

For Immediate Release

#39-19

NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS CEREMONY FOR JOHN D. SOLOMON FELLOWSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE GRADUATES

May 9, 2019 — New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito and Deputy Commissioner for External Affairs Christina Farrell presided over a graduation ceremony for nine graduate students who completed the 2018-2019 John D. Solomon Fellowship for Public Service. The graduation ceremony was held Wednesday, May 8, at Barnard College. The graduates completed a nine-month fellowship at City agencies and partner organizations responsible for preparing for and responding to emergencies in New York City.

“The John D. Solomon Fellowship offers students the opportunity to serve their fellow New Yorkers and gain professional experience in the emergency management field,” **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito** said. “NYC Emergency Management is proud of the graduates’ commitment to the program, and we look forward to their success as they embark on their careers.”

The family and friends of the late John D. Solomon, an accomplished journalist who focused on homeland security and other public policy issues, established the John D. Solomon Fellowship in 2012. A devoted public servant and active member of his local NYC Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), John was a passionate advocate of emergency preparedness and resilience.

The New York City Emergency Management Department administers the John D. Solomon Fellowship for Public Service, the first student fellowship in New York City devoted specifically to emergency management. The program provides ten graduate students in the New York City area the opportunity to complete a nine-month, paid fellowship in a New York City government agency or non-profit organization. The fellows worked for City agencies and organizations including NYC Emergency Management, NYC Department for the Aging, NYPD, FDNY, NYC Department of Education, NYC Department of Social Services, and the American Red Cross of Greater NY. Through their work, the fellows gained valuable first-hand experience in the emergency management field.

“As the creator of the seminal blog, [*In Case of Emergency, Read Blog – A Citizen’s Eye View of Preparedness*](#), John D. Solomon was passionate about public service. It is deeply meaningful to John’s family and friends that this fellowship, in his name, is helping support future leaders who share his dedication to public service, especially emergency management,” **James D. Solomon**, John’s brother, said. “For anyone who has become disillusioned about government, or even worse cynical, meet a John D. Solomon Fellow. They will restore your faith.”

During the nine-month fellowship program, fellows represented their respective agencies at community and local government meetings, undertaking various individual and agency-directed

projects. They also organized and participated in community service projects that worked toward enhancing the preparedness and resilience of their agency, and ultimately, New York City.

“The John D. Solomon Fellowship offered me the opportunity to experience public service and the life-changing impact it can have on those we serve. It was through the fellowship’s support and mentorship that I learned I wanted to commit my life to assisting others,” **Shannon MacColl**, Solomon Fellowship alumna and NYS Division of Veterans’ Services director of public information, said. “It is an honor to be a part of a program and tradition like the John D. Solomon Fellowship where others are able to find their calling.”

“The John D. Solomon Fellowship provides an excellent footing for those interested in public service and emergency management. Through the fellowship, I have gained invaluable experience and knowledge both professionally and personally,” **Jani Sambavi**, a graduate of the Solomon Fellowship, said. “It was an honor to be able to a part of a one-of-a-kind fellowship where students have the opportunity to participate and learn about an aspect of life that all citizens should strive for, which is to contribute to a city that gives them the tools and freedom to be the best they can be.”

The 2018-2019 academic year marks the seventh year of the fellowship program. To date, the program has welcomed more than 50 fellows into 13 different NYC agencies and organizations, representing more than 25,000 service hours donated to City agencies. Over 50 percent of fellowship alumni have moved on to careers in New York City or New York State government. Many have also found professions with nonprofit organizations, emergency management agencies, and public service related fields around the world. To learn more about the John D. Solomon Fellowship for Public Service visit, <http://www.nyc.gov/johndsolomonfellowship>.

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