



The Citizen Corps Bulletin

Volume 2, Issue 6 - Jan 2009

Relevant Stories. National Coverage. Ordinary Citizens. Safer Communities.

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FEMA Expands Social Media Use *Administrator Paulison Hosts Twitter Press Conference*

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has expanded its online social media presence via new offerings such as "webisodes" of emergency management activities, YouTube videos, Twitter tweets, and even an online press conference with FEMA Administrator, David Paulison. Admin. Paulison participated in his first, all access social media press conference through the FEMA's Twitter account, *Femainfocus*, on Jan. 12, 2009. The public was invited to join this discussion via the FEMA Twitter page. A transcript of the tweet can be found at: <http://www.fema.gov/media/2009/010909.shtm>

By using social media tools, FEMA is able to capture and share the various preparedness and recovery efforts and discussions across the U.S. and make them readily available to the public. Online FEMA multimedia and social media resources include:

- www.twitter.com/femainfocus: Get the latest FEMA information and participate in forums addressing issues.
- www.youtube.com/fema: Vignettes about FEMA programs.
- www.fema.gov/media/multimedia/: View FEMA video shorts on preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.
- www.fema.gov/radio/index.jsp: FEMA MP3 files of recent radio news and Public Service Announcements.
- www.dhs.gov/xprepresp/programs/gc_1220128923561.shtm: FEMA's Federal Hurricane Response Widget.
- www.ready.gov/vblog: Ready Campaign's video blog featuring public-created preparedness videos.



DHS Releases FY09 Grant Guidance

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) FEMA has released Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Application Guidance for 14 Federal grant programs, totaling more than \$3 billion available in Federal funding to assist State and local governments. The FY09 grant programs will provide \$24 million more than last year to enhance the nation's ability to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters and other emergencies. The FY 2009 grant program allocation for Citizen Corps is \$14.6 million.

FY 2009 Homeland Security Grant Program funding, which includes Citizen Corps, will focus on six priorities for both states or urban areas: measuring progress against the National Preparedness Guidelines; strengthening preparedness planning, training and exercises; strengthening improvised explosive device deterrence, prevention, protection and response capabilities; emphasizing information sharing capabilities; strengthening medical readiness; and strengthening preventive radiological/nuclear detection abilities.

Applications for all HSGP programs are due no later than March 20, 2009. Further information is available at www.dhs.gov and www.fema.gov/grants.



Dear Partners in Community Preparedness –

At the start of another year, we in the Community Preparedness Division at FEMA want to take a moment to thank all of you for your dedication and unfailing commitment to help your communities be safer and more resilient. We recognize that the process of civic engagement can be challenging, but we also know that you share the conviction that government collaboration with civic leaders, outreach and education on personal preparedness, and public participation in community safety pay enormous dividends.

We look toward 2009 with optimism for continued success in the Citizen Corps movement of community preparedness and resilience. Thank you for your continued efforts and may we all have a happy and safe new year!

FEMA Community Preparedness Division / Citizen Corps

DHS and Its Employees Star in New Television Series



DHS and its employees will be the stars of a new, non-scripted series called “Homeland Security USA,” which premieres on Tuesday, Jan. 6 at 8 p.m. (ET). Employees are shown on the job at ports of entry, airports, and other settings as they capture illegal immigrants, arrest human traffickers, and stop drug runners. The trailer below previews some of the action viewers will see. Check listings for local air times.

Learn more about the series:

<http://abc.go.com/primetime/homelandsecurity/index?pn=about>

Watch the trailer for Homeland Security USA:

<http://www.thrfeed.com/2008/12/homeland-security.html>

DisasterAssistance.gov Launched

DisasterAssistance.gov is the result of Executive Order 13411, which requires the government to simplify the process of identifying and applying for disaster assistance. Executive Order 13411 was issued in response to the confusion and frustration people encountered when they asked for help from multiple federal programs following Hurricane Katrina. All Federal agencies that offer forms of assistance to those affected by disaster are working closely to turn this vision into reality.

