

Good afternoon everyone, and thank you for joining the “CERT Resource Development” Webinar. My name is Zola and before we begin I have a couple of brief technical considerations to share with you. First, for all general attendees just using your computer speakers for the audio, please turn the volume up on your computer speakers. Next, to reduce any background noise, I ask that the presenters, or anyone calling in, please mute your computer speakers and ensure your phone is on mute when you are not speaking. All participants are free to type a question or comment in the Q&A pod any time throughout the webinar. We will address them following the presentation. Without further ado, I would like to turn it over to Dante Randazzo to get us started. Dante?

Thank you Zola. Happy Earthday everyone and welcome to today's webinar on developing resources for CERT programs. My name is Dante Randazzo and I'm the national lead for the CERT program here at FEMA. Obviously today's topic is extremely relevant. You all need resources in order to serve your community. And many programs, probably most programs, have needed to find creative ways in order to secure the resources they need. The ingenuity of local programs has always been one of the greatest strengths of CERT, and we have an ever-deepening pool of experiences and lessons learned throughout the country. Programs everywhere are finding new ways to keep their programs going. We're fortunate today to have three such programs with us to share their experiences. Today speakers include Jolan Csukas, Volunteer Coordinator for Cowley County, Kansas CERT; Brian Maier, Chief Operation Officer for Search and Rescue Ohio and Todd Frier with the Mississippi Citizen Corp and CERT program.

Once all of our speakers have completed their presentation, there will be time for a Q&A session. We hope that you will be able to put some of the strategies today's speakers will be discussing to use in your communities to help develop resources for your programs. We know this is an important topic, and we want to continue to share ideas and strategies that work for state and local programs with the rest of the national CERT community. In that spirit, today's Q&A session will be a little different. If any you listening today have any ideas on developing resources that have worked for you in your communities that we don't cover during the main presentation, please share those during the Q&A session. After the Q&A session, there will also be a brief survey. Please complete that before you sign out – this helps us to know how well we're serving you with these webinars. We will also be posting the recording of the webinar, the presentation from the webinar and a written copy of the transcript from today's webinar online at Ready.gov. During the Q&A session Zola will post a direct link to where that will be posted. There's a whole list of webinars on that page and it will be under the category Citizen Corp Partners and Affiliates. That information is also available in the invite that we circulated prior to the webinar in order to promote through the ICPD e-brief. With that, I would like to go ahead and introduce our first speaker Jolan Csukas, the Cowley County, Kansas CERT Program.

Good afternoon and thank you Dante. I am happy to be here today. My name is Jolan Csukas, I am the Volunteer Service Coordinator for Cowley County Emergency Management in Winfield, Kansas. A little bit about my background is that I am a level CERT three member and have been since 2006. I was able to join emergency management as a Volunteer Service Coordinator in 2012. And I have also been a member of the Kansas Emergency Management Association since 2013. In that particular year I was honored to become the KEMA New Emergency Management Professional of the Year. Cowley County Emergency Management is an agency governed by a

three-member County commission form of government, with a County Administrator and founded by local taxes. We are a small rural county with a population of about 36,000 located in south-central Kansas and bordering Oklahoma. Cowley County Emergency Management is a support agency for the Citizen Corp volunteer program including CERT, CART and MRC. They also support the Cowley County Emergency Auxiliary which others call storm spotters. They are known as CCEA.

Being under the umbrella of the local government agency is a very beneficial. The groups can go ahead and concentrate on their mission instead of just being on their own. They can concentrate on the core foundation which is like- needs a real strong leadership that is what makes things successful. The leadership is made up of individuals with a wide range of expertise. They're motivated and knowledgeable and they are definitely forward thinking. The group also has the ability to recognize and identify the strengths within the membership. This is really good because everybody plays a role and knows they are valued. Some of our members such as teachers and ex-military work together to design and present trainings for the group. Some of the older members who felt like they really could not be real active, find a role in answering phones or making phone calls, running off forms and doing filing. We have several people that are very good at IT and they handle our communications and our videos for us.

The other thing we feel strongly about is keeping our members engaged. We do that training exercises within the group. We try to do exercises in the neighboring counties. We do teambuilding activities with other first responder groups so that we can go ahead and foster trust and respect amongst all of the different groups. Being familiar with each other is certainly going to be beneficial when you need to be called out in cases of emergency.

