



# MRC In Touch

Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

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## Featured Article

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### The Tulalip MRC Readiness and Resilience Preparedness Program

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers and units represent the broad diversity of our nation. Whether it is supporting a major urban city, one of the U.S. territories, a small rural town, or a tribal community, the strength of the MRC is its flexibility to support the unique needs of the communities it serves. The NACCHO MRC Challenge Award supports the diversity of MRC units by providing funds for MRC units to identify a community need, develop goals and objectives to address the issue, and provide opportunities to develop and build the capabilities of their volunteers.

In March 2016, the Tulalip MRC in Washington state received an MRC Challenge Award for its readiness and resilience project, titled “Rediness & Rezilience,” which sought to provide a comprehensive preparedness program for its community members. The goal of the “Rediness & Rezilience” project was to give participants the tools and knowledge to be self-sufficient and resilient during times of reduced accessibility to resources.

The Tulalip tribal community was still distressed by the after-effects of a teen mass shooting that took place in 2014, when Sandy Evans, MRC Unit Coordinator, submitted the “Rediness & Rezilience” project proposal. Considerable opportunities for recovery – emotional and otherwise – had been offered by the tribal administration and this project helped address the missing component. One of the goals of this project was to engage the community members in tangible and physical hands-on emergency preparedness trainings that could inspire self-confidence and strengthen their foundation for recovery. The Tulalip “Rediness & Rezilience” program also took the unique approach of providing cultural awareness, along with emergency preparedness for the entire reservation population, not just the tribal members. Of the approximately 10,000 residents on the reservation, about one quarter are enrolled tribal members; the rest are a very diverse population with multiple ethnicities, socioeconomic levels, and many non-tribal with tribal connections. This program provided an opportunity for neighbors to meet and share the common goal of a being a prepared and resilient community.

Participants in the “Rediness & Rezilience” program commit to a 20-hour program of varying configurations (for example: 5 three-plus hour classes and a 5-hour disaster scenario training exercise). Topics of the classes include the Incident Command System, Medical Operations, Light Search and Rescue, Disaster Psychological First Aid, Fire Suppression, Terrorism, and Tactical Communications. During the disaster scenario training exercise, participants react to a variety of scenarios and practice their learned skills such as triage, providing first aid to victims, cribbing and lifting, carrying patients, and conducting search and rescue both inside and outside of buildings. The MRC volunteers help create a realistic training environment through the use of moulage and serving as victims or role playing during the scenarios.

When Sandy Evans started her first set of classes, her long-term goal was to make the program self-sufficient. The initial class in 2015 was conducted using outside subject matter experts with newly trained MRC volunteers participating in the training and using equipment borrowed from the county. During the second set of classes in the spring of 2016, the trained MRC volunteers took the lead and taught the course content. By the fall 2016 course, many of the supplies and equipment requirements were purchased, with all necessary equipment purchases to be finalized by spring of 2017. Currently, the Tulalip MRC is conducting its fourth round of classes and the popularity of the class has resulted in wait lists, enthusiastic support from Tribal Leaders, and participants from across the reservation.

Sandy and the Tulalip MRC volunteers continue to strive to improve the readiness of their community. With each round of classes, they explore new topics to include and build on the strength of their participants, such as adding ham radio instruction, which may be the sole form of communication in an area prone to power outages, and adding emergency preparedness topics such as planning for pets. Sandy, who is a volunteer MRC Coordinator, now looks to the future and planning for her eventual retirement. She has begun building relationships with the tribal health clinic and exploring opportunities to collaborate and provide mutual support. Through the “Rediness &

Resilience” program, Sandy and the MRC volunteers have provided a solid foundation for their tribal community and empowered them to be resilient and ready to respond to disasters.

## MRC/NACCHO Connections

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### Participants selected for the 2017 MRC Leadership Summit

With 115 participants selected this year, attendees are representative of the diversity of the communities they serve and the MRC network. Additional demographic information of the participants can be found [here](#). NACCHO, through a cooperative agreement, works in partnership with the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Program, in offering eligible MRC Unit Leaders the opportunity to attend the annual Preparedness Summit and MRC Leadership Summit. This competitive funded training invitation is intended to provide in-depth leadership training on some of the newest MRC tools and resources, build connections among MRC leaders and program partners, and better enable MRC units to achieve their local missions.

### MRC Core Competencies Assessment Tools Available

Two new assessment tools are now available in the NACCHO MRC Toolkit. The MRC Volunteer Self-Assessment tool and the MRC Volunteer Assessment tool provide MRC Unit Leaders with options to capture their volunteers’ self-assessment, training classes, and gather individual and unit metrics on volunteer capabilities. Go to the NACCHO Resources Toolbox and select Medical Reserve Corps Toolkit to find the [MRC Volunteer Core Competencies Assessment Tracking](#) tools.

## Announcements

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### Kent County MRC Supports Local Preparedness Program for People with Access and Functional Needs

The Kent County Health Department in Michigan partnered with the Kent Regional Inclusive Community Coalition (RICC), Kent County Emergency Management, the American Red Cross, the Kentwood Fire Department, Kent County Medical Reserve Corps, and the Salvation Army to design a free preparedness program for people with disabilities. This program was developed not only to promote resilience in people with disabilities, but also to train first responders in reaching people with varying mobility, sensory, and cognitive disabilities. Another aim was to identify people within the program to become peer trainers in future program offerings. Click [here](#) to see the full story.

### Planning for Unaccompanied Minors in Shelter Operations

Shelters should be adequately prepared to receive, serve, and supervise unaccompanied minors during an emergency until minors can be received by authorities or their parents/guardians. This issue brief provides information for local health departments and their emergency planning partners about the effects of disasters on minors and tips on how to plan for unaccompanied minors in shelters. [Learn more »](#)

### Help is a Click Away: The MRC TRAIN Support Desk

MRC TRAIN, part of the TRAIN Learning Network, offers Medical Reserve Corps volunteers access to thousands of trainings in a single online location and unit leaders with a host of administrative tools that allow them to promote volunteer training opportunities, direct volunteers to specific training, track volunteer training, and report on training data. Tools included in MRC TRAIN cover setting up in-person training, developing pre- and post-tests, gathering evaluation data, creating training plans, and much more.

While the functionality of MRC TRAIN may seem daunting, the MRC TRAIN Support Desk is set up specifically to help! The MRC TRAIN Support Desk has aided units in creating training plans, registering volunteers, posting unit orientation information, and finding possible trainings. The MRC TRAIN Support Desk can be reached via email at [mrcsupport@train.org](mailto:mrcsupport@train.org) or by phone at 202-218-4426.

### NACCHO Report: Vector Control Assessment in Zika Virus Priority Jurisdictions

NACCHO, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has released a summary of

findings evaluating vector control capacity across 10 Zika Virus (ZIKV) priority jurisdictions.

NACCHO and the CDC compiled findings and implications, aiming to further advance local health department vector control and ZIKV response planning. Collectively, the responses illustrate that mosquito control programs, expertise, activities, and financial resources are highly variable throughout the 10 jurisdictions. See the [“NACCHO Report: Vector Control Assessment in Zika Virus Priority Jurisdictions”](#) for more information.



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

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