

# DRC Dispatch

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

DECEMBER 2011

## A Note From The Director

Dear DRC Staff, Alumni, and Friends,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the DRC Dispatch! We anticipate publishing once in each fall and spring semester, and to provide updates on the latest news at DRC, snapshots of past or ongoing projects, research travel, and other items that we hope will be of interest to anyone with a connection to DRC.

We hope that this newsletter will reach the entire DRC extended family, broadly construed as everyone who worked or studied here in any capacity from initial establishment through the present. If you see any DRC folks who have not received the Dispatch, please ask them to send us their contact information. We are also on Facebook and Twitter.

It has certainly been busy here the last few months. We felt the Mineral, Virginia earthquake strongly on campus; the Center swayed noticeably, first with pictures trembling on the walls and then building up momentum, accompanied by the noise of walls and the suspended ceiling quivering. Dr. Ben Aguirre and Dr. Lucia Velotti, a research assistant and student in public policy, have been conducting a survey of earthquake experiences and perceptions on campuses around the area. Yvonne Rademacher and Alex Greer, graduate students in the Disaster Science and Management program, and Laura Keeley, a historic preservation graduate student, traveled to Virginia and to Washington on a reconnaissance trip. Alex and Yvonne also traveled to Japan, completing a second NSF-funded reconnaissance trip to the area affected by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami, gathering information on volunteers, interorganizational coordination, non-profit organizations, and other topics that we hope will form the basis for a more intensive study.

Most recently, and on a lighter note, I'm pleased to say that we participated in the University of Delaware spirit photo contest... and placed first in the "People's Choice" category! The DRC was featured at the university's Spirit Day activities, part of the homecoming weekend celebration. It was unusually cold, and I for one was glad to receive a foam UD crown, which I wore for warmth. Organizing the photo shoot and the production process was spearheaded by DRC's cadre of resourceful graduate students, and we thank everyone who voted for us.

Meanwhile, we hope you'll enjoy this first issue of the Dispatch, and we'll look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

James Kendra



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**DRC is now part of the UD Royal Family!**

## Past Experience by Dr. Russell Dynes and Dr. Enrico Quarantelli

The following experience is from Professor Emeritus Russell R. Dynes.

“During World War II, I built a pipeline from India, through Burma over the Himalayas into China with the help of several national armies. Travel for academics is more difficult, but I found the Fulbright Program useful. When the DRC was first starting, I went to Egypt and spent time at the United Nations Arab States Fundamental Center. In 1971, I lectured at many Indian Universities, as well as Pakistan and Nepal, and organized an All India Disaster Conference at Patna, Bihar.

In 1998, I was at the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center in Thailand and

organized a U.S.-South Asia Conference on disaster.

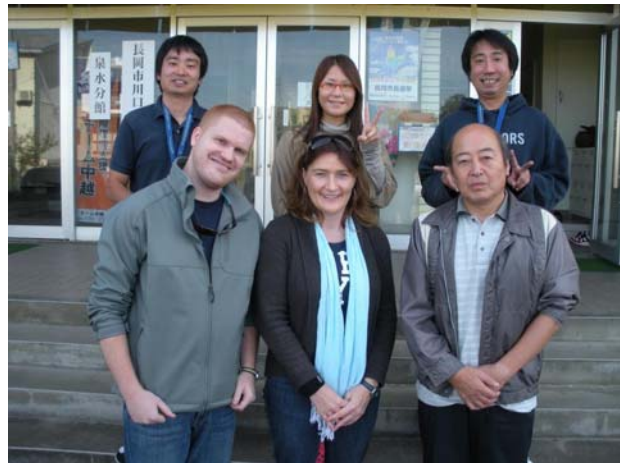
I also spent a semester at Cardiff University, Wales and did field work for the DRC in Japan, Mexico, Iran and Curacao. I estimate I have lectured or attended conferences in over 40 countries.

While there are important personal learnings from such travel, there are also institutional consequences; which provide world wide awareness for the activities of the DRC which lead to visits and stays from others around the world which universalizes the study of disaster.” ~ Russell R. Dynes



## Field Notes

DRC research assistants and Disaster Science and Management program graduate students Alex Greer and Yvonne Rademacher recently returned from a reconnaissance field visit to Japan. From October 31- November 6, Rademacher and Greer joined Takumi Miyamoto in areas impacted by the March 11, 2011 disaster. Their focus was on volunteer organization, coordination, and emergence. Here, they are joined by members of a long term recovery organization



DRC researcher and doctoral student Rochelle Brittingham presented on evacuation and sheltering concerns for people with access and functional needs in a session on Disaster & Disabilities, at the The 10th European Sociological Association Conference in Geneva, Switzerland.



