

# Strategies for Developing working partnerships examining lessons learned from COVID 19



**Donald Brannen, PhD**  
**Nancy Carlson**



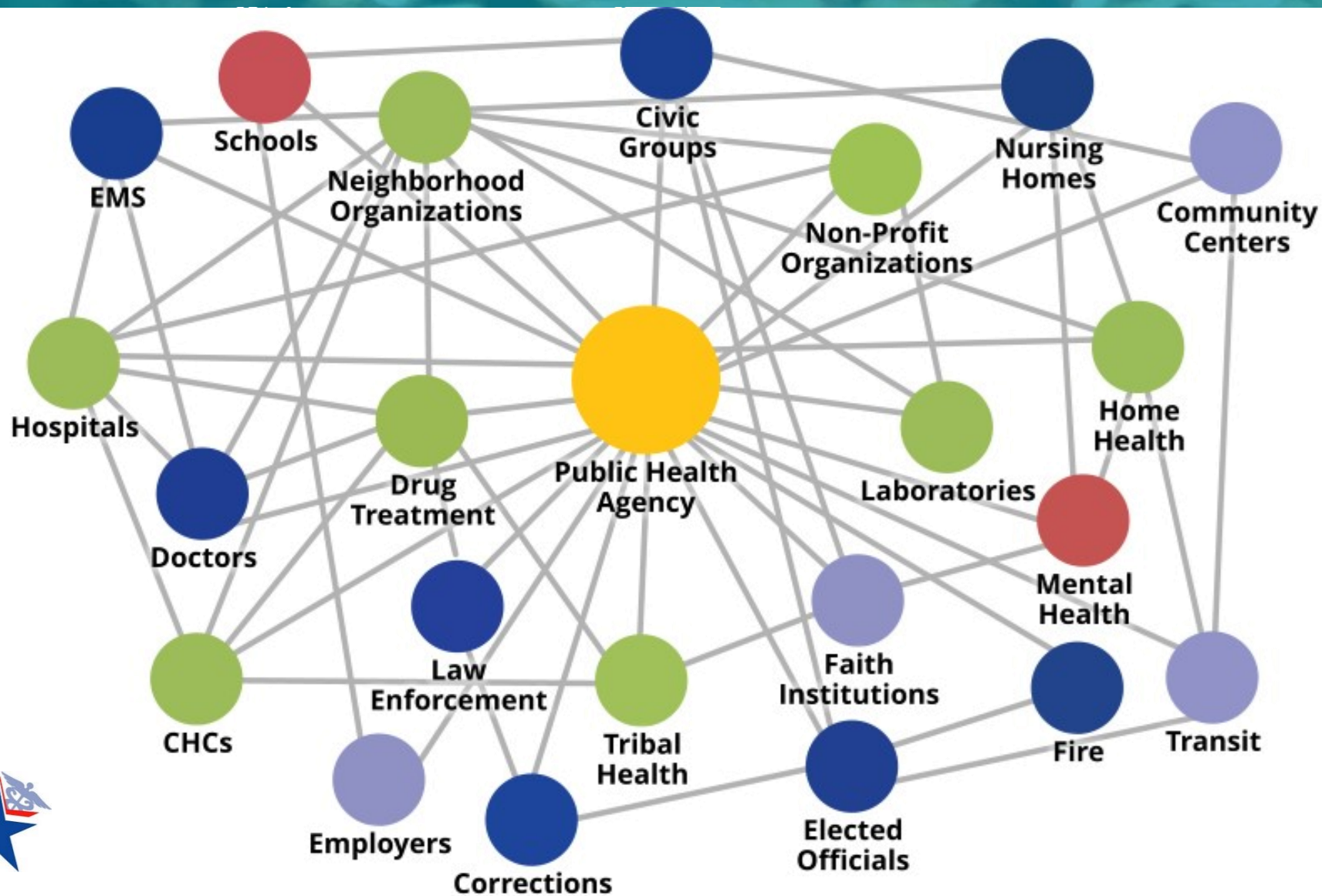
# Donald Brannen

Donald Brannen is an epidemiologist at Greene County Public Health since 2001. He investigates outbreaks and monitors the health status of the community. He holds a doctorate in public health and graduate degrees in hospital administration, epidemiology, and biostatistics, with undergraduate degrees in medical laboratory sciences and liberal arts. Prior to his current role he was a manager of global outpatient research for Hilltop Research and the Senior Study Manager at Phoenix International Life Sciences. During his current role he was an adjunct professor of Health Services Administration Graduate Program at Xavier University and Community Health at the Boonshoft College of Medicine Wright State University. Since 2003 he has served as the Greene County Medical Reserve Corps Unit Leader. He has actively managed readiness exercises and multiple MRC deployments. The unit currently has over 700 volunteers.

