The threat landscape facing our nation and world is complex, varied, and dynamic. We are facing issues like terrorism, cyber threats, climate change, supply chain disruptions, organized criminal activity, and adversarial nation states. From deliberate acts like terrorism, to inadvertent events like large ships drifting sideways in critical shipping lanes, to natural disasters like hurricanes and floods, the possible scenarios are nearly endless. We cannot do this alone or in a vacuum.

The obvious answer is by working together toward common goals, mixing tried and true solutions with innovative approaches that solve problems better, faster, and cheaper, while recognizing that there will be no simple silver-bullet solutions. The combined COE-DHS network is formidable, but if there is one thing we have all learned, it is that we need each other. We need to trust each other, we need to share information, experiences, and expertise, and we need to collaborate. We need a strong and valuable partnership with DHS at all levels, we trust each other, and we are all working towards the same goal – to keep our nation and world safer.

There are related and complementary skills and expertise at the different centers, and we should continue to leverage these skills and facilitate collaboration. It is by combining our knowledge, experience, ability, and imagination, all focused on the problems faced by DHS, that we can make a difference.

A microcosm of this approach is the DHS Center of Excellence program. This program has brought together researchers, academics, and practitioners from across the country to work on problems related to homeland security. The program has been successful in bringing together experts from different fields to work on interdisciplinary projects, and it has helped to create partnerships and collaborations that would not have been possible otherwise.

The DHS Center of Excellence program is an example of how we can work together to address the complex challenges facing our nation. We need to continue to support and expand these types of programs, and we need to continue to work together to find solutions to the problems we face.

To learn more about the CINA Scholars program, contact Deanna Austin at dau@gmu.edu. To learn more about the Virtual Hearing on Thursday, March 25, contact Dr. Louise Shelley at lshelley@gmu.edu. To learn more about the CINA Virtual Distinguished Speaker Series, contact Jiasun Li at jiasunli@gmu.edu.