## From their corner of the world.....



Here at the DRC, we have had the extreme pleasure of meeting, interacting, and hanging out with many wonderful people from all around the world. When they leave, it feels as though part of our global family is missing. So, we have asked them to write and let us know how life is with them, after returning to their homes.

"After more than 24 hours of flight, finally I returned home on 3rd September. I feel happy and excited to see my family members and my old friends. Now, I am working on my Ph.D dissertation and doing some research for my center. And, I am on a project which focuses on high-speed road system reactions to snow storms. That's very interesting, because I had some relevant experiences when I was at UD last year.

Anyway, I miss you guys so much and keep in touch.

My best wishes, Top." (Tao Peng, Nanjing University, China).



"I was at DRC from March to June 2010. My stay was a significant experience, both personal and scientific. For my research objectives it was of paramount importance, namely in terms of theoretical learning on the sociological aspects of disasters; but also in terms of network building and bibliographical research. Coming back to my country, I felt that I had not only consolidated, but also expanded my knowledge. Already in Portugal, I have been invited to pre-

sent research in Lisbon on resilient cities, and I had the opportunity to spread what I learned from the DRC research team. I continue now developing my work in connection with DRC, I still continue to rely on the same quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of Dr. Benigno Aguirre and Pat Young. Thank you.

Sincerely, Carmen Diego Concalves."



I am a third year Ph.D. student in Civil and Environmental Protection at the Università Politecnica delle Marche (UNIVPM) at Ancona, Italy.

The aim of my research is to study climate change scenarios in the Marche Region (central Italy) in order to identify possible strategies for the local emergency management agencies to achieve the goal of hazard reduction. I have organized the research into three main sections: (1) Analysis of climate trends (precipitation and temperature) at the local scale, (2) Climate change risk perception and strategies for risk prevention and vulnerability reduction, and (3) Construction of impact scenarios and definition of strategies of action useful for local civil protection.

During the time spent at the DRC I mainly focused on climate change risk knowledge and perception. Taking advantage of the Disaster Research Center's inter and multi disciplinary approach I developed a new analysis of perception data collected in Italy in 2010. As a matter of fact, with the support of the experienced DRC scientists I decided to concentrate my data analysis not only on climate change risk knowledge and perception but also on information and communication exchange among citizens, institutions and emergency managers.

This new direction of research has opened up the possibility to analyze the existing gap between science and practice in terms of emerging climate hazards and risks. Furthermore, the possibility to observe new methods of work and access to specific resources dedicated to disasters, taught me how organize and summarize information and knowledge from different areas.

During the last two months spent at the DRC I used the available resources (books, articles, knowledge and ideas exchange) in order to define a local adaptation strategy for future climate hazards which directly involve emergency managers and citizens. The result of this last period at the DRC is the analysis of the communication channels and networks among all the players who act in vulnerability reduction, risk prevention and citizen information and awareness. Furthermore, I wrote part of my final dissertation.

After returning to Italy in November I continued to write my dissertation using all the collected information and fostering the research line identified with my DRC tutor, Prof. James Kendra.

Ciao, Federica Appriotti



## Newsletter Name winner is..... !



All votes are in .....and out of a lot of great entries and deliberation, the newsletter has finally been given a name. Eva Wilson who suggested the name, received a \$25.00 gift card to Barnes & Noble in a small ceremony held here at the DRC on Tuesday, October 18th. Thank you to all who submitted entries, and congratulations to Eva on her winning submission!



## Saying farewell for now, is never easy.



In the months of August and September, we had to say goodbye to 5 of our visiting scholars.

So until we meet again.....

From left to right:  
Takumi Miyamoto, Osaka University, Japan;  
Huang Fang, University of China, Chengdu, China;  
Shi Zhenngyi, Minzu University, China;  
Mohan Bera, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India;  
Tao Peng, Nanjing University, China.

## STUDENT AWARD

Ziqiang Han was awarded the Student Award for Best Research



Paper Presentation at the NECoPA conference in New York in October 2011. He was awarded a certificate and a check for \$250.00.

Congratulations to Ziqiang!