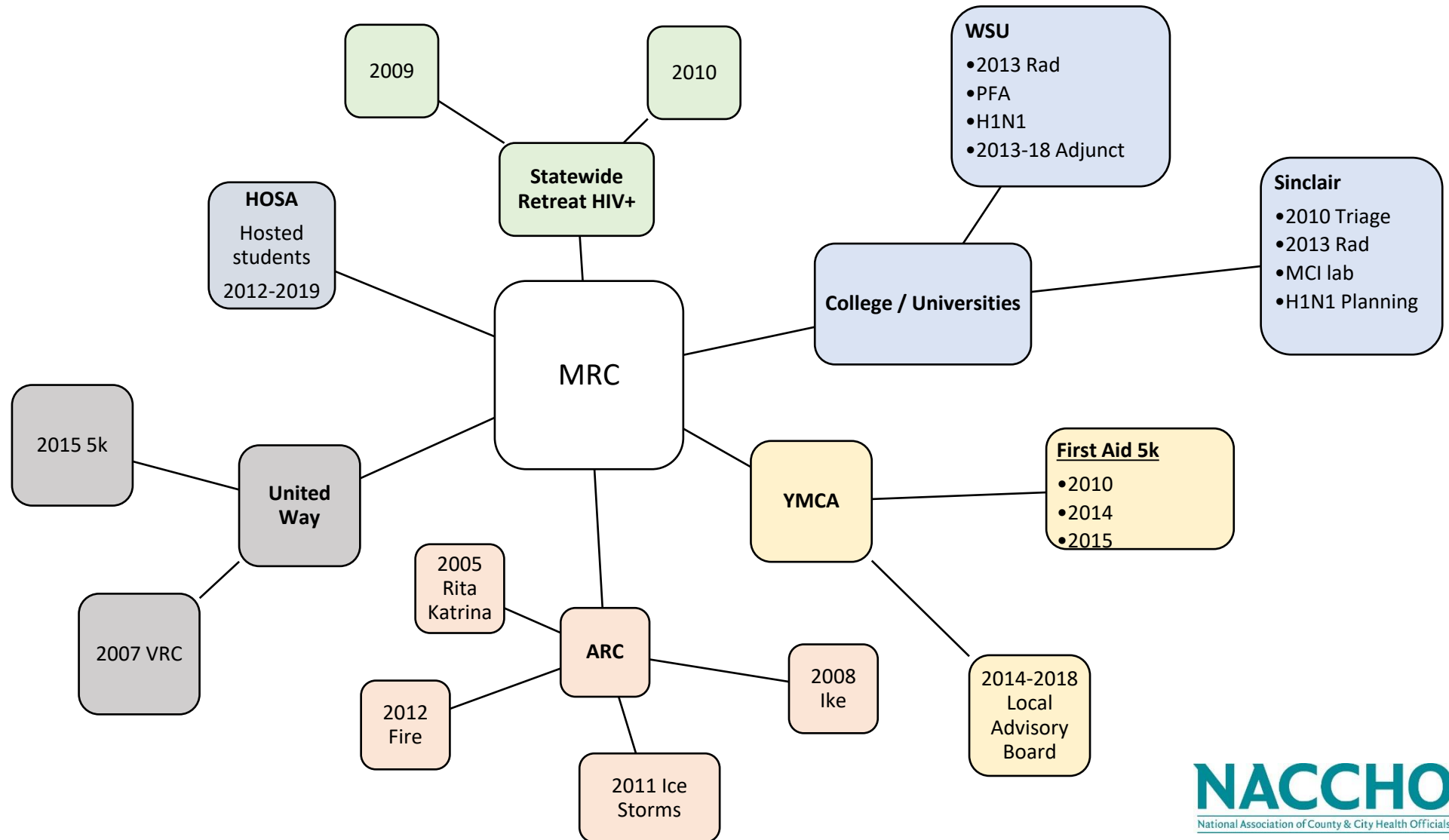
# Objectives - *Addresses relationship and stakeholders over time*

