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## Two UNH Students Win Dept. of Homeland Security Fellowships

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DURHAM, N.H. – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently announced the recipients of its newly created Graduate Fellowship Program. Among the 101 students selected from a national pool of nearly 2,500 applicants were University of New Hampshire graduate students Carolyn Girod and Clint Jenkin.

Girod is a master's degree candidate at UNH's Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space (EOS), and Department of Natural Resources. Jenkin is a doctoral student in the Department of Psychology. The students will be recognized at a reception in Washington, DC, next month.

According to DHS, the fellowship program was created to support "the development and mentoring of the next generation of scientists as they study ways to prevent terrorist attacks within the U.S., reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize the damage and recovery efforts from attacks that occur."

Jenkin is developing a scale to measure people's fear of terrorism; he will relate this fear to attitudes toward airport security, as well as other policies. "Terrorism opens a whole new area of social research," he says. "I'm excited to be part of this giant brainstorming process about national security." Girod's thesis work involves studying fire risk and carbon storage in plants – a topic with few ties to terrorism but quite relevant to homeland security in the broader sense.

"You don't often associate environmental issues with homeland security," Girod, a native of Buffalo, N.Y., says. But in her application she successfully made a connection between fire risk, which endangers people and property, and carbon storage, which slows the pace of climate change – a potential threat to future generations.

The agency charged with fire-related disaster relief, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is now a department within DHS. Despite the long-term effectiveness of fire suppression to date, the elevated risk from fuel buildup and recent outbreaks of wildfire raise

serious concerns about future fire activity. At the heart of Girod's work is the inherent "tension" in the coupled dynamics of carbon storage and fire management techniques. "The thing is, if you increase carbon storage by having more trees this presents greater fire risk, so planning for the long-term (carbon storage) could cause serious problems in the short-term (more fires)."

"This fellowship is an impressive award for Cary and an honor for the university," George Hurtt, Girod's advisor and assistant professor at EOS and Department of Natural Resources, says. "The fact that the award is for environmental research is a good indication that the new Department of Homeland Security is proceeding in the broadest sense to protect people and property now and in the future."

This fall Jenkin is conducting an initial survey on people's fear of terrorism with undergraduate students that will allow him to develop a survey he'll use to interview people who have recently flown. "I expect to find that people who are more afraid of terrorism are more willing to put up with the inconveniences that can be associated with airport security."

"The work Clint is doing could potentially affect airport security in the future," says Ellen Cohn, professor of psychology and Jenkin's advisor. "Fear of crime literature is very well established, and his work will springboard off of that. This is a whole new area."

"Clint is an exceptionally talented young researcher," adds Ted Kirkpatrick, director of Justiceworks at UNH. "Universities are now full partners with the federal government in addressing issues of safety and security in the wake of 9/11. Clint's research as a DHS fellow will undoubtedly contribute to high-level policy discussions in the nation."