## Break time at the center.....



A new get away from the office and your cubicle break time was implemented for the first time here at the center called FIKA. Several of our faculty and students have traveled to Sweden over the past year or so, and they described an enjoyable tradition .....a daily break known as “fika”. At fika, which occurs at regular times, Swedes stop work and gather for coffee or other light refreshments, pastries or cookies, and relaxed conversation: a welcome short break from the routine of the workday.

Fika is in the Roundhouse, Tuesdays, at 2:30pm. Join us!

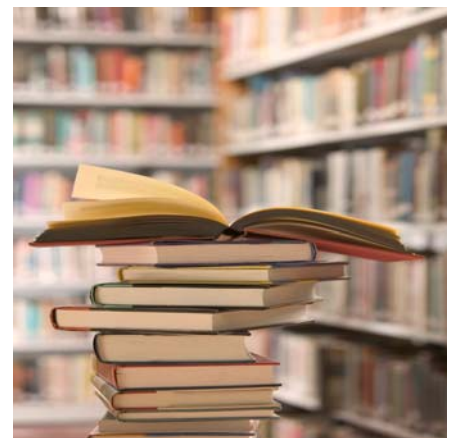


## Who's visiting the DRC now?

The DRC welcomed a new visiting scholar arriving from China on our last day before the holiday break.

Jiayang Liu is an associate professor in the school of finance and insurance at Guangxi University. He is also a doctoral student at the Southwestern University of Finance and Economics. He will be doing research on risk management and insurance

actuary. Jiayang has also brought his wife, Binmei and his son, Tianyi during his stay with us. Welcome to Jiayang Liu and his family!



## “Oh, what fun.....” DRC Holiday Gathering

Prizes in our annual door/cubicle decorating contest:

1st place: Vicky Becker.

2nd place: Lauren Clay

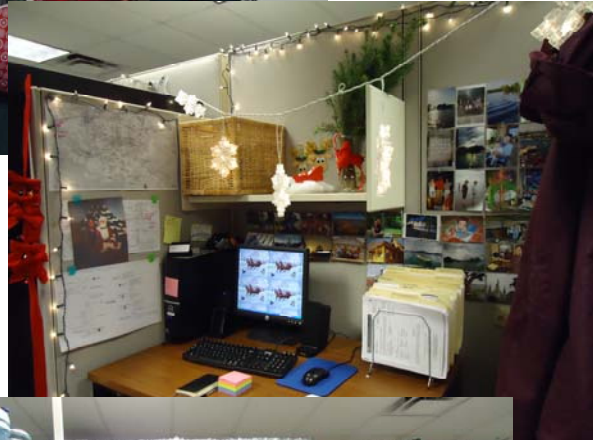
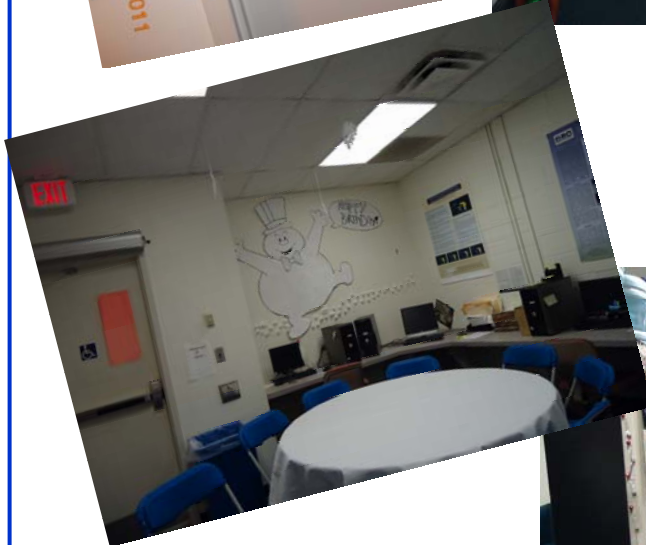
Third place: Lucia Velotti and Eva Wilson

Honorable Mention: UGrads, Austin Barlow, Caitlin Gruber

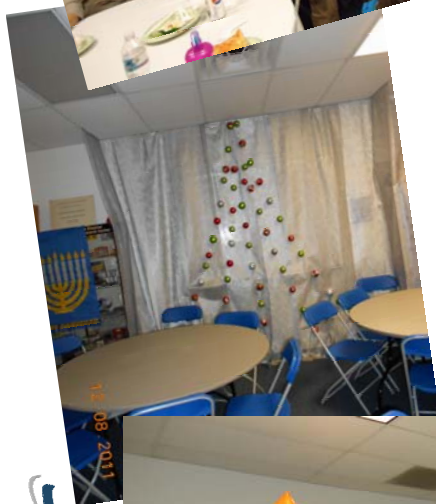
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!