- a. Objective 1: How MRC units can establish, incorporate, maintain partnerships during blue-sky operations, and disasters with regional, state-level and non-traditional responders' partners.
- b. Objective 2 – Identify how your unit's relationship to your partners changed over the course of COVID 19
  - Did you gain new partnerships -- how
  - Did you lose partnerships -- why
  - Did the partnerships you had change – how and why
- c. Objective 3 – Unit leaders will learn to identify which partnerships and types could have beneficial in response to COVID-19 and for future missions.
- d. Objective 4 -- Assess units' level of engagement and how units can strengthen their current partnerships to be more effective in the next response.

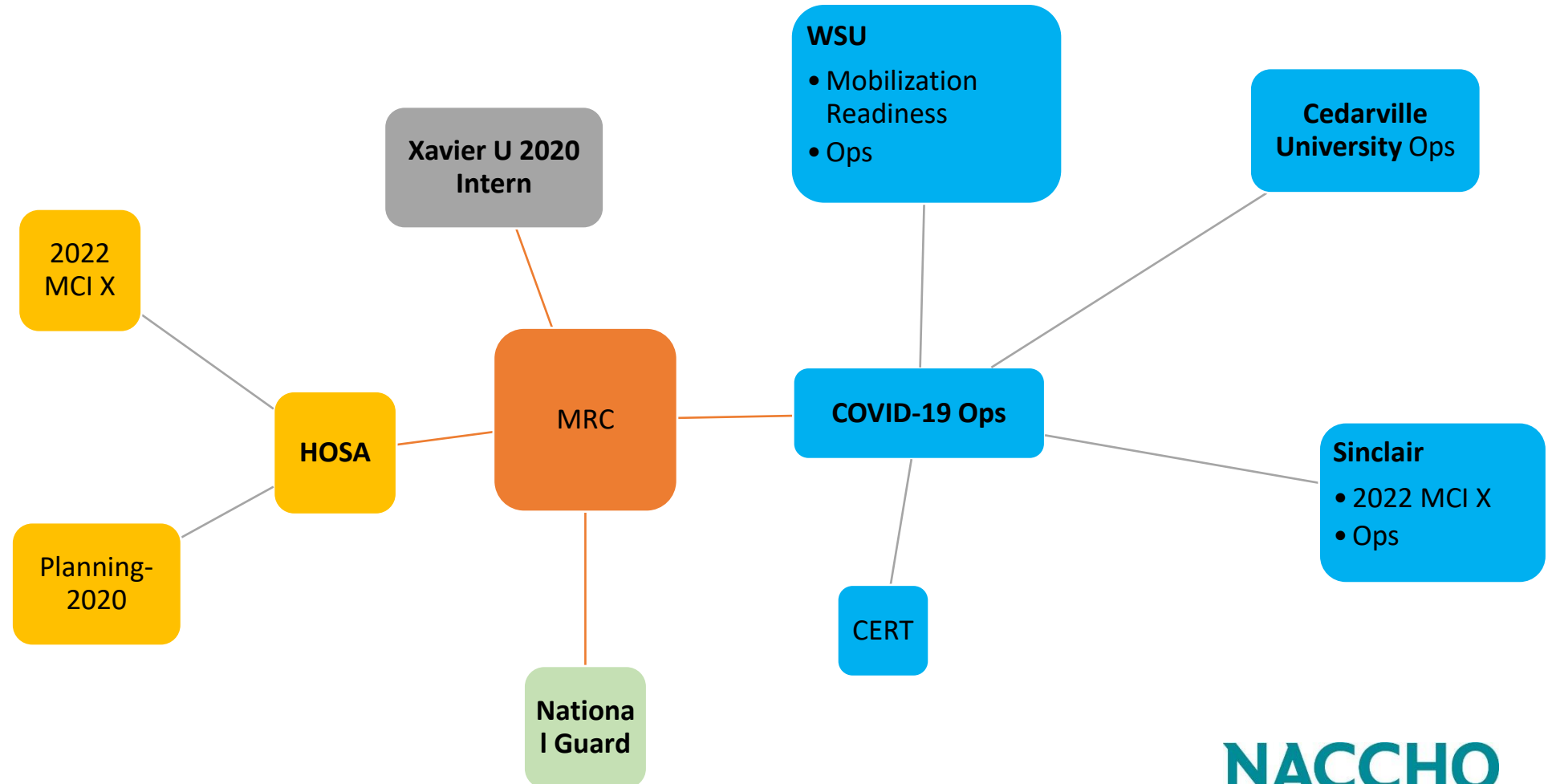




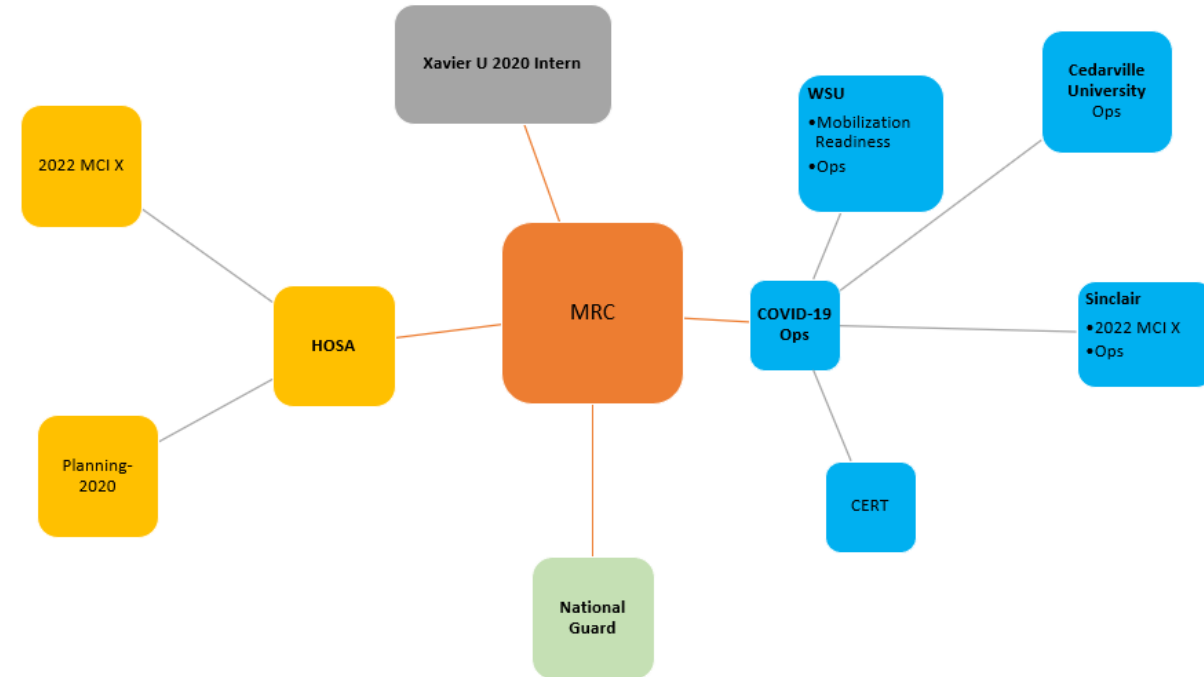
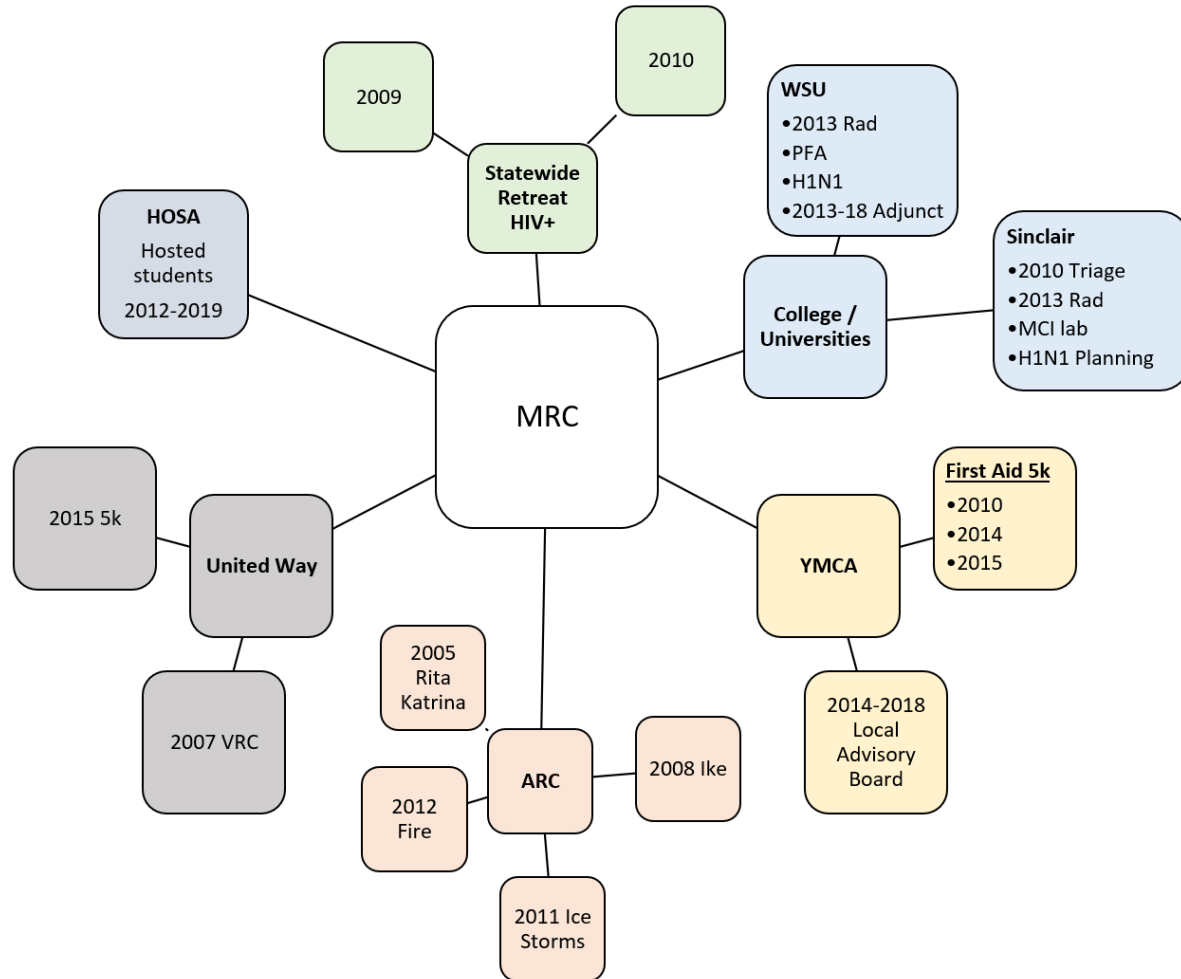
# Partnerships Before the Pandemic



