



MRC In Touch

Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

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Featured Article

Arizona Animal Emergency Response MRC Aids Pets of Homeless Families

The Arizona Animal Emergency Response MRC has participated in monthly events through Project Connect, an initiative formed to help care for homeless and near-homeless families in Maricopa County. Sponsored by the United Way, Project Connect brings together social service agencies to provide 300 to 500 families with necessary services on a monthly basis. Since 2012, MRC volunteers have cared for the attendees' pets while individuals receive their services. Volunteers also supply families with pet food when they leave the event.

As part of a nonprofit organization called Empty Bowl Food Pantry, the Arizona Animal Emergency Response MRC is part of a larger mission to offer assistance to the pets of individuals who are experiencing economic challenges, coping with health problems, or recovering from a natural disaster. The organization provides both short- and long-term assistance through relationship building and engaging in outreach to these individuals, especially after the formal disaster response period has ended. Since the Phoenix metro area has been fortunate with few weather-related incidents, community residents are eager to serve their communities however they can, and many have volunteered with Empty Bowl Food Pantry.

In addition to their work with Project Connect, the Arizona Animal Emergency Response Team MRC has participated in other events to aid the pets of the underserved in the community. They volunteer with HopeFest Phoenix, an annual event that connects uninsured, underinsured, and underserved residents with resources to facilitate long-term stability. During HopeFest 2013, the Arizona Animal Emergency Response Team MRC served over 20,000 people and distributed more than 5,000 pounds of dog and cat food.

Learn about [animal emergency preparedness](#) on MRC Train.

MRC/NACCHO Connections

Twenty-Nine Units Receive NACCHO's MRC Challenge Award

NACCHO, in partnership with the DCVMRC, has announced the recipients of the MRC Challenge Awards. Nearly 200 MRC units applied for the MRC Challenge Award and the top 29 applications were selected to receive the award. As you may recall, the awards fund projects that benefit local communities in one of four focus areas: chronic disease prevention, community resilience, mental and emotional health and well-being, and partners for empowered communities.

NACCHO would like to thank all of the units who shared their innovative ideas and applied for the Challenge Award. For those units who did not receive funding, we hope that you will seek additional funding to continue your projects. To stay updated on the progress of the Challenge Awardees' projects, be sure to visit <http://mrcnaccho.org> often. In the coming months, the website will host awardee profiles, video updates, and more.

The full list of Challenge awardees and their projects follows:

- **Adams County MRC, Quincy, IL;** 5-2-1-0 Let's Go! – Community Partnership to Reduce Obesity and Chronic Disease
- **Albuquerque-University of New Mexico MRC, Albuquerque, NM;** Public Health Action Curriculum for Teens
- **Arizona EMDR Trauma Response Network MRC, Scottsdale, AZ;** Enhance Mental Health Response to PTSD and Other Psychological Injuries
- **Ashland County-City MRC, Ashland, OH;** You Can't Stand Up Alone

- **Black Belt MRC, Tuskegee, AL**; Resilience For All: Macon County
- **Brookline Department of Health MRC, Brookline, MA**; Brookline Youth Wellness Project
- **Burlington County MRC, Westampton, NJ**; MRC as Partners in Prevention
- **Campbell County MRC, Gillette, WY**; Mind Your Community!
- **Central Georgia MRC, Macon, GA**; Standing Down for our Veterans: Operation Get Healthy!
- **Chicago Familia Latina Unida MRC, Chicago, IL**; Youth Health Service Corp
- **Colorado Muslim Society MRC, Denver, CO**; Eliminating Health Disparities within Colorado Muslim Community
- **Fort Bend County MRC, Alvin, TX**; Let's Get Physical!
- **Greater Taunton MRC, Taunton, MA**; Psychological First Aid for Families Experiencing Homelessness
- **Kansas State Animal Response Team Veterinary MRC, Wichita, KS**; My PET Plan: Pets Evacuate Too!
- **Macomb County Health Department MRC, Mount Clemens, MI**; Youth Emergency Preparedness Outreach Initiative
- **Maryland Responds MRC, Baltimore, MD**; Creative Partnerships for a Prepared and Resilient Maryland
- **Minnesota Behavioral Health MRC, St. Paul, MN**; Psychological First Aid for Youth
- **Mississippi Gulf Coast MRC, Gulfport, MS**; He Hits You Because He Likes You: Early Intervention for Unhealthy Relationships in Grade School
- **New Orleans MRC, New Orleans, LA**; Preparing At-Risk Populations for Emergencies
- **Niagara County MRC, Niagara Falls, NY**; Energizing Partnerships to Advance Support Networks for Breastfeeding Mothers
- **Norfolk County 7 MRC, Needham, MA**; Clearing the Air: Empowering Nail Salon Owners and Workers for Better Health
- **NW Missouri MRC, St. Joseph, MO**; MRC: Educating Individuals, Encouraging Positive Mental Health Outcomes
- **Rhode Island MRC, West Greenwich, RI**; Naloxone and Overdose Prevention Education Program
- **Skagit County MRC, Everett, WA**; Coming Home to Health!
- **Southwest New Mexico MRC, Silver City, NM**; The Southwest Mental Health Net
- **Tarrant County MRC, Fort Worth, TX**; Fathers to Dads: Empowering Teen Fathers through Mentoring
- **Tri-County MRC, Aledo, IL**; Keeping the Faith-Community Preparedness
- **Tulalip Tribes MRC, Tulalip, WA**; Tulalip Bay Wellness Trail: Developing a Path to a Healthier Future
- **Woodford County Health Department MRC, Versailles, KY**; Step by Step to a Healthier Woodford County Through Square Foot Gardening