*On Thursday, December 08th  
we celebrated the end of the  
semester with a holiday  
gathering.*

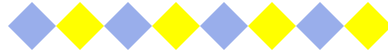








## University of Delaware's People's Choice Spirit Champions!!



This was held during UD Homecoming Week in November.





## Scholarship Recipients at the IAEM

### Scholarship Recipients at the IAEM

Kudos go out to both Ray Chang and Amy Crabill for being awarded \$5000 scholarships for 2011-2012 from the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Scholarship Fund. They received their awards at the IAEM annual meeting in November in Las Vegas, NV. These scholarships, donated by "The Emergency Information Infrastructure Project," (EIIP) an emergency management education forum, are to "promote and develop disaster preparedness and resistance by furthering the education of students studying the field of emergency management."

Scholarship applicants must demonstrate strong academic performance as well as write an essay. It's rare for students from the same institution to receive scholarships, so we are especially proud of Ray and Amy.

For more information about this IAEM scholarship program, please visit their website: <http://www.iaem.com/About/Scholarship/faqs>.



### Director Dr. James Kendra visits China



James Kendra meets with faculty from Southwestern University.

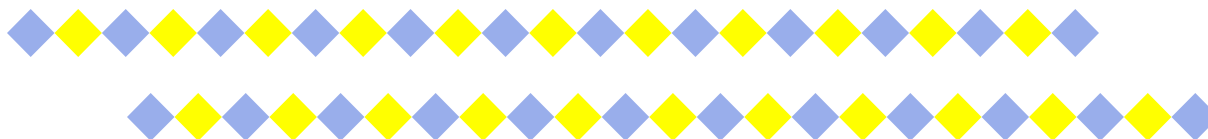
James Kendra meets with Prof. FENG Xide, Chairman of University Council, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics (SWUFE) in Chengdu, China

## In the news

Research by DRC faculty members Wachtendorf and Kendra is noted in a Huffington Post article about the 9/11 boat evacuation, authored by one of the boat operators. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jessica-dulong/the-untold-story-of-groun\\_b\\_955893.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jessica-dulong/the-untold-story-of-groun_b_955893.html)

DRC core faculty member Benigno Aguirre was cited in a Chronicle of Higher Education article on the trial of Italian seismologists  
<http://chronicle.com/article/When-Explaining-Science-Is-a/129274/>

Congratulations to Benigno Aguirre, Sherif El-Tawil, Eric Best, Kimberly B. Gill, and Vladimir Fedorov on the article "Contributions of Social Science to Agent-based Models of Building Evacuation", published in Contemporary Social Sciences, 6(3): 415-432 (2011).  
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rsoc>



## Upcoming Events:

Japan trip from January 21st to the 29th. This research trip will include the following members from the DRC: Dr. Joanne Nigg, Rochelle Brittingham, and Alex Greer. They will be conducting research for the NSF Rapid Japan Grant. Our former visiting scholar, Takumi Miyamoto will be visiting with them when they arrive.



## Disaster Research Center

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and also on  
Twitter at:  
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*Your input is always welcome! If you have any information or updates that you would like posted in the next issue, please feel free to contact the DRC or me personally.*

*Thanks for your patience!*

*Best regards and here's to a Happy, Healthy, and Safe New Year to all!!!*

*Gail Kracyla Email: prissy@udel.edu*



## In the spotlight at DRC.....

\*Early this past summer the DRC had a couple of Grad students that tied the knot.

Ray Chang and his bride Elvena Fong were married not once but 3 times! The first time was on January 31st in Fairfax, VA at a court house; the second time was a very traditional Taiwanese wedding on June 25th in China, and third celebration was on August 06th here in Washington, DC. Whew, way to go Ray and Elvena!

While Ray and Elvena were celebrating their third wedding ceremony on August 6th, another one of our Grad students and his bride got married



on that same day!

Alex Greer and his bride Delilah Frazier were married on August 06th in Johnson City, Tennessee.



Alex & Delilah



Ray & Elvena