# Partnerships During COVID-19



# Partnership Dynamics



# Partnerships (blue-sky (before) and red-sky (during COVID-19) operations.

## HOSA

- Preparedness
- Planning & '2022 Training – refocus post COVID'

## Colleges Universities

- Training Planning Some Ops
- Mobilization Ops & '2022 Training – refocus post COVID'

## ARC

- Non-Pandemic Disasters
- Limited Participation

## CERT

- Local Response Only (No Pandemic-MRC Partner Activity)
- COVID-19 Response

## YMCA & United Way

- Community Health – Health Promotion (e.g., 5k)
- No Pandemic-MRC Partner Activity

# How and Why Did Partnerships Change

- HOSA stopped after helping plan for pandemic MRC mobilization event unit we refocused on MCI training in 2022.
- Senior Level Nursing Students focused on supporting mock mobilization instead of neighborhood assessments. Later fully engaged in mass vaccination clinics.
- ARC sent 1 representative to each mass clinic if they had the staff, so most of our clinics did not have a ARC person onsite due to how many clinics were ongoing at once.
- CERT – a neighborhood-based group – helped fill the ranks of data entry and mass clinic support staff.
- YMCA and United Way – were busy with their own operations, and MRC too busy to help if they had community-based health events.



# Which Partnerships were Useful

## Pre-Pandemic

- HOSA
- Graduate Interns
  - Evaluations
  - Data Collection
- ARC – non-pandemic disasters
- YMCA
- United Way



## COVID-19 Pandemic

- Colleges and Universities –
  - Planning
  - Mobilization
  - Training
  - Vaccinations –  
Nurses and Medical Residents
- CERT

# Opportunities – for Greene County MRC

## Could have had Greater Benefits

- ARC
  - Large coverage area (maybe a good thing)
- Mental Health
  - MRC focused on
    - Mobilization Event
    - Just in Time Training
    - Vaccinations
    - Investigations
    - Contact Tracings
- Clinic planning – MRC Unit Leader's input at clinic design per each clinic site

## Future

- Formal internship programs –with MOU's, agreements, etc.
  - Lays the foundation of learning and capacity by providing an ongoing basis of quality improvements.
    - E.g. HOSA and XU Intern
- Healthcare Preparedness Councils
  - CMS mandated, MRC should participate
- MRC unit leaders should have option to take the Medical Countermeasures: Point of Dispensing (POD), Planning and Response MCPOD MGT-319 course or its equivalent.

# Level of Engagement and Effectiveness

- Tracking (Call-outs, Assignments, Sign in Sheets, logistics)
- Show Up – Be at coalition meetings
- Effective partnerships help address health equity
- Having a seat at community planning events helps assure social accountability
- Partnering with health education institutions helps introduce future health professionals to volunteer service.
- Understanding dynamic stakeholders needs and goals helps address structural inequalities at their root cause.

**Volunteers Want to Make A Difference!**



# Nancy Carlson

Nancy Carlson has over 30 years of experience in crisis and disaster behavioral health at the community, county, and state level. Since 2003, she has been the Disaster Behavioral Health Program Coordinator with the Minnesota Department of Health, in Emergency Preparedness and Response. In this position, she develops state-level preparedness, response, and recovery plans, administers a state-wide Minnesota Behavioral Health Medical Reserve Corp, leads a team of Regional Behavioral Health Coordinators, and provides training, education, and technical assistance to disaster behavioral health partners and stakeholders. Prior to her current position, Nancy worked in county human services with emotionally disturbed children, seriously and persistently mentally ill adults, and coordinated a multi-discipline county-wide community crisis mental health response team. Nancy is a Certified Compassion Fatigue Therapist, and Compassion Fatigue Educator. She has a BS in clinical psychology from Mankato State University, an MPhil, everything but the Ph. D. dissertation, in Human and Social Services specializing in Disaster, Crisis, and Intervention from Walden University.



# The MN Behavioral Health (BH) MRC



- BH MRC volunteers may be licensed or unlicensed mental health professionals, social workers, mental health counselors, school counselors, mental health case managers, substance abuse professionals, chaplains, psychiatric nurses, geriatric specialists, pharmacist, or they may come from a closely related community support service area.



# Partnerships Developed Pre-COVID

- Federal Agencies (SAMHSA, CDC, FBI Victims Assistance, USDA)
- State agencies (HSEM, MDE, DHS, DEED, MDA, BAA)
- State Response Teams (MNVET, HOSA MRC, MN MMT, MN DMERT, MNRAD)
- University of MN (UMN MRC, School of Public Health)
- County/City (Public Health, Emergency Managers, Human Services, MRCs, Victims' Assistance, Schools)
- MNVOAD
- Red Cross
- Others- gained from past response efforts



# Impact of COVID on the BH MRC Volunteers and Partnerships

## **Negative Impact**

- Lost volunteers (retirement, health issues, moved out of state).
- Lost experienced Team leaders.
- Unable to respond in a traditional manner
- Issues regarding deployment of State asset versus local assets.

## **Positive Impact**

- Student Intern -Communications
- BH MRC collaboration with healthcare coalitions to support responders – website/virtual services
- Contracted Regional Behavioral Health Coordinators /BH MRC Team Leaders – virtual services
- New and expanded partnerships at state and local level

# COVID Response Partnership: Healthcare Coalitions

## (Statewide Behavioral Health Wellness Group)

### WellnessMN


Focused on Behavioral Health Staff Wellness, providing tools and resources that support the individual, the team, and the organization for all responder levels to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

It is our genuine desire to support you, your team, and your organization in this prolonged challenging response.

*You are much appreciated and valued.*

#### Minnesota Cares:

A Wellness Workshop For Our Healthcare Community



A FREE event on November 2nd, 2023, to honor the healthcare community and to provide them with evidence-based tools to improve their well-being and build resilience.

[Read more about the Minnesota Cares event.](#)

#### 10 Minutes for You!

Regional Behavioral Health Coordinators on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 3:50-4:00 pm throughout April. No registration is needed.

