



The Citizen Corps Bulletin

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

Citizen Corps Looks Ahead to New Era

The inauguration of President Barack Obama marks a new beginning for our country and a new beginning for Citizen Corps. As a former community organizer with a deep conviction for active citizenship, President Obama has made it clear that transparent and collaborative government, grassroots activism, and volunteer and community service will be key priorities for his administration. These are also the guiding principles of Citizen Corps.

During his inaugural address, President Obama observed that, **“for as much as government can do and must do, it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this nation relies.”** Citizen Corps is founded upon the understanding that our citizenry are vital partners in the welfare of our communities and in building community resilience – while the government provides critical services for a safe and secure America, it cannot replace the value of a prepared, informed public.

Working together, Americans today can meet the nation’s most daunting challenges through a structured approach to collaboration and information sharing. Citizen Corps Councils bring together community leaders from local government, emergency management and emergency service providers, hospitals, schools, volunteer and service organizations, businesses, faith-based organizations, and advocacy groups. Having all stakeholders at the table allows each community to be unified in its efforts to improve the health and safety of the community and to prepare for and respond to disasters.



As we celebrate our seventh anniversary on January 29th, we want to thank the thousands of community leaders and the millions of people who have embraced the tenants of civic engagement and personal responsibility to create safer and more resilient communities. We look forward to even greater participation in the years ahead.

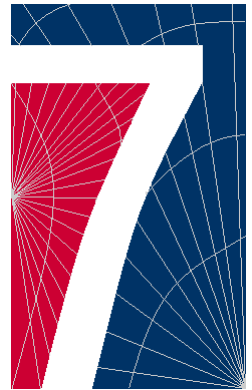
Now is the time to reinvigorate our communities, to be open to new ideas, and to try new approaches. At the National Office of Citizen Corps, we are working on a new Citizen Corps website, organizing the 2009 National Conference on Community Preparedness, increasing collaboration with FEMA regional offices, creating a national Citizen Corps awards program, ensuring community preparedness language is

in federal policies and grant programs, conducting community preparedness research, developing training for preparedness and response skills, and enhancing our national partnerships.

The time for action is now: together, we must all embrace the responsibility to prepare and protect our communities, and be ready to help each other in times of need. Best wishes for 2009!

“What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility -- a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation and the world, duties that we do not grudgingly accept but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character than giving our all to a difficult task... This is the price and the promise of citizenship.”

- President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address, January 20, 2009



Year Anniversary
January 29, 2009

Save The Date! 2009 National Conference: August 9-12, 2009

Presentation Proposals Due March 2, 2009

The 2009 National Conference on Community Preparedness: *The Power of Citizen Corps*, is being hosted by FEMA's Community Preparedness Division on August 9-12, 2009, at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City Hotel in Arlington, VA. The conference is open to all who are interested in making their communities safer, stronger, and better prepared for all types of hazards. It will bring together approximately 600 state and local elected officials, emergency management, fire and police services, public health and emergency medical services, non-governmental organizations, private business and industry, advocacy groups, and members of public.

Attendees at the 2009 National Conference on Community Preparedness will:

- Share best practices on collaborative emergency planning
- Discuss preparedness outreach and education for targeted populations
- Learn innovative approaches to funding
- Hear updates on DHS/FEMA initiatives
- Get updates on findings from citizen preparedness research
- Hear about successful training and exercises
- Share volunteer management practices
- Network with other Citizen Corps participants



The conference planning team is currently soliciting proposals for presenters. We encourage Citizen Corps members, partners, and others who are interested in sharing their experiences with increasing community preparedness to visit the conference website and submit their proposals. **Call for Presenters submissions are due by March 2.** More information on the conference and the Call for Presenters submission form can be found on the conference website: <http://www.iaem.com/NCCP2009.htm>.

Share Your Vision and Ideas with the Obama Administration

President Barack Obama's new administration wants to help reclaim the American dream and bring about positive and lasting change to the nation. As such, the President has pledged to institute an environment of openness and transparency. The new administration has created a website to hear directly from the American people. To share your stories and ideas on the issues and policies that matter the most to you, please visit the following website:

"I'M ASKING YOU TO BELIEVE.
 Not just in my ability to bring about
 real change in Washington ... I'm
 asking you to believe in yours."

<http://change.gov/page/s/yourvision>. In addition, the President has created a new office, the Office of the Public Liaison, through which everyone can participate and inform the work of the President. For more details visit <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/opl/>.

President Obama's USAService.org Features Citizen Corps

Citizen Corps is featured as one of the service opportunities available on the new www.usaservice.org website. This site was launched by then President-elect Obama to promote community service events and get Americans involved in building their communities, finding opportunities to serve, and sharing their experiences. The site helps citizens to set up, plan, and host community service events and to recruit volunteers. Users can also find events in their communities, and learn about service opportunities offered by other organizations, including several Citizen Corps partners and affiliates such as the American Red Cross, MyGoodDeed.org, the Hands On Network, and USA Freedom Corps. Users can also contribute photos and comments to the USA Service blog. We encourage all of our Councils and partners to visit the site and to share their service experiences.



Janet Napolitano Sworn in as Secretary of Homeland Security Former Governor Created Arizona State Citizen Corps Council

On January 21, 2009, Janet Napolitano was sworn in as the third United States Secretary of Homeland Security. Prior to her appointment, Secretary Napolitano was the Governor of Arizona and supported several DHS initiatives, including Citizen Corps. In May 2004, she signed an executive order establishing the Arizona State Citizen Corps Council. The Council was charged with developing a comprehensive, statewide plan that would support local Citizen Corps Councils across the state, and serve as Arizona's liaison to national and state organizations supporting community preparedness. Secretary Napolitano also supported Citizen Corps and community preparedness efforts through several state-wide public service announcements and by declaring September as National Preparedness Month in Arizona.



Secretary Napolitano being sworn into office

As Governor, Secretary Napolitano worked closely with DHS on issues such as border-security and immigration. She implemented one of the first state homeland security strategies in the nation, opened the first state counter-terrorism center and, spearheaded efforts to transform immigration enforcement. Secretary Napolitano has been a pioneer in coordinating federal, state, local and bi-national homeland security efforts, and presided over large scale disaster relief efforts and readiness exercises to ensure well-crafted and functional emergency plans. As the former chair of the National Governors Association, she worked with her colleagues across the country on disaster preparedness, emergency management and recovery efforts.

Among her goals as Secretary is the integration of all of DHS components into "One DHS." Secretary Napolitano believes "each organization that became part of DHS brought its legacy of service, achievement, and innovation, and that heritage has contributed and will continue to contribute to the Department's greatness. By sharing our strengths we can and will achieve the shared sense of mission that will ensure we are doing everything we can to protect this great Nation."

Citizen Corps Website & Contacts

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Send Us Your Citizen Corps Stories, Photos, 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. 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.