The initial DisasterAssistance.gov website went live on Dec. 31, 2008, with disaster assistance programs administered at the federal level. DisasterAssistance.gov is to be completed by 2014 and will include forms of assistance available at the Federal, State, regional and local level.



Resolve to be Ready Toolkit Now Available

For the fourth year in a row the Ready Campaign is encouraging Americans to Resolve to be Ready by making a New Year's resolution to get preparedness for emergencies. To help assist you in your outreach, please find the toolkit with helpful resources to promote Resolve to be Ready in our communities and businesses at

<http://www.ready.gov/america/about/resolve2009.html>.



Comment Period Open for Title IX Voluntary Private Sector Preparedness Accreditation and Certification Program

The Department of Homeland Security has posted a Federal Register notice seeking public comments about the Voluntary Private Sector Preparedness Accreditation and Certification Program. The program is mandated by the *Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007* to establish a common set of criteria for private sector preparedness, including disaster management, emergency management, and business continuity programs. The goal of this voluntary program is to enhance nationwide resilience in an all hazards environment by improving private sector preparedness.



DHS has posted the Federal Register notice at <http://www.regulations.gov> (Identify Docket ID FEMA-2008-0017.) Comments may be submitted to <http://www.regulations.gov> or FEMA-POLICY@dhs.gov. For more information on the program, visit the Voluntary Private Sector Preparedness Accreditation and Certification Program Resource Center: www.fema.gov/privatesectorpreparedness.

GAO Report: Homeland Security Grant Risk Assessment

For the fourth year, the General Accounting Office has reviewed the methodology used by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to allocate State Homeland Security Program and Urban Area Security Initiative funding, including the risk assessment methodology used to determine which urban areas are eligible to apply for grants.

Generally, the GAO found that DHS has constructed a reasonable methodology to assess risk and allocate the funds, however, the GAO reiterated its previous recommendation from last year's report that "the Secretary of DHS formulate a method to measure vulnerability that captures variations across states and urban areas, and apply this vulnerability measure in future iterations of this risk-based grant allocation model."

The GAO briefed the congressional committees with two briefings in November 2008 and December 2008. A copy of the final briefing is available at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09168r.pdf>.

Report Finds Economic Crisis Hurting U.S. Preparedness

The report *Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism* finds that progress made to better protect the country from disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and bioterrorism is now at risk, due to budget cuts and the economic crisis. Released by Trust for America's Health (TFAH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the sixth annual *Ready or Not?* concludes that major gaps remain in many critical areas of preparedness, including surge capacity, rapid disease detection, and food safety. Currently, more than half of states score seven or lower out of 10 in readiness rankings.



Over the past six years, the *Ready or Not?* report has documented steady progress toward improved public health preparedness. This year however, TFAH found that cuts in federal funding for state and local preparedness since 2005, coupled with the cuts states are making to their budgets in response to the economic crisis, put that progress at risk. The full TFAH/RWJF report is available at: <http://healthyamericans.org/reports/bioterror08/>.



IAEM Announces Winners of 2008 Awards

The International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) announced the winners of its 2008 Awards at the IAEM 56th Annual Conference & EMEX 2008, Nov. 15-20, 2008. Many of the awardees efforts support community preparedness. Congratulations to all!

