



IHS NEWSLETTER

Sam Houston State University Hosts Inaugural IHS Research Symposium

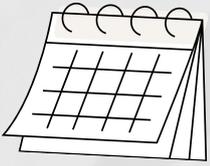
On July 30, 2025, the Institute for Homeland Security (IHS) at Sam Houston State University held its Inaugural Research Symposium at The Woodlands Center. The event brought together nearly 100 professionals, researchers, and students from across sectors to share insights and advance solutions in Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP).



The symposium focused on four key topic areas—Artificial Intelligence, Supply Chain Resilience, Emerging Threats, and Insider Threats—with thirteen competitively selected research presentations highlighting applied findings with national relevance. The event drew strong engagement from a wide range of roles in industry, academia, and government.

Participation from the Sam Houston State University Homeland Security Student Association (HSSA) added valuable energy to the event, providing students with exposure to real-world research, professional networking, and critical sector insights.

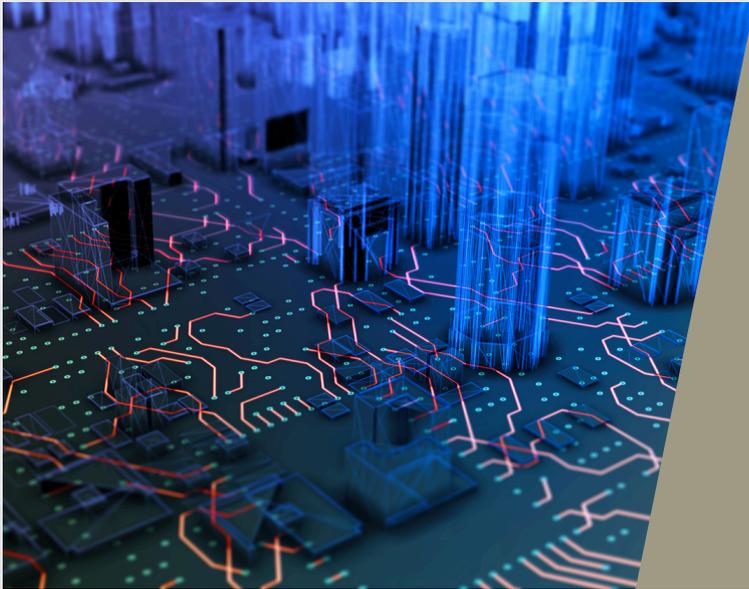
"I extend my sincerest appreciation to all those who contributed to the success of the First Annual IHS Research Symposium. My thanks go to the research presenters for their valuable contributions, the IHS leadership for their continued vision and strategic guidance, the IHS administration for their coordination and operational support, and the IHS student interns for their outstanding contributions throughout the event," Shannon Lane, PhD, IHS Program Manager II, Researcher, and Event Organizer said. "The level of professionalism, the relevance of the research, and the enthusiasm from participants exceeded our expectations. We are proud of what this event has accomplished and excited for what lies ahead." The success of this symposium sets a strong precedent for hosting another event of its caliber next year. Stay tuned for upcoming announcements and details.



RESEARCH



[Online Research Link](#)



Understanding Critical Infrastructure as Systems and Networks

Mark Scott

Critical infrastructure provides services that are essential to community health, safety, and well-being.

Infrastructure assets, systems, and networks are characterized by their connections with other infrastructure, increasing the likelihood of cascading effects if they are disrupted, but analysis of these dependencies is not often integrated into emergency planning. This paper is intended to



help private and public sector critical infrastructure protection practitioners expand their awareness of how infrastructure is connected, so they can use that knowledge to more effectively assess and mitigate risk to critical facilities. It achieves this purpose by applying network and systems science principles to explore the dependencies between infrastructure assets, examining how these connections change the risk profile of critical facilities, and suggesting actions for enhancing risk management approaches. Case studies of recent emergency events affecting Texas and other parts of the U.S. are included to demonstrate the importance of this approach. Users will be able to apply this knowledge across individual assets, sectors, and geographic scales based on available resources.

TEAM MEMBER HIGHLIGHT <<<

Julia Chialastri

Research Associate



Julia Chialastri is a dedicated scholar who began her academic journey as an undergraduate student at Sam Houston State University (SHSU), where she was selected as a Raven Scholar. She pursued her passion for criminology, biosecurity, and criminal justice by continuing her graduate studies at SHSU. After graduation, Julia transitioned into a successful career, leveraging her education and skills in data management. She brought her expertise to a Fortune 50 company, where she contributed to impactful projects in corporate strategy, mergers and acquisitions, and customer data management. She now uses her skills in Power BI to conduct research and analysis on complex projects related to critical infrastructure. Outside of her professional life, Julia is actively involved in sustainable agriculture and permaculture communities. She enjoys spending her free time playing video games with her husband and cherishing moments with her daughter.

>>> EVENTS <<<

HALL OF FAME THOUGHT LEADERS CONFERENCE

October 28th, 2025 | 8:30am to 3:00pm CT

- Sam Houston State University – The Woodlands Center
- Cost: \$49.00
- Join top minds in national security, business, and critical infrastructure protection at the IHS Thought Leaders Conference – Hall of Fame Speakers Series. This year's theme, "Are CSOs and CISOs Really Prepared for Success?" challenges conventional thinking around leadership in high-stakes environments. Speakers will talk about challenges they faced during their tenure and ways they set their organizations apart from the rest in difficult situations.

More information: [here](#)

PODCAST <<<

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER A CRISIS

WITH JUSTEN NOAKES

Grant Threatt and Robert Crane

All disasters are local. Disaster preparation often comes down to reliable information and accessible routine. This week, we chat with Justen Noakes, the Executive Director of Before/During/After and HEB's former "hurricane guy," about how an accessible and localized information hub can help small business plan, react and recover from crises. Noakes has also written a research paper for IHS on supply chain management and problem solving. We're also joined by IHS Public Sector Program Executive Robert Crane and gone-but-not-forgotten IHS transportation project manager Grant Threatt.

Listen to the Podcast: [here](#)

