



# MRC ★ In Touch

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## Featured Article

### "National Preparedness Month" Activities Contributed by MRC Units Nationwide

During the month of September, hundreds of MRC units reported their preparedness activities. Below is a look at some of the unique "National Preparedness Month" activities performed by MRC units nationwide.

#### Chickahominy Regional MRC

The Chickahominy Regional MRC (VA) unit is located within close proximity to Washington, DC, nearby military and federal facilities, and two nuclear power plants. Because terrorism continues to be an ongoing threat, the MRC unit provided terrorism training to volunteers in order to prepare for an event in their community.

Five volunteers were trained specifically about explosive threats and incidents; chemical, biological, and nuclear threats and incidents; cyber-terrorism; identity theft; social engineering; and crime threat and prevention. The volunteers learned about each type and method of terrorism, how to reduce the risks, the tactics used to receive information, and prevention techniques.

The training lasted for two hours and was held at the MRC office. The terrorism training is taught each year as part of the unit's core competencies for volunteers. The volunteers who attended were both very excited and positive about the information provided.

#### Yale/New Haven MRC

Each year, the Yale New Haven Center for Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response spends the month of September focusing on preparedness by delivering "National Preparedness Month" messages in a fun and educational way to three delivery network hospitals within the Yale New Haven Health System.

Several Yale/New Haven MRC (CT) unit volunteers assisted at each hospital and included students from Yale University and Quinnipiac University Schools of Nursing, Medicine, and Public Health. The overall goal was to increase the level of preparedness on the part of

employees of the Health System. A “Wheel of Fortune” game was held at each hospital for participants to answer questions about preparedness. The questions were relevant and of appropriate difficulty, and encouraged dialogue at the table. Participants then received a raffle ticket to win a “go-bag” starter kit. MRC unit coordinator, Eugenie Schwartz says, “The participants loved the concept of the go-bags and enjoyed the game.”

### **Eastern Panhandle MRC**

The Eastern Panhandle MRC (WV) unit collaborated with a local Target store to promote a public awareness campaign and to increase the visibility and interest of the MRC. Joining the MRC unit and Target, were the local fire department, regional hazmat team, and the Berkeley County Office of Emergency Management.

During each Saturday of September—booths, tables, emergency equipment, and fire trucks greeted shoppers outside the Target store. Volunteers then passed out preparedness flyers and brochures about the seasonal flu, emergency preparedness, seasonal flu vaccination information, and more to shoppers. In addition, mini first aid kits, hand sanitizer, adult emergency comfort tubes, and children’s emergency comfort bags were distributed as well.

To promote this campaign, the events were advertised in the newspaper and on local radio stations. MRC unit coordinator, Denise Ryan, says, “The event was an ideal situation to raise community awareness of the MRC and our role in the community. We shared information, newsletters, calendar of events, and also signed up a number of new volunteers (both medical and non-medical).”



## **MRC/NACCHO Connections**



### **Health Equity and Social Justice**

NACCHO has been diligently working to advance the capacity of local health departments (LHDs) to tackle the causes of health inequities through public health practice and their organizational structure.

The Health Equity Campaign joins health departments and others using the PBS documentary film series *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?* in their jurisdictions to host community dialogues about health equity. It has been aired on PBS and is currently available on DVD.

The film showcases how inequalities in housing, health, jobs, and education, combined with a lack of power and control over one’s life—can result in poor health and even death.

To view a clip of the *Unnatural Causes* documentary, visit [http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/video\\_clips.php](http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/video_clips.php).

Educate your community about the root of health inequities by joining the Health Equity Campaign. If you are the first of ten people to join this campaign, you have the opportunity to receive a free DVD of *Unnatural Causes*. The DVD is to be used in the community for a public screening and training. To join this campaign and to learn more about health inequities, contact NACCHO Program Associate, Ashley Bowen at (202) 507-4282 or [abowen@naccho.org](mailto:abowen@naccho.org).

## Announcements



### **Resilience and Renaissance: Efforts to Rebuild a Healthier New Orleans**

The National Health Policy Forum recently released a report that offers a look at the city of New Orleans' public health preparedness before, during, and after Hurricane Katrina. It also explores the different ways to build a healthier New Orleans.

To view the report, visit [http://www.nhpf.org/library/site-visits/SV\\_NewOrleans09.pdf](http://www.nhpf.org/library/site-visits/SV_NewOrleans09.pdf).

### **Capacity Building Awards (CBA) Announcement**

CBA applications are currently being reviewed. Award notifications will be sent via e-mail in January 2010. The award status can also be viewed by logging onto the NACCHO Web site when you receive your e-mail. If you have questions, please visit the NACCHO Web site at: <http://www.naccho.org/mrccba>, or contact Chicquita Hairston at [chairston@naccho.org](mailto:chairston@naccho.org), (202) 507-4224.

### **2010 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit**

The 2010 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit will be held May 12-16, 2010 in Nashville, TN. The Web site address for information regarding this training event is <http://www.integratedtrainingsummit.org>.

Poster submissions are currently being accepted for the training summit through Monday, March 1, 2010 5:00 P.M. EST. For additional information, please visit <http://teams.hhs.gov/conference>.

### **Attend the 2010 Public Health Preparedness Summit**

The 2010 Public Health Preparedness Summit, "Partners in

Preparedness: Engaging a Community for a Successful Public Health Response," will strengthen and enhance the capabilities of public health professionals and other participants to plan and prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters and other public health emergencies. For more information, visit: <http://www.phprep.org>.

To submit information for either MRC: In Touch or MRC: In Focus, please contact Megan Skupien at [mskupien@naccho.org](mailto:mskupien@naccho.org) or (202)783-1376.



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