The group assists with community functions, we work with local law enforcement and responders. We do county emergency preparedness presentations around the communities on a regular basis. The other thing we do is use the media to keep the focus on us. We are visible in the community and keep our activities in the public eye by maintaining a good relationship with our local radio stations. In fact, one of our members works for "KS Okay" so that becomes very beneficial when we want to get announcements out very quickly, easily and cheaply. Also the newspaper- we go ahead and make sure that we feed them information on a regular basis so that we can stay in the forefront. We also have a Facebook page and we have a County website that we keep current.

We were doing well and then the funding went away. The group had some money from organizations paid for traffic control. We get a few speakers fees and of course there is the inevitable sale of hats and T-shirts. We also knew that with the things that needed to happen this was not going to sustain a volunteer program.

So we put our heads together and decided that what we really needed to do probably in order to be able to access grants for nonprofit organizations and offer tax deductions to donors we thought that probably what we should do is form a 501(c)(3). Each group could not afford to do that on their own so we had a collaborative effort between CERT, CART, MRC and the spotters and we call this Cowley County Emergency Response Volunteers - hoping that that would really kind of give us a leg up.

As we delved into creating a 501(c)(3) we realized it was just going to be pretty darn expensive. We would have to raise a lot of money just to cover that. So, it was going to be expensive to start up and maintain and even though collectively through the county - even though the county attorney helped us and we didn't have to pay that expense it was still going to be fairly expensive. It was also going to be time-consuming. Who wanted to take on that responsibility? There was going to be the record-keeping, the filing of the taxes, etc. I am not going to spend a whole lot of time on that because I know that Brian and Dante are both going to be addressing the pros and cons of forming your own 501(c)(3) after looking at all of that we chose to go a different route. The group felt like whatever efforts we put out to raise money could be better spent on equipment and training.

As a result we looked around and we decided that we could join the Legacy Foundation – the local endowment association that has been in the county for a long time and has an excellent reputation and they welcomed us under their umbrella. The benefits to that were, they offered their services for only a 2% fee of whatever was brought in. They do all the paperwork, they do the acknowledgments, the thank you's, legal work and file the annual tax reports. They have also put CCERV Incorporated on their endowment gift list which has surprisingly paid off for us in several ways. They maintain a separate account for each of our volunteer groups and we also received a quarterly statement from them so that we are able to keep track of monies that we have.

How has it paid off? Well, in our first year of operation as a nonprofit in 2014 we raised \$6,178, which we thought was pretty darn good considering the size of our community. We felt like because of community awareness, the activities of the groups, the presentations and activities and everything, that our community pretty much came together. I mentioned that endowment gift list a while ago. What that brought in for us was about \$600 last year just because people realized that we are on the list and they can donate to us. They were anonymous donors, but we definitely appreciated them. We also have the support of our local businesses. They realized that we need batteries for radios for the storm spotters, they have - we have come up with several ways of being able to raise money for products that we need. In other words, when we wanted to purchase the 400 NOAA weather radios so we can give them out to community members during our different presentations one of the things we did is we asked the businesses to sponsor that 25% of the radio that we needed to come up with. As a result, what we did was we made a little tag and put it on the back of the radio to let people know what particular business in the community sponsored that radio for them.

One of the other things we have- Cowley County has multiple pipelines of gas and other oil and those types of things running through the county so as a result we approached the Kansas Pipeline Association and asked for some monies to purchase equipment, which they gladly did in the tune of a \$2500 grant. We have also done for fun and games we have done fundraisers. We did a fun run that put us out there in the community in a different light. We ended up purchasing a smoker that was built by some high school students in one of the smaller towns in the county and we are raffling that off and we will end up splitting the donations with the high school students so that actually gives us a little bit of an in there. We did Valentine deliveries for one of the grocery stores. We are kind of diversifying putting ourselves out in the community not only

as first responders and people that control traffic, but also we do fun things and it also goes ahead and keeps our members kind of active.

Sustaining your membership funding and resources requires more effort than just monthly meetings. You have to step outside of your circle to draw in what you need and what you want. In order to do that you need, there are some things that you really need to take into consideration. You need to know your volunteers. You need to utilize your strengths. To keep them engaged and keep their training current. You need to know your community. Make sure it knows about you. If you're specific about what you need they will support you. You need to be creative but you need to make it fun in ways to keep your volunteers engaged through training and activities and how you raise the funds. We come up with different than crazy ideas all the time and they seem to work because everybody buys into it and that really, really helps as well. Be resourceful. You need to look to your community for the resources that you need. They are there. You need to look for them. Use law enforcement, EMS, firefighters as trainers for some of your groups. Use your fellowship halls and hospitals and library conference rooms for training and meeting. There again it gets you out in the community and makes people inquisitive. They are interested and then they remember you and when you go to them they are going to remember what it is you do and they are going to help you. Know who can provide special services that you need before and after a disaster. Form a partnership with those groups now and then they will be available for you when you need them. I believe that ends my presentation for today. Thank you.

