



# MRC In Touch

Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

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[www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)

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## Featured Article

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### Preventing Chronic Diseases in Richmond, VA

Author: Amy Bowsher, NACCHO intern

In Richmond, VA, those living in neighborhoods that are considered food deserts encompass more than 40 percent of the city's population.[1] With such food deserts contributing to food insecurity—ultimately contributing to a wide number of chronic diseases—the Richmond City MRC focused the goal of their MRC Challenge Award to addressing health concerns affiliated with just that.

The Richmond City MRC sought to provide health screenings at community events, educate individuals about nutrition, healthy habits, disease prevention, as well as help affected individuals receive necessary care. At local community events, close to 100 MRC volunteers held more than 90 individual screening events for blood sugar, cholesterol, height, weight, and BMIs. To improve access to healthy food options in their community, the MRC also engaged local partners—like the Richmond Healthy Corner Stores Initiative (RHCSI) a partnership between Richmond City Health District, local farmers and corner store owners working together to bring fresh produce into neighborhood markets.

Through health screenings held in partnership with RHCSI and the Resource Centers (satellite RCHD locations within public housing neighborhoods), volunteers were able to educate their community about making healthy lifestyle choices. Participants in the health screenings received guidance on what to eat, and where to buy it, as well as information on preventing obesity, diabetes, and other chronic lifestyle-related conditions. When the health screenings identified community members who needed further health care, the program referred them to affordable care providers. A number of beneficiaries accessed treatment through these referrals channels.

The MRC unit successfully developed a community resource guide and helped educate and connect community members to health resources. Their program actively works to support “Virginia’s Plan For Well-Being” which seeks to improve population health in Virginia by 2020 through expanding community resources, preventative actions, and access to care providers.

1 Food Policy Task Force. (2013). *Office of the DCAO-Human Services City of Richmond*. Retrieved January 12, 2018, from [http://www.richmondgov.com/ProjectFoodPolicyTaskForce/documents/FPTF\\_ReportJuly2013.pdf](http://www.richmondgov.com/ProjectFoodPolicyTaskForce/documents/FPTF_ReportJuly2013.pdf)

## MRC/NACCHO Connection

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### 2017 Network Profile of the MRC is now available!

NACCHO recently released the 2017 Network Profile of the MRC! Thank you to the 769 MRC unit leaders for informing the latest comprehensive snapshot of the MRC network. We encourage you to use the report and resources below to become more knowledgeable about the network and your peers and see the impact of the MRC network across the nation;

- Electronic version of the 2017 Network Profile of the MRC: [https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/NACCHO\\_MRC-2017-Report.pdf](https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/NACCHO_MRC-2017-Report.pdf)
- Standalone infographics and info-snapshots: <http://bit.ly/2017MRCNetworkProfile>
- An interactive data visualization site summarizing the major components of the data: <http://legibledata.com/naccho/live/report2017/>
- The "Findings from the MRC Network Profile" webinar [recording](#) and [slide deck](#).

To help you use the Network Profile and resources developed, NACCHO has created this [how-to-guide](#) so your unit can share the great work the MRC network and your volunteers are doing. For any questions about the Network Profile, please email NACCHO's MRC Team at [mrc@naccho.org](mailto:mrc@naccho.org).

## Announcements

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### APHA: Call for Abstracts is now OPEN

The American Public Health Association (APHA) is now accepting abstracts for the APHA's 2018 Annual Meeting & Expo scheduled to take place in San Diego, CA, Nov. 10-14. The deadline to submit abstracts for this year's meeting ***Creating the Healthiest Nation: Health Equity Now*** is Feb 19-23. For more information about the conference and submitting an abstract, visit the conference webpage [here](#).

### Deadline Extended: Submit an Abstract for NACCHO Annual 2018

The deadline to submit an abstract for NACCHO Annual 2018 has been extended to **January 26, 2018, 5:00PM EST**. This year's conference, themed "Unleashing the Power of Local Public Health" is a great opportunity for MRC units to share their innovative, proven, or promising evidence-based practices. Submit an abstract by clicking on the following <http://www.nacchoannual.org/abstracts/>.

### MRC Toolkit - Looking for New Resources and Tools to Share

[NACCHO's Toolbox](#) is a free, online collection of local public health tools produced by members of the public health community. Users can find resources in topic specific toolkits, including the MRC Toolkit.

The NACCHO MRC Team is in the process of refreshing the MRC Toolkit and encourages MRC Units to share their promising practices and resources. Resources and tools will be vetted by the MRC Advisory Group for submission into the MRC Toolkit, with credit/authorship remaining with the submitter. This is a great opportunity to share your successes and help improve the greater MRC network. Please email us at [mrc@naccho.org](mailto:mrc@naccho.org) if you are interested in submitting a resource to the NACCHO MRC Toolkit.

### Webinar: Catastrophic Medical Surge Planning: Responding to Sheltering Needs during Hurricanes Harvey and Irma

The NACCHO Surge Management Workgroup invites preparedness and response professionals to attend "Catastrophic Medical Surge Planning: Responding to Sheltering Needs during Hurricanes Harvey and Irma," a NACCHO-hosted webinar. The webinar will take place on **Thursday, Jan. 25, from 1-2 p.m., ET**.

During this webinar, presenters will provide attendees with insights from their experiences leading sheltering activity in response to Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. Additionally, attendees will be able to describe strategies for optimizing emergency preparedness and response plans for shelter operations, identify strategies for engaging with existing and potential new partners to assist with establishing and maintaining shelters, and discuss ways in which local and state health departments can collaborate to ensure the needs of their populations. [Click here](#) to register.

### NDAFW and what MRC units can do

On January 22-28, the National Institute on Drug Abuse and National Institute on Alcohol Abuse will be hosting their annual [National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week](#) (NDAFW)! Taking part in National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week is a great opportunity for MRC units to reach teens and shatter the myths about drug abuse through science-based facts.

Want to get your MRC unit involved? There are plenty of ways to take part in National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week, including the following:

- [Plan](#) a local NDAFW event and promote it by [registering online](#)
- Provide the [Drugs: Shatter the Myths](#) booklet, and other resources, to teens for free
- Find out how much you know by taking the [National Drug IQ Challenge](#), and encourage others to do the same!
- Promote facts from NDAFW and your events on social media using the hashtag #drugfacts

For more ideas, the latest news, and a list of registered local NDAFW events near you take a quick look at the National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week website at <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week>.

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# NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

*The National Connection for Local Public Health*

[www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org)



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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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](mailto:ajordan@naccho.org).