THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION, CO-LED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA IN TUCSON AND THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO, IS DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGIES, TOOLS AND ADVANCED METHODS TO BALANCE IMMIGRATION AND TRADE WITH EFFECTIVE BORDER SECURITY, AS WELL AS ASSESS THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES, IMPROVE SURVEILLANCE AND SCREENING, ANALYZE IMMIGRATION TRENDS, AND ENHANCE POLICY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS.

Education Lead
NCBSI - University of Texas at El Paso

Recent Successes

Education Needs Assessment
Dr. Gail Rioux and Dr. Cristina Ramirez, two researchers from NCBSI, are conducting an Education Needs Assessment of DHS agencies and their personnel in order to determine relevant curricula for the Education Program, which will be established at The University of Texas at El Paso. The education program will include certificate and degree programs in homeland security and will serve to introduce students at the university level to pathways in careers in homeland security. The research team has been traveling across the country to survey agency personnel from the Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Citizenship and Immigration Services, and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The response to the survey has been high. For example, TSA management personnel have been supportive and enthusiastic at every TSA office visited. They have actively participated in the surveying process by providing it to a large percentage of employees at each airport visited. This high-volume response has added to the strength of the assessment, likely making the assessment accurate and relevant to DHS.

Through the survey process, the researchers are gaining a greater understanding of DHS goals and needs with regards to the education of future and current personnel. TSA has been proactive by asking the researchers to tailor the survey by adding two questions. The questions ask employees to indicate whether an associate degree in homeland security would be valuable for future employees. TSA officials are very interested in the results of the survey as they develop their respective education programs. Because of the interest among TSA personnel in the progress of the survey and their own education efforts, Dr. Ramirez was invited in late September to attend and address the first class of the TSA certificate pilot program in Tucson, Arizona.

HS-STEM Academic Program
The NCBSI is proud to announce that its partner, Texas A&M University (TAMU), launched an exciting new Master of Science and a Master of Engineering Program in September of 2009. This new program is being funded by DHS under the homeland security related science, technology, engineering and mathematics (HS-STEM) program at the Office of University Programs. This graduate degree program features a two year study program which will culminate in a Master’s degree in Industrial & Systems Engineering from the TAMU Dwight Look College of Engineering, and will feature 15 hours of integrated homeland security coursework with emphasis on policy, legislative, technology and system integration issues in border security & immigration. In addition to a Master’s degree, a student will be issued a University Certificate for Homeland Security Specialization. This program contains a 3 month summer research experience, 33-36 hours of graduate coursework and a one year post-degree employment program in homeland security. The core academic partners are TAMU, The University of Texas at El Paso and the University of Washington. Details can be found at the following website: msma.tamu.edu/hs99

Upcoming Events

NCBSI Annual Review Meeting
The 1st NCBSI Annual Review will be held in El Paso, Texas on December 10-11. The COE researchers will present and discuss the progress of the Center’s research and education activities over the first year. For questions relating to the meeting, please contact the DHS Program Manager, Theophilos Gemelas, at Theophilos.Gemelas@dhs.gov
Recent Successes

U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords Hosts U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Thad Allen for Briefing on Drug Fighting Efforts at the University of Arizona BORDERS Center

On September 18th, U.S. Rep Gabrielle Giffords hosted the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, Admiral Thad Allen, at the National Center for Border Security and Immigration (BORDERS). Congresswoman Giffords organized the event to discuss federal efforts to keep drugs from entering the U.S. in order to address the rising level of violence caused by drug cartels.

A native of Tucson, Admiral Allen was in Southern Arizona to conduct an assessment of border security needs. Allen, who is Chairman of the Drug Interdiction Committee, briefed community leaders and representatives from local, state and federal law enforcement agencies on the ways various stakeholders can work together to build effective partnerships for disrupting illegal drug trafficking.

Research Lead
BORDERS - University of Arizona

Project Spotlight: Adaptive, Risk-Informed Resource Allocation

At the “tactical” level, achieving border security requires personnel to integrate a variety of intelligence data (e.g., satellite and other sensor systems) and security assets (e.g., border patrols) to detect, and then to interdict, threats to border security. In an operating environment characterized by constrained resources, these demands require a methodology for allocating resources so they can be most effective. So, how can emerging patterns in border-crossing behavior be identified and exploited to support decision-making?

The objectives of this project are to:
• understand the tactical choices and trade-offs that decision-makers must make when allocating scarce intelligence and security resources between ports of entry;
• develop methods and tools that could facilitate resource allocations by identifying emerging patterns and trends in border activity; and,
• evaluate how proposed methods and tools may make available surveillance assets and border patrols more effective at reducing risk to border security.

Achievement of these objectives will provide border security stakeholders with concepts and tools for dynamically allocating assets operating in a tactical environment.

Upcoming Events

BORDERS Annual Review Meeting

The BORDERS 1st Annual Review will be held in Tucson, Arizona on December 2-4. The COE researchers will present and discuss the progress of the Center’s research and education activities over the first year. For questions relating to the meeting, please contact the DHS Program Manager, Theophilos Gemelas, at Theophilos.Gemelas@dhs.gov

Questions/Comments

If you have any questions or comments about the DHS Center for Border Security and Immigration, please send an email to any of the following:
- University of Arizona, Executive Director – Elyse Golob, EGolob@email.arizona.edu
- University of Texas, El Paso, Managing Director – Luis Barker, LBarker@utep.edu

If you would like to be added/removed from this distribution list or have any additional questions about the Centers, please contact the DHS Program Manager, Theophilos Gemelas at Theophilos.Gemelas@dhs.gov or the Program Coordinator, Tara Duggan at Tara.Duggan@associates.dhs.gov