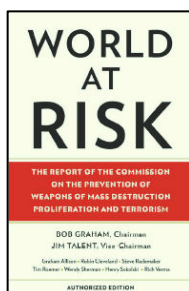
- **Business & Industry Preparedness Award:** The George Washington University's Office of Public Safety & Emergency Management for its Planning Guidance and "SafeTea" Plan Sessions.
- **Partners in Preparedness Award:** The partnership between the Chinese Information & Service Center, Seattle, Washington, and the Seattle Office of Emergency Management, who teamed up to provide emergency preparedness information to Chinese and Vietnamese communities in Seattle.
- **Interagency Disaster Preparedness Award:** The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health for its "Schools' Pandemic Influenza and Infectious Disease/Public Health Emergency Toolkit," that provides a means for improved communication and collaboration between the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the over 80 LA County school districts that serve more than 1.8 million children.
- **Public Awareness Award (Division 1, Local Emergency Management Agency):** The City of Bellevue, Washington, for its multi-language emergency preparedness videos; the Seattle Parks & Recreation and Seattle Office of Emergency Management for the STEP (Student Training Employment Program) job readiness program; and the City of Everett, Washington, for its Emergency Preparedness Public Education Campaign "Who Depends On You?" (WDOY).
- **Public Awareness Award (Division 2, State/Regional National Government, International, or Non-Profit Organization):** The City of Houston, Texas, for "Are You Ready," a community preparedness campaign for the Greater Houston region; the Golden Gate Regional Center, San Francisco, California, for its disaster preparedness video series; and Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, for its "SMU Aware 2008 Calendar."
- **Public Awareness Award (Division 3, Commercial or Other For-Profit Organizations) :** Emergency Management & Safety Solutions, Inc., San Francisco, California, for its "Advanced Pandemic Planning for Critical Infrastructure - A Roundtable and Whitepaper Series for U.S. Critical Infrastructure."
- **Technology & Innovation Award (Division 1, Local Emergency Management Agency):** The Sarasota County Office of Emergency Management, Sarasota, Florida, for development of the People with Special Needs (PSN) registration "WebPSN" database software.
- **Technology & Innovation Award (Division 2, State/Regional National Government, International, or Non-Profit Organization):** The U.S. Geological Survey for its Shakecast Program and the New South Wales State Emergency Service, Wollongong, NSW, Australia, for its Business FloodSafe Online Toolkit.



IAEM also bestowed its highest honor, the National Security Award, upon FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison, for his "unselfish and dedicated leadership that has significantly contributed to a strong U.S. civil defense and emergency management program as part of U.S. national security." Learn more about the IAEM Awards Program at www.iaem.com.

Commission Recommends Engagement of Citizenry for Prevention of WMD Attacks

The Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism submitted its final report to Congress this Dec. 2008. The Commission was chartered to assess the U.S. progress in preventing WMD proliferation and terrorism—and to provide the next President and Congress with concrete, actionable recommendations. Among the conclusions of the Commission's report are: "The next administration should work with state and local governments to develop a checklist of actions to prevent WMD proliferation and terrorism and to provide guidance to citizens on what to expect from their government and on how to be engaged in the prevention of WMD terrorism." A copy of the full report can be located at: <https://www.hsdl.org/homesec/docs/legis/nps36-120208-01.pdf&code=608092e6e175870b363f05b10c9b071d>.





DHS Releases Risk Lexicon

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is in the process of building an Integrated Risk Management Framework to improve its capability to make risk-informed strategic decisions using systematic and structured assessments of homeland security risk. The DHS Risk Lexicon supports the Integrated Risk Management Framework by defining a single language for DHS risk management. Clear and unambiguous communication amongst risk practitioners, decision makers, and homeland security stakeholders is a key aspect the Departments integrated risk management capability. The DHS Risk Lexicon represents a significant step forward by making available an official set of definitions for risk-related terms for the Department.

The DHS Risk Lexicon is a product of the efforts of the Intra-Departmental DHS Risk Steering Committee (RSC). The RSC was formed to leverage the risk management capabilities of DHS components, offices, and directorates to advance an integrated approach to risk management for DHS.

The Lexicon will expand over time and be continually reviewed to ensure that terms and definitions are accurate and up to date. To learn more, read the full RSC report at http://www.hlswatch.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/dhs_risk_lexicon_report_final.pdf.



