

For Immediate Release

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Trooper Completes FEMA Master Public Information Officer Program

Washington State – Completing a year-long professional development program, Trooper Will Finn, Public Information Officer for District Five in Vancouver, joins less than 70 others across the U.S. as a recognized Master Public Information Officer (MPIO).

Established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2017, the MPIO program is a three-course series to prepare senior level public information officers for an expanded role in delivering public information and warning using a strategic, whole community approach. It is the Department of Homeland Security's highest level of training and credentialing for public information professionals.

"The Master PIO Course is the pinnacle of our training for emergency public information professionals," said FEMA Emergency Management Institute Deputy Superintendent Michael J. Sharon. "It solidifies the skills they learned in our Basic and Advanced PIO courses to build seasoned communicators who are ready in times of crisis."

The program reinforces the qualities needed to lead whole community public information and external affairs programs. It provides relevant management theories and concepts and uses case studies to enhance public information as well as external affairs skill sets.

MPIO program participants work within a collaborative environment on projects with an established network of peers. Students contribute to the body of knowledge for emergency management through evaluation of leadership, group dynamics, and functional best practices of joint information centers (JICs) and by conducting peer-reviewed research resulting in a paper published by the National Emergency Training Center Library at the U.S. Fire Administration. Students spent over 200 hours in the classroom to achieve the MPIO designation.

Trooper Finn is the only trooper nationwide to graduate from the program and oversees public information, community outreach, and recruiting for the Washington State Patrol in Southwest Washington. Captain Neil Weaver, head of the WSP Office of Government and Media Relations praised Trooper Finn. "Will is an example both of a professional who does all he can do to become better at his craft and a trooper who does all he can do to better serve the public. We are proud and appreciative of his commitment and service."

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