



MRC ★ In Touch

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Announcements

CALENDAR

February-
American Heart Month

National Cancer
Prevention Month

2/3-2/4 -
Psychological First Aid
Training
Orlando, FL

2/6 -
National Wear Red Day

2/18-2/20 -
Public Health
Preparedness Summit
San Diego, CA

LINKS

[Medical Reserve Corps](#)

[MRC at NACCHO](#)

[Public Health
Preparedness Summit](#)

[Tar Wars Program](#)

[CNN video coverage of Be
Ready Camp](#)

Featured Article

Youth Volunteers and the MRC

Youth involvement in Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) activities was a hot topic of discussion at the Region IV MRC conference held on January 8-9, 2009. MRC unit leaders from the [Martin County MRC \(FL\)](#), [Impact Club Junior MRC \(AL\)](#), and [Project HELP MRC \(AL\)](#) provided summaries of what their units are doing to incorporate youth into their activities. These updates were followed by a lively discussion with unit leaders throughout the region.

Youth are an integral part of the Southwest Alabama Medical Reserve Corps. Junior MRC members have the motivation, knowledge, and resourcefulness that have helped to invigorate adult members of the Southwest Alabama MRC. Involvement in a MRC unit can have a positive effect on youth volunteers as well. Just to highlight one example, a teen volunteer that participated in a recent drill has expressed an interest in pursuing a career as a nurse practitioner. For those who are concerned about liability, the MRC Director highlighted the use of junior MRC members as a resource during non-emergency response related occasions, such as community-based events and mock drills.

The North Alabama Medical Reserve Corps (NAMRC) also actively uses youth in MRC public outreach events. One such event is the Tar Wars program, which uses teens to educate fourth and fifth graders around the dangers of tobacco use and encourages them to be tobacco free. The NAMRC uses the local [Health Occupations Students of America \(HOSA\)](#) students to implement the Tar Wars program and plans to establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the group to limit the unit's potential liability. NAMRC is also engaging sixth grade youth in CERT training through the Alabama Governor's Office and Department of Homeland Security's [Be Ready Camp](#). The educational program includes a mock disaster that allows students to use first responder skills to practice triage.

Tips

- Engage youth in MRC public outreach activities and any event not related to emergency response.
- Examples of community-based activities that could involve youth: increasing health literacy and disease prevention, building public health preparedness, and eliminating health disparities.

MRC/NACCHO Connections

Advanced Practice Centers

The mission of the [Advanced Practice Center](#) (APC) Program is to advance public health practice and improve local capacity to prepare for and respond effectively and efficiently to public health emergencies. Since its inception, the APC Program has earned national and international recognition. Presently, seven local health departments (LHDs) serve as innovative leaders for public health preparedness. These LHDs are tasked with developing cutting-edge models, programs, and tools for other LHDs nationwide, saving most municipalities and counties the expense and trouble of designing these products from scratch, while assuring that the materials truly serve local needs. The tools the APC sites create, along with the training they provide, including resources for Point of Distribution staff training as well as volunteer management training, are geared towards and freely available to staff working on the front lines of public health preparedness.

While a considerable number of LHDs have been addressing public health preparedness for several years now, this program highlights the work of LHDs that are widely recognized as leaders in the field of public health preparedness. The APC program provides these LHDs with a wealth of essential resources to package and disseminate their critical, unique expertise to other communities.

Announcements

Conference Poster Submission

The [2009 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness, and Response Training Summit](#) is accepting poster abstract submissions until February 6, 2009. Scholarships are available to cover the travel and lodging costs for one attendee from every eligible MRC unit. The scholarship application process will remain open until February 5, 2009. [Registration](#) for the conference is now open.

Public Health Prevention Service Application

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are requesting applications for the Public Health Prevention Service (PHPS) Class of 2009. The CDC will select 25 Prevention Specialists to participate in the class, which will begin in October 2009. The application deadline is February 15, 2009. More information can be found on the [PHPS website](#).

Notification of Capacity Building Awards

MRC units that applied for a Capacity Building Award received notification of their status on December 31, 2008. If you applied for an award and did not receive notification, please contact Justine Uhlenbrock at juhlenbrock@naccho.org.

To submit information for either MRC: In Touch or MRC: In Focus, please contact Justine Uhlenbrock at juhlenbrock@naccho.org or (202) 507-4195.

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