DHS Releases Latest Version of NIMS

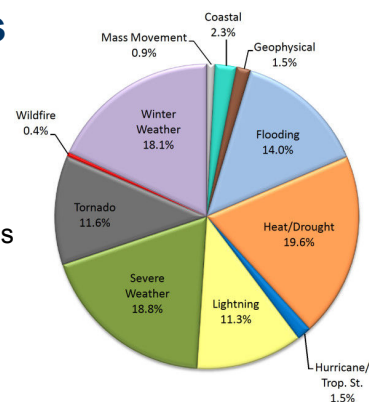
In December 2008, DHS released the latest version of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The basic purpose, scope and principles of the document remain unchanged from the previous version. The majority of changes impact the organization and readability of the document while ensuring that it adequately reflects the importance of preparedness. For example, the latest version reorders the key components to emphasize the role of preparedness and to mirror the progression of an incident. In addition, NGOs and the private sector actions have also been more fully integrated throughout NIMS. The latest version also has been revised to incorporate National Response Framework principles to ensure accuracy between the documents.

The term Emergency Management/Response Personnel was added to the document as an all encompassing term to include first responders, emergency managers, and all organizations and individuals in various levels of governments as well as NGOs and private sector organizations with roles in incident management. To help familiarize stakeholders with key NIMS principles, the document was also augmented to draw the readers to certain concepts and help them better understand processes. This was accomplished through graphics, tables, call-out boxes and highlighting.

To learn about other changes to NIMS, visit <http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/NIMSWhatsNew.pdf>. Or to view the latest version in its entirety, go to http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/NIMS_core.pdf.

Heat/drought Cause 20% of Natural Hazards Deaths

New research analyzing nationwide data from 1970 to 2004 by Susan Cutter and Kevin Borden of the University of South Carolina, shows “chronic everyday hazards such as severe weather (summer and winter) and heat account for the majority of natural hazard fatalities. The regions most prone to deaths from natural hazards are the South and intermountain west, but sub-regional county-level mortality patterns show more variability. There is a distinct urban/rural component to the county patterns as well as a coastal trend... It is important to view natural hazard mortality through a geographic lens so as to better inform the public living in such hazard prone areas, but more importantly to inform local emergency practitioners who must plan for and respond to disasters in their community.” To read the researchers’ full report, visit <http://www.ij-healthgeographics.com/content/7/1/64>.





2008 Spirit of Portland Winners Announced

The Spirit of Portland Awards are presented annually to Portland neighbors and organizations who have made outstanding contributions to the community. Winners are selected from nominations submitted by Citizens. All 30 winners will be recognized during an award ceremony Dec.11 at City Hall. This year, several of the winners supported community safety and emergency preparedness efforts:

The Spirit of Portland Winners Are:

- Community Crime Prevention - Carl Leonard Roberts
- Community Harmony - Norm Costa and Gloria McMurtry
- Community Policing - Sgt. John Anderson and Officer Greg Baldwin
- Emergency Preparedness - Clarence Harper Jr. and Laurelhurst NET
- Neighborhood of the Year South Portland Neighborhood Association, hosted 4 concerts in Willamette Park and active in National Night Out activities

The Selection Committee is made up of representatives from Council Members' Offices, the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, District Coalitions, neighborhood business associations, and past recipients. The nominees are evaluated using five categories in which they exemplify commitment to the community: how they helped with outstanding projects, enriched the community, provided a special service, were responsive to neighborhood issues and how they helped raise cross-cultural awareness.

For more information, contact Nell Wagenaar, 503-823-3997 or email: nwagenaar@ci.portland.or.us

Source: <http://www.portlandonline.com/ONI/index.cfm?c=43746&a=218694>



Nebraska Panhandle Citizen Corps Recognized

Nebraska Lieutenant Governor Rick Sheehy was at the Panhandle Public Health District office in Hemingford at 1 p.m. Monday, Nov. 10 to present the 2008 Be Prepared Award for Citizen Corps Council of the Year to the Panhandle Citizen Corps Network (PCCN). Local Citizen Corps Council activities were highlighted, culminating with a mock search and rescue exercise at the Box Butte County Fairgrounds.