Thank you so much Jolan. We really appreciate that. It sounds like you really have some excellent things going on in Cowley County. Thank you so much for being with us here today. Jolan will be staying with us through the end of the presentation for the Q&A session. At this point, I would like to now introduce our second speaker, Brian Maier with Search and Rescue Ohio.

Good afternoon everybody. I was asked to speak a little bit about my organization, Search and Rescue Ohio. We are a professional search and rescue volunteer team here in central Ohio. We actually started out as a CERT team so to speak. There was no real CERT team in our area at the time. We formed it in about 2003. From members who wanted to give back to the community. We were looking for a way to do that. So they kind of formed what was then called RACE which stood for Rapid Assistance to Community Emergencies. As I like to say a CERT team on steroids. We did a lot of things a little above and beyond the typical CERT program. We did a lot of tree removal after severe storms that came through Ohio, shortly after we formed, we did deploy down to Hurricane Katrina and some of the Gulf States after some of their various hurricanes. Back home in Ohio at the time there wasn't a big need for CERT in the sense that there wasn't a big drive from local EMA, mostly because of funding issues. So we were looking for ways that we could fund ourselves and keep things going. At that time there weren't, at least in our area, funding a lot of CERT programs. So the decision was made - if you want to click to the next slide please.

The decision was made as to how we could try to generate revenue and a couple of different avenues were thought of to organize as a charity, some kind of an education fund, or a nonprofit association or a limited liability corporation. The termination was to go ahead and incorporate as a 501(c)(3) and for us it was -I know for a number of folks it can be kind of an expense every

year to pay your fees and things like that. We actually find that it pays for itself though in the end. Being a 501(c)(3) does open up a lot of doors for revenue generation. It also frees up money from a lot of folks when they know they can write it off on the taxes both individually as well as corporations, companies and that nature. When the company donates things, a couple of years ago we had about 30 or so batteries donated from batteries plus for our handheld two-way radios. Because we were a 501(c)(3) we were able to go in there and was it tax-deductible for us. Excuse me, there was no sales tax on that and that was the benefits for us. After that it was nice because they were able to - for them because there were your community relations and they can talk about some of the things they have donated and helped out charity wise and things of that nature. But when you become a 501(c)(3) there are some hurdles you need to get through. Some of the things that we did are, discussed on this slide. We did come up with our own bylaws. Because in the state of Ohio at least, we are required to have bylaws as a 501(c)(3). We came up with bylaws. We organized a Board of Directors to oversee the organization. We have a Board of Directors and we also have an executive staff made up of officers like myself similar to that we have an operations officer, logistics, the secretary and the training officers that makes up our executive staff. We also went a little further after the bylaws and came up with Articles of Incorporation. We also have a training manual and we have a couple of other things that distinguishes us a little more and kind of solidify the seriousness of what we are in trying to accomplish. Every year we come out with a business plan that we use in our marketing strategies when we reach out to businesses and agencies. Some of the ways that 501(c)(3) are able to raise money that may not be available to those otherwise is -- I do know for sure how many other groups are using this as far as the CERT community goes but Amazon does offer a version of their website called Amazon Smile and as long as you are a 501(c)(3) you can register with them and a portion, a percentage if you will of the public's purchase can be allocated to a charity of their choosing. So one of the things that is a low hanging fruit for us in the organization is a lot of folks that want to contribute in some way we can kind of take the sting out of it maybe donating like cash or checks and things of that nature and we let them know they can go to Amazon smile and sign-up. Our organization is under there. When they purchase something through Amazon Smile it looks just like the regular Amazon website, but because they set us up as their default charity a percentage of their overall purchase gets donated by Amazon to us. Another bit of low hanging fruit is through the Kroger grocery store they have what they call a Kroger's reward card. It is similar to most reward cards you will see throughout the country. Kroger will also donate to a 501(c)(3) that is registered with them to have portion someone's grocery bill donated to the organization of their choice. That check gets deposited to us once every quarter. The individual that signs up for that has to reenroll every April. This month we sent out a huge massive email as well as via Facebook and twitter reminding folks if they signed up for Kroger rewards this was the time to reenroll because they do purge their enrollment every April. Those are a couple of examples of low hanging fruit available to a nonprofit 501(c)(3). There is a cost associated with this. As mentioned by the previous speaker. At least for us here in Ohio we have a fee that we file with the Attorney General, which runs a little over \$100 and some change. There are a couple of other expenses. We do have taxes we have to file with the IRS, but at the end of the day or at the end of the year the cost associated with that 501(c)(3) are greatly dwarfed by all of the benefits that we actually are able to receive from that. Because we are a 501(c)(3) and we're not exactly a governed CERT program through let's say and EMA at the county or state level, we do have a little more autonomy. We are closely related to the Delaware county EMA here in Ohio. The Delaware County EMA has difficulty funding their