[10 min for you calendar April](#)

[Join us for "10 Minutes for you!" here](#)

#### Communications: In and Out of Disaster

Date: June 13th, 9-10:30am

Speaker: RBHC Team

Register at: <https://www.train.org/mn/>

Registration ID: 109162

[Communication PDF](#)

#### Tiny Habits

Practice tiny habits each day as a way to continue your wellness journey by [using this calendar](#) to guide your efforts.

#### Ongoing Events

##### Virtual Psychological First Aid (PFA) Training

Offered the 2nd Monday of every month, from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm

[Psychological First Aid handout \(PDF\)](#)

##### The MN Train

You will need to create an account to join any of the upcoming training sessions. Look for Course ID: 1101620 and determine a date that works best for you. On that day, please log in and join the training per the instructions provided.

[Statewide Behavioral Wellness Group Information Sign-Up](#)

### Resources/Tools

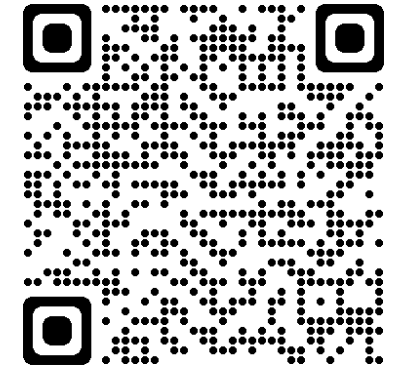
These will vary in ease of use and duration of time. We understand that you have different interests and time available to engage in self-care.

Peer Support Resources (\*\*NEW!\*\*) +

Resources for Individuals +

Resources for Teams +

Resources for Organizations and Leaders +



# COVID Response/Recovery Partnership: MN Department of Education/School Nurses

## **New and Expanded Partnership**

- School Nurses
- School counselors/SW/psychologists
- Special education teachers
- Regional education cooperatives

## **Methods to build and support relationships**

- Training
  - Psychological First Aid
  - Skills for Psychological Recovery
- Responder support services
  - Presentations and tools geared towards schools and school nurses

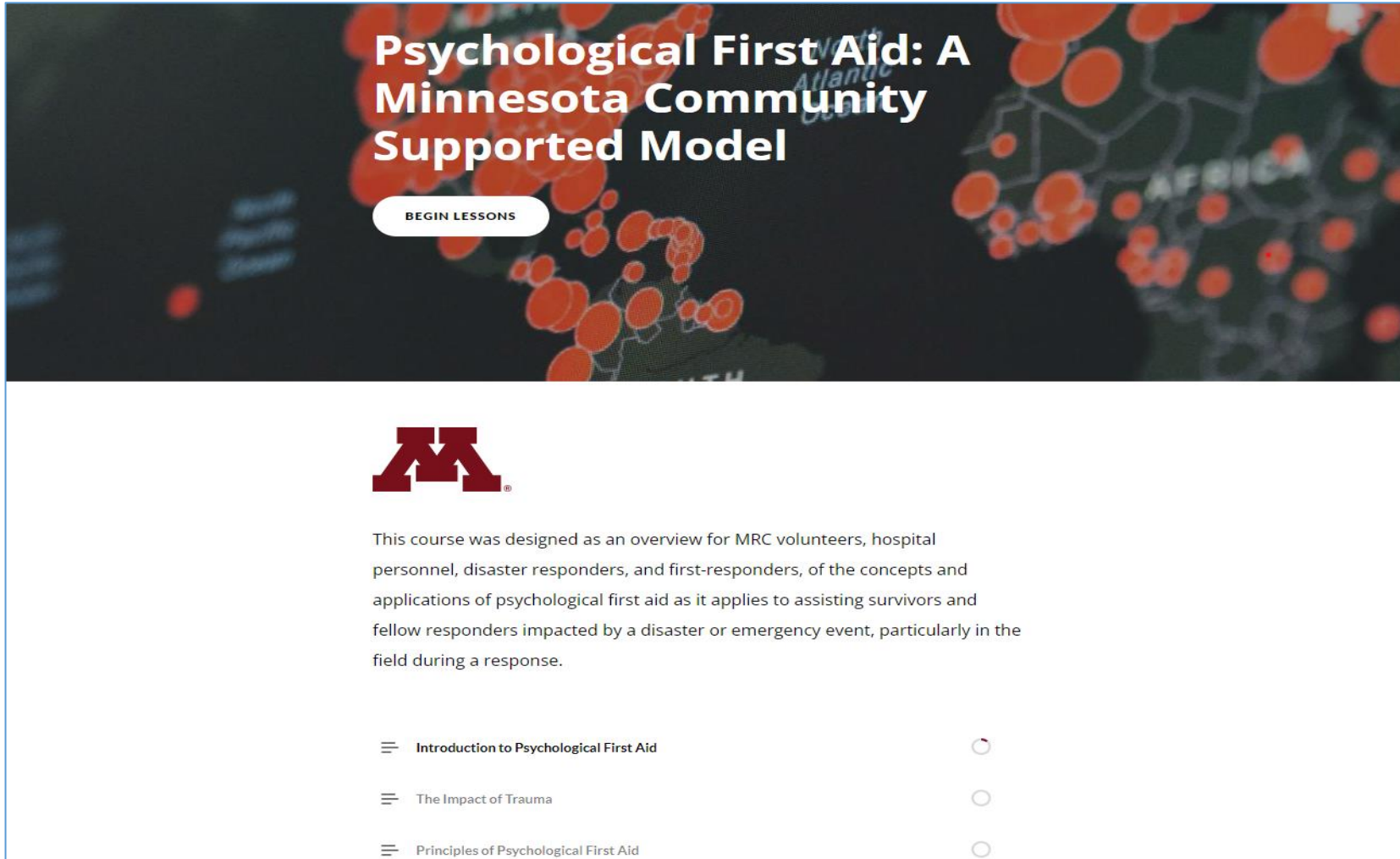
# Training Collaboration BH MRC & Ramsey County MRC:

## Volunteer PFA T-t-T Training

- PFA Train-the-Trainer Training on July 22, 2023
- Mainly from Ramsey county, but open to all MRC volunteers in MN until seats are filled.
- Proof of completion of the PFA is required for registration.
- PFA training is offered every other month
  - MNTRAIN <https://www.train.org/mn/>  
Course ID 1101620




# COVID Collaboration with the University of MN: Psychological First Aid (YouTube videos and online training)



The screenshot shows the top section of a website for a Psychological First Aid course. The header features a dark background with a world map and red virus-like particles. The title 'Psychological First Aid: A Minnesota Community Supported Model' is in white, with a 'BEGIN LESSONS' button below it. The Minnesota State logo is centered below the header. A paragraph describes the course's purpose for MRC volunteers, hospital personnel, disaster responders, and first-responders. At the bottom, a list of three lessons is shown, each with a hamburger menu icon, a title, and a progress indicator.

## Psychological First Aid: A Minnesota Community Supported Model

[BEGIN LESSONS](#)



This course was designed as an overview for MRC volunteers, hospital personnel, disaster responders, and first-responders, of the concepts and applications of psychological first aid as it applies to assisting survivors and fellow responders impacted by a disaster or emergency event, particularly in the field during a response.

- ☰ Introduction to Psychological First Aid ○
- ☰ The Impact of Trauma ○
- ☰ Principles of Psychological First Aid ○


# COVID Collaboration: Pediatric Community of Care


## Care Providers for Children with Special Healthcare Needs and Disabilities

**Welcome**  
Skills for Psychological Recovery

**Skills For Psychological Recovery**

Hosted by Minnesota Department of Health





**Welcome!**

# COVID Collaboration: BH MRC & MN HOSA MRC



- MN HOSA MRC goal- to prepare themselves for disasters and to teach others to be prepared for disasters in their homes, schools, communities or state.
- Unable to provide training during COVID
- MN HOSA MRC Training Camp at Camp Ripley –November 30-December 2, 2023





## **Nancy Carlson, MPhil, CFT, CFE**

Disaster Behavioral Health Program Coordinator  
MN Behavioral Health Medical Reserve Corp  
Administrator  
Division of Emergency Preparedness and Response

### **MDH Webpage:**

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ep/behavioral/index.html>

### **Minnesota Department of Health**

Office: 651-201-5707 | Mobile: 651-247-7398

## **Don Brannen, PhD**

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# Table Discussions

**How did your unit's relationship to your partners change over the course of COVID-19?**

- Did you gain new partnerships – how did that happen?
- Did you lose partnerships – why did that happen?
- Did the partnerships you had change – how and why?