The PCCN was organized in 2007 and includes the Ponderosa Search and Rescue Team, the Scotts Bluff County Citizen Corps Council, Panhandle Public Health District, Panhandle Regional Medical Response System, Region 21, 22 and 23 Emergency Management Agencies and the Scotts Bluff County Health Department. It serves some 90,000 Nebraska residents living in 11 western counties.



PCCN is assembling a Medical Reserve Corps for the region and other Citizen Corps groups are also being organized in Chadron, Gordon and Box Butte County and the PCCN hopes to establish additional Citizen Corps Councils in each county. The PCCN is also developing databases of community resources and volunteers throughout western counties and a plan to handle pets in a disaster situation.

The group is also sponsoring training for new Community Emergency Response Teams. Trainings have been held in Scottsbluff, Gordon and Chadron this summer and fall. CERT trainings were also held in Alliance on November 7 and 8.

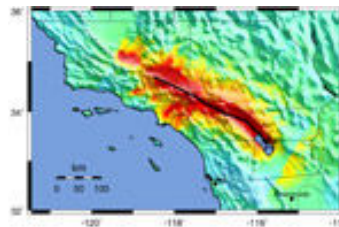
Source: The Chadron News: <http://www.thechadronnews.com/articles/2008/11/05/chadron/brief/news497.txt>



Southern California Holds Massive Earthquake Drill

On November 13, 2008, more than 5.47 million people participated in The Great Southern California ShakeOut, now officially the largest earthquake drill in the Nation's history.

"This is the best single effort in emergency preparedness in my nearly 20 years in the business," wrote Mike Martinet, Executive Director, South Bay Office of Disaster Management (Area G). "I hope that we can continue to use this scenario or some variations thereof for years to come."



The Great Southern California ShakeOut was a historic week of earthquake preparedness events, based on the 7.8 Magnitude San Andreas Fault earthquake scenario, which included millions taking part in a "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" drill. When asked what could be done better, the participants overwhelmingly supported the idea of turning it into an annual day or week of disaster preparedness activities.

"We certainly have heard many ideas of how we can get more people involved - and we'd like to do just that!" said Mark Benthien, Executive Director of the Earthquake Country Alliance and Outreach Director for the Southern California Earthquake Center.

One month after the Great Southern California ShakeOut, people are still talking about what they did during the ShakeOut drill. Emergency managers and community leaders are talking about what worked and what could have been done better, and where to go next. **Among their suggestions: improved communications with citizens groups, neighborhood watch groups, and the public;** getting more buy-in from the top-level in many organizations, businesses, and educational institutions; and giving people more time to get ready.

Source: <http://www.shakeout.org/>

Volunteer Corps Trained While Disaster Unfolded

In a strange coincidence, a cadre of elite emergency medicine physicians and government officials happened to arrive at El Capitan Ranch on Nov. 13, to train Santa Barbara County's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), just as the Tea Fire Incident, a massive wildfire that claimed over 230 homes and burned 1,940 acres, began to sweep across southern California.

Nancy Lapolla, director of the county's Emergency Medical Services agency (EMS), said her entire staff was there listening to Direct Relief International's director, Thomas Tighe, when phones started ringing. During the next two days, Lapolla and EMS staff rotated shifts at the Emergency Operations Center while attending what she described as his "very important" training. The training weekend, called the Mark Stinson Austere Medicine Medical Reserve Corps Leaders Course, was a collaboration between Doctors Without Walls-Santa Barbara Street Medicine and EMS, and was mostly funded by grants from the Orfalea & St. Francis Foundations.

Simulated disasters whose victims required immediate care, far from hospital equipment, were featured on the agenda. Anesthesiologist Kelly McQueen, an expert in surgery in humanitarian settings, was one of the instructors. "Six percent of disaster-related injuries require surgery," she said. Tareg Bey, from the University of California at Irvine, instructed how to respond to chemical and radio-nuclear incidents. Another VIP was Jeffrey Rubin, director of Disaster Medicine for California's Emergency Medical Services Authority, who was overseeing medical services in four fire zones while still maintaining a presence at the training. Rubin said there are 40 MRCs in the state, but the Santa Barbara training was groundbreaking. Santa Barbara's MRC is unique in its high degree of physician involvement and cooperation between the not-for-profit and government sectors.

