

Doctoral Student Makes a Difference as a Public Servant

The Office of Research and Economic Development wishes to recognize and congratulate doctoral student, **Kailash Gupta**, for his outstanding commitment to research. Gupta is completing his degree in Public Administration and Management and has a specialization in Emergency Management. As Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-PI of various disaster-based research projects, he has received an impressive number of grants and other awards for his work in a short period of time.

In 2009 Gupta secured the **Quick Response Research Grant** of \$1,900 for *Cross-Cultural Analysis of Responses to Mass Fatalities following 2009 Cyclone Aila in Bangladesh and India* from the Natural Hazards Center (NHC) of the University of Colorado at Boulder. This NSF funded award supported his research in Summer 2009 in Bangladesh and India. Students funded through the Natural Hazards Center receive hands-on field research training at disaster sites soon after an incident occurs and gather ephemeral data concerning immediate impact and response.

Another NSF funded **Quick Response Research Grant** of \$3,000 from the NHC was awarded to Gupta in 2010 for *Cross-Cultural Analysis of Responses to Sudden Catastrophic Mass Mortalities following 2010 Haiti Earthquake* to research procedures used in dealing with bodies following the 2010 earthquake. Although Gupta is the PI for this grant, NHC decided that a graduate student should travel to Haiti with a faculty member due to the magnitude of the disaster and as a safety precaution. Dr. Abdul-Akeem Sadiq, visiting assistant professor with UNT's Department of Public Administration, accompanied Gupta on the trip.

A \$40,000 NSF funded **Rapid Response Research (RAPID)** grant was given for *Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Disposition of Unidentified Bodies in Haiti*, which additionally supports Gupta's research of mass fatality management associated with the 2010 earthquake. This 2010 award was submitted in joint application with his major advisor, Dr. David McEntire, associate professor, Department of Public Administration, and Dr. Sadiq. Under the grant, the three traveled to Haiti, and Gupta will continue further research in India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Their research will provide recommendations to improve disposition of unidentified bodies following mass mortality incidents. Findings will be useful for disaster researchers, emergency management personnel, and others involved in humanitarian activities.

A first prize cash award goes to Gupta for the **2010 Essay Competition** organized by the North Texas Chapter of the **American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)**. His essay, *Cross-Cultural Analysis of Mass Fatalities Management*, reports his research findings of emergency management procedures regarding cyclone disasters with his earlier research concerning the 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka and India. ASPA is the largest and most prominent professional association in public administration; its programs and services offer knowledge, technical skills and resources to facilitate excellence in public service.

Gupta was recommended for and received the 2010 **TIEMS Rohrmann Student Scholarship**. TIEMS stands for The International Emergency Management Society. This award supports three students conducting research relevant to the aims of TIEMS and wishing to present their research in the Annual TIEMS Conference, June 8-12, 2010 Beijing. Gupta will present two papers, *A New Philosophy in EOC Design: The case of Rajasthan State of India*, and *Higher Education and Certification Opportunities in Emergency Management*. TIEMS is dedicated to developing and bringing the benefits of modern emergency management tools and techniques to society for a safer world.

Additionally, three UNT travel grants were awarded to Gupta from the Graduate School, the College of Public Administration and Community Services, and the Student Government Association for the presentation of his dissertation related paper, *Cross-Cultural Analysis of Disposition of Unidentified Bodies following Sudden Catastrophic Disasters* at the upcoming **XVII International Sociological Association's World Congress of Sociology** conference to be held in Gothenburg, Sweden, July 11-17, 2010.

Gupta's research and achievements are making significant contributions to the way emergency teams help communities affected by natural disasters. His grant record at this early juncture of his career underscores his commitment to excellence in public service. His teachers are proud of him, and we at ORED are, too! Good luck to Gupta as he travels to Haiti, China, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Sweden!