



FEMA

Stakeholder Advisory

FEMA ANNOUNCES DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL

Today, FEMA announced the formation of its first Youth Preparedness Council. The Council supports FEMA's emphasis on and dedication to involving the whole community in preparedness related activities.

FEMA's Youth Preparedness Council is a unique opportunity for a select group of youth leaders to serve on a highly distinguished national council and to voice their opinions, experiences, ideas and solutions to help strengthen the nation's resiliency for all types of disasters. Nominated by individuals who can attest to their preparedness activities, Council members demonstrate a willingness to represent the youth perspective on emergency preparedness and take information back to their communities to share it.

"Engaging youth is an integral step in preparing the nation for all hazards," said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. "Youth have a unique ability to influence their peers and families to be more resilient, and children play an important role in disaster preparedness, during and after a crisis."

Children comprise approximately 25 percent of our nation's population and are the future of our communities. They can play an important role in disaster preparedness and each have the unique ability to help their communities be safer, stronger and more resilient before, during and after a disaster or emergency event. As such, we all have a vested interest in engaging and empowering youth to become active participants in individual, family, and community preparedness. Research states that:

- *Youth who are trained in preparedness are more resilient in actual disasters.*
- *Youth are highly effective messengers for reaching and influencing parents and other adults.*
- *Youth who are engaged today will ensure a future generation of prepared adults.*

Additionally, youth have proven to be positive influencers, leaders, and first responders to their families, peers, and neighbors when they take the preparedness message home. The Youth Preparedness Council will provide a venue to engage an often overlooked population and take into account their perspectives, feedback, and opinions.



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The Youth Preparedness Council is comprised of 13 diverse leaders (13 – 17 years of age) from across FEMA’s ten regions and who are:

- dedicated to public service;
- making a difference in their community; and
- expanding their impact as a national advocate for youth preparedness.

The distinguished members selected are as follows:

- FEMA Region I: Rachel Little (*Massachusetts*)
- FEMA Region II: Gabriela Rodriguez Boria (*Puerto Rico*)
- FEMA Region III: Donald “Diesel” Embrey (*Virginia*)
- FEMA Region IV: Benjamin Cooke (*Tennessee*)
- FEMA Region V: Jason Reed (*Indiana*)
- FEMA Region VI: Dorian Tre’ Vaughn Gregory (*Louisiana*)
- FEMA Region VI: Jonathan DeLong (*Texas*)
- FEMA Region VII: Nimansha Jain (*Nebraska*)
- FEMA Region VIII: Ashley Houston (*Utah*)
- FEMA Region IX: Divya Saini (*California*)
- FEMA Region IX: Tiffany Espensen (*California*)
- FEMA Region IX: Christian Chowen (*Hawaii*)
- FEMA Region X: Cayman Kirkhart (*Idaho*)

This year council members will have the opportunity to participate in a community preparedness roundtable event in Washington D.C. where they will advise and ask questions on youth disaster preparedness with the leadership of national organizations working on this critical priority. It is also expected that members will meet with FEMA on a quarterly basis via conference call or webinar and provide ongoing input on strategies and initiatives. Council members are eligible to serve on the Council for two years.

To learn more about FEMA’s youth preparedness efforts please visit:
<http://www.citizencorps.gov/getstarted/youth/youthindex.shtm>.

Together, we can make the Nation more resilient and secure.