Source: <http://www.independent.com/news/2008/nov/20/volunteer-corps-trained-while-disaster-unfolded/>



Upcoming Awareness Campaigns & Monthly Themes

The following campaigns, days of recognition, and monthly themes can be used as a guide to jumpstart planning for local Citizen Corps events and media outreach. Aside from garnering media attention, these events will help raise awareness for your local Citizen Corps activities, ultimately increasing preparedness and community resiliency.

January

- National Volunteer Blood Donor Month Month-long
<http://www.aabb.org/>
- National Mentoring Month Month-long
<http://www.mentoring.org/>
- U.S. Junior Chamber-Jaycees Week Jan. 18-24, 2009
<http://www.usjaycees.org/>
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service Jan. 19, 2009
<http://www.mlkday.gov/>
- Citizen Corps 7th Anniversary Jan. 29, 2009
- Winter Storm Preparation Ongoing
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/>

February

- Black History Month Month-long
- National Burn Awareness Week Feb. 1-17, 2009
http://www.shrinershq.org/Hospitals/Burn_Awareness/About/
- Digital Transition Feb. 17, 2009
<http://www.dtv.gov/>

March

- American Red Cross Month Month-long
<http://www.redcross.org/>
- Meals on Wheels: March for Wheels Month-long
<http://www.mowaa.org/>
- National Women's History Month Month-long
<http://www.nwhp.org/whm/index.php>
- Daylight Savings Time Mar. 8, 2009
- National Poison Prevention Week Mar. 15-21, 2009
<http://www.poisonprevention.org>
- The Great American Cleanup Ongoing
<http://www.kab.org/>

Upcoming Conferences

- January 13-16, 2009:** Association of Public Television Stations: 2009 NETA Conference - Tampa, FL
<http://www.netaonline.org/2009/Tampa.htm>
- March 5-9, 2009:** American Legion Auxiliary: 29th Annual Americanism Youth Conference - Valley Forge, PA
http://www.legion-aux.org/uploads/docs/ALA_trifold_freedom%20foundation%202009.pdf
- March 18-22, 2009:** Jaycees: US Jaycees Year-End Celebration 2009 - Crystal River, FL
<http://www.fljaycees.org/yearend2009/>



NCPC Report: Americans Believe Crime Has Gotten Worse

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) last month released a report reminding leaders at all levels of government that “crime prevention matters.” Although crime rates have plunged since the early 1990s, three nationwide polls independently found that Americans believe crime is a serious problem, and in fact, that it has gotten worse. Fear of crime can have serious implications, both for individuals, who may curtail their activities to accommodate their fears—no matter how unrealistic, and for communities, where businesses and quality of life may suffer if people are afraid to work, shop, or play in neighborhoods that are perceived to be unsafe.



Information is key to allaying people’s fears and bringing their perceptions closer to reality. By educating people about their relative risk of victimization and giving them tools and strategies to reduce that risk, public safety agencies can help their constituents adopt appropriate measures to protect themselves, their families, and their communities. Crime Prevention Matters draws on research to explain the relationship between crime rates and perceptions and on NCPC’s extensive history to offer several examples of successful crime prevention strategies. This document can be downloaded at www.ncpc.org/crime-prevention-matters.pdf

Dunkin’ Brands Awards Grant to NVFC

The Dunkin’ Brands Community Foundation announced that it is awarding a grant to the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) to support its National Junior Firefighter Program. The grant builds on the success of a grant in 2008 which resulted in 520 junior firefighter programs and 275 junior firefighters registering with the national program.



The grant will help the NVFC expand its National Junior Firefighter Program, which provides resources and tools to departments and youth to help them develop, maintain, expand, and participate in a local junior firefighter program. The Program is also supported by Spartan Motors, Inc. and Baskin-Robbins. With the help of the Dunkin’ Brands Community Foundation in 2009, the NVFC will award \$5,000 grants to 10 fire departments to help them start a junior firefighter program or improve existing programs.