[Learn more](#) about this year's Challenge Award recipients, and view [press coverage](#) of the Challenge Award.

Announcements

Learn about Partnerships, Coalitions, and Volunteers in Disaster Response at the 2014 Preparedness Summit

NACCHO and the DCVMRC are two of the partners hosting this year's Preparedness Summit, which will take place April 1-4 in Atlanta. This year's Summit schedule is packed with a wide-array of sessions that provide learning opportunities for professionals working in all aspects of preparedness. Of particular interest to MRC attendees may be sessions focusing on partnerships, coalitions, and volunteers in disaster response that highlight innovative approaches to engaging volunteers, forming unlikely partnerships, and mobilizing coalitions to meet community preparedness needs and respond effectively in a disaster. Learn more about [these sessions](#), and [register now](#) for this year's Summit.

Encourage Youth in Your Community to Apply for FEMA's Youth Preparedness Council

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is seeking applications for its Youth Preparedness Council, a unique opportunity for youth leaders to serve on a highly distinguished national council and participate in the Youth Preparedness Council Summit. Youth leaders will have the opportunity to complete a self-selected youth preparedness project and to share their opinions, experiences, ideas, solutions, and questions regarding youth disaster preparedness with FEMA leadership and national youth preparedness organizations.

Any individual between the ages of 12 and 17 who is engaged in individual and community preparedness or who has experienced a disaster that has motivated him or her to make a positive difference in the community may apply to serve on the Youth Preparedness Council. Applications are due no later than Feb. 24 at 11:59PM EST. Learn more about the [Youth Preparedness Council](#).

Free Books for Children in Your Community

NACCHO is partnering with FirstBook in an effort to provide thousands of new books, at no cost, to public health leaders and health educators that serve low-income children. FirstBook offers quality reading materials that encourage young readers to be physically active, see their doctor for checkups, and make lifestyle choices that will help them grow into healthy and successful adults. MRC units can distribute these materials to children in their communities. The books are free and can be shipped to your location for \$0.45 for each book. Visit FirstBook's [website](#) to learn more and to register.

HAM Radio Webinars Announced

In preparation for the HAM radio examination that NACCHO is offering at the 2014 Preparedness Summit, NACCHO is providing free training opportunities to help you learn more about HAM radio. NACCHO will be hosting a series of webinars designed to educate the preparedness community about HAM radio and prepare them for the examination. In addition, NACCHO is hosting an in-person 'HAM-Cram' review session the night before the examination at the Summit to ensure your success! The webinars will be recorded and made available after airing. Register now for these free webinars:

- Webinar 1: Introduction to Amateur Radio and Preparing for the Examination (Wednesday, Feb. 5 from 4-5pm ET)
- Webinar 2: Amateur Radio Safety, FCC Rules, Antennas, Station Setup and Operations (Wednesday, Feb. 19 from 4-5pm ET)
- Webinar 3: Frequencies, Operating Practices, Public Service Communications (Wednesday, March 5 from 4-5pm ET)
- HAM-Cram: Preparedness Summit 2014 (Wednesday, April 2)
- Examination: Preparedness Summit 2014 (Thursday, April 3 from 12-4pm)

[Read more](#) about the HAM radio events planned at the 2014 Preparedness Summit.



The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local public health departments.

1100 17th St, NW, 7th Floor Washington, DC 20036
P 202-783-5550 F 202-783-1583

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Please contact Alyson Jordan, NACCHO's MRC Communications Specialist, with any questions or suggestions for the newsletter at 202-783-5528 or at ajordan@naccho.org.