter!



TIEMS USA Chapter President Kay Goss

The USA conference organizers were Jim Hagen, Tom Robertson, and Connie White. As local host, Connie arranged excellent facilities at the University of Southern Mississippi, an impressive tour of a local Emergency Operations Center, and some very enjoyable social functions, including a trip to New Orleans.



*The three organizers, Tom Robertson, Connie White and Jim Hagen being thanked by
TIEMS Vice President Guosheng Qu*

The conference kicked off what we expect to be growing TIEMS activity in the USA, and increased interaction between the USA and international emergency management communities. We invite you all to participate, and look forward to seeing you at the next TIEMS USA conference.