Source: http://www.nvfc.org/page/626/show_item/904/News.htm

Operation Hope Offers Mortgage Crisis Hotline

In an effort to save homeownership during a time of crisis for many mortgage holders, Operation HOPE, Inc. is providing a number of services through its Mortgage HOPE Crisis Hotline (MHCH). Through the Hotline, foreclosures are delayed and loan modifications are negotiated weekly. As of November 2008, the MHCH has prevented 257 foreclosures through loan modification or no action agreements and assisted an additional 145 clients, working through more than \$100 million in challenged mortgages. Collaborative efforts by all segments of the financial services industry, government agencies and community organizations have provided solutions to the growing problem before it cripples the economy.



The Hotline receives calls on a regular basis and each client is assigned to a dedicated HOPE mortgage counselor, and in some cases a Virtual HOPE Corps volunteer, who works with the client until the loan is modified or another outcome has been reached, sometimes without lender cooperation. Homeowners with mortgage challenges can call 888-388-HOPE (4673) for free services including assistance with negotiating with lenders, applying for loan modifications, avoiding foreclosure, selling a house and purchasing an affordable home, and restructuring existing debt and obligations. To learn more, visit www.operationhope.org/smdev/hotline.php?id=1427.



2008 Law Enforcement Volunteer Programs Awards Announced; Deadline for 2009 Approaches

On November 11, the Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), presented this year's Outstanding Achievement in Law Enforcement Volunteer Programs Awards to the police departments of Delray Beach, FL; Richardson, TX; and the City of Benicia, CA. The award recognizes law enforcement agencies with outstanding law enforcement volunteer programs that demonstrate innovative, effective practices for augmenting staff and improving service delivery to their communities. The goal of the award program is to recognize the value that volunteers provide to law enforcement and to institutionalize the theories and practices of the national Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) Program. The IACP manages and implements the VIPS Program in partnership with the USA Freedom Corps, Citizen Corps, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice. Nominations for the 2009 award program must be postmarked no later than May 15, 2009. Visit the following website for more details: <http://www.policevolunteers.org/>.



IACP Adopts Resolution in Support of VIPS

During the annual IACP conference on November 11, the IACP adopted a resolution in support of the VIPS Program. The resolution commended VIPS for its registration of over 1,700 law enforcement volunteer programs since its inception, as well as the several million hours contributed by its volunteers to law enforcement efforts worldwide. IACP also recognized the training programs and technical services offered by VIPS for law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve, adding that such efforts had furthered the development, sustainment, and recognition of volunteer programs.

In the resolution, IACP called upon all of its members to consider the many ways volunteers can help support law enforcement efforts, in areas such as administrative support, victim assistance, crime prevention, enforcement endeavors, public awareness, and emergency response, through organized, nationally registered Volunteers in Police Service programs in their organizations. The resolution also encouraged continued federal funding of the efforts to foster growth in the number of police volunteers, volunteer program activities, and law enforcement volunteer programs through Citizen Corps and its partner programs.

Cordova High Teen Cert Organizes Evacuation Drill

On November 20, Cordova High School transformed into a disaster zone as students there participated in a fake evacuation for their graduation drill. More than 100 students and emergency personnel took part in dealing with the mock disaster. The drill was meant to demonstrate skills of the school's Teen Community Emergency Response Team, or CERT. The school's Teen CERT program is the first to be implemented in Rancho Cordova and within the Folsom-Cordova Unified School District, said Carol Willis, the Sacramento Region Citizen Corps Council's Teen CERT coordinator.

The exercise began at 8:15 a.m. with an "explosion" in the culinary classroom. The campus' fire alarm activated, students and staff were evacuated, a 911 call was made, and the school's emergency system alerted parents. The scenario included an overwhelmed emergency response system, so when 911 was called, emergency personnel were busy working on a multi-casualty collision on Highway 50. Teen CERT members were notified and went to the command center at the school to conduct size-up, light search and rescue, triage and treatment. Thirty teens performed search-and-rescue functions and more than 75 students acted as victims.



Teen CERT is part of the Sacramento Region Citizen Corps Council. The first Teen CERT class began in 2007, and six schools have implemented the program, with 130 Teen CERT members in total. Teen CERT members also are trained to assist fire department CERT teams. For more information about the Sacramento Region Citizen Corps Council, go to www.srccc.org or call (916) 264-8650.



MRC Response to the 2008 Hurricanes – Final Report

The 2008 hurricane season provided further confirmation of the ability of local Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units to enhance their communities' resiliency and capacity to respond to public health emergencies. Over 1,500 MRC members volunteered 30,000 hours in response to Hurricanes Ike and Gustav and Tropical Storm Hanna.



These volunteers came from 63 MRC units in 14 states, and they performed a myriad of different tasks based on the needs in their local communities. In general, the response of MRC units during 2008 was phenomenal. However, as with any undertaking, there is always room for improvement. The following three areas should be considered: 1) MRC units should recognize the importance of tracking the number and type of volunteers utilized, the number of hours worked, and the impact of their activities; 2) As Federal Medical Stations (FMS)

become increasingly important Federal response assets, it will be helpful to further explore the use of MRC members to staff state run FMS's; 3) While the MRC has now grown to over 790 units, there were areas affected by the hurricanes that still did not have MRC units. OCVMRC should continue to promote awareness and understanding of the MRC, and expand the number of units. To read the Final Report in its entirety, please visit:

<http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/Hurricane/2008Report>.

Call for Nominations for 2009 Neighborhood Watch Awards

The National Sheriffs' Association in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U. S. Department of Justice is pleased to announce that they are accepting nominations for the 6th Annual National Neighborhood Watch Awards of Excellence. All law enforcement agencies, Neighborhood Watch groups, organizations, and/or programs that have made an exceptional contribution to the Neighborhood Watch program in their communities are encouraged to submit nominations to the National Sheriffs' Association by March 31, 2009. For complete information on eligibility, criteria, and nomination forms please visit

<http://www.usaonwatch.org/AboutUs/AwardsProgram.php>.



Fire Corps National Advisory Committee Meets

The Fire Corps National Advisory Committee (NAC), which is comprised of representatives from national fire and emergency service organizations as well as other prominent leaders in the industry, convened on November 10 to provide expertise and guidance for Fire Corps' future activities and direction. Fire Corps staff presented information regarding program updates, resources, best practices, 2008 survey results, progress within the State Advocate Network, and conferred the first Fire Corps Award of Excellence. For more information about Fire Corps and the NAC, visit www.firecorps.org or email info@firecorps.org.

2008 Award of Excellence: Macomb Township Fire Department

Fire Corps presented its 2008 Award of Excellence to Macomb Township (MI) Fire Department during the NAC meeting on November 10. This award honors a Fire Corps program whose remarkable achievements in the fire and emergency services and the community exemplify outstanding performance. Macomb's Fire Corps implemented several outstanding department projects, including preparing kits to help residents who have suffered a tragedy, performing child safety seat inspections, educating new parents about infant safety, overseeing the creation of an emergency translation book, and creating Fire Corps and fire safety public service announcements. The Macomb Township Fire Corps also worked closely with their local Community Emergency

Response Team to enable members to receive training in areas of emergency response, such as CPR and first aid. For more details on Macomb Township Fire Corps, contact Sgt. Dwayne Thompson at thompsond@macomb-mi.gov or visit the following website:

http://www.firecorps.org/page/856/Award_of_Excellence.htm.



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Send in Your Stories, Ideas, and Experiences!

Because Citizen Corps is a grassroots movement, it is critical that we share examples of local implementation. Please consider sending your experiences, published news articles, and ideas to us at the national office at citizencorps@dhs.gov. Please be sure to include your name, city and state, and contact information with your submission. And we love photos too! Thank you for your support.