CERT program as many CERT programs have difficulty doing. They are a very small staffed EMA. They didn't have the ability to really get any kind of full-time volunteer or pay an administrator to oversee a CERT program. We partnered with them. We required all of our members to go through a CERT program. We farm it out to a neighboring county that is a lot larger. They actually have a paid CERT. They have CERT coordinator in there program. It is the largest CERT program in the state and in this region. And so we do farm it out to them. Our members to go take the night class course and we are all CERT members but because the Delaware County EMA doesn't have to invest resources or apply for grants or anything like that it does take a little bit on their shoulders and we are still there to provide them CERT oriented help. We are completely insured. Part of what we do is we carry liability, accident, injury, death insurance on all of our members. All over members to pay dues, \$35 per year and that helps defray some of the cost. Having that insurance actually helped open a lot of doors. Not just with the Delaware County EMA because they don't have to worry about finding coverage for us, just that they need to use us. Because we are a search and rescue team we do travel throughout Ohio and we also travel outside of the state to Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Maryland for mutual aid calls. Because we have that insurance, agencies are a lot more willing to work with us. We are able to leave our border Delaware County area and work with other agencies because we are able to carry that insurance. I'm getting little off-topic. I want to go back to the 501(c)(3). Being a 501(c)(3) does set us apart a little bit in the sense that we have our own board of directors, our own executive staff and we have kind of - I want to say a lot more autonomy in some regards because we are not under an EMA at the county or state level. And that works for us. It works for the EMA that we work with because we are self-sufficient and they don't have to expend those resources. Especially nowadays a lot of the DHS and FEMA money, but not stepping on anybody's toes, is kind of drying up. We are now over a decade after 9/11 and unfortunately a lot of politicians are kind of forgetting about that idea of being prepared for the next disaster. And so here in Ohio we are kind of seeing a lot of funding dry up. Because we are a 501(c)(3) and we have already been self-insured we are already set up that way, agencies like the Delaware County EMA, Franklin County EMA and so forth know that they don't have to worry about funding us. The majority of our stuff does come through donation. We do get a lot of in-kind donations both in equipment and funding. Chase Bank has a program where any of our team members who also work for them can turn in their hours they have volunteered over the year and Chase will donate financially to our team in compensation for those hours worked. Cardinal Health is another big company here in central Ohio that does something similar. That is another thing I would say, check with some of the companies in your area depending on where you live, who is headquartered in your area. They all have to donate money to keep up Public Relations appearances and things of that nature so they are always looking for folks. If you can sell them on your organization that is easy money for them. A lot of organizations on this call today, your overall budgets really aren't that big in the grand scheme of things for these companies. \$1000 to them is no big deal. They will gladly go ahead and write that check. Please reach out to the companies in your area. Regards of whether or not you are a 501(c)(3). I will say though, they do like that because of course they can use that as part of their Public Relations and write stuff off on the taxes. Some companies love to do that. That is kind of all I have to share. I guess, correct me if I'm wrong, if you have question, Q&A portion will be at the end of the whole conference. Is that taking place now?

Brian yes, it will take place at the end of the presentation. We will make sure all of our presenters get an opportunity to make presentations and we will devote hopefully at least the last ten minutes of the presentation. We will address all of the questions. We have been receiving questions throughout and appreciate it- if you continue to send those in throughout the presentation. We will wait until the end of today's webinar to address those.

I pretty much covered everything I need to cover. I want to reiterate that it may take a little effort but I do strongly believe that becoming a 501(c)(3) has greatly helped us financially and I think it can if done properly for your organization as well. So give it a second thought or give it a first thought if hasn't occurred to you. I will go ahead and yield rest of my time. Thank you very much.

Great, thank you so much Brian. With that we will move on now to our third presenter today. Todd Frier will be filling in for Dave Nichols today with the state of Mississippi Citizen Corp and CERT program.

Thank you so much for having me. It was a pleasure to listen to the other speakers. I kind of come from it from a little bit of a different angle. Mississippi has been very fortunate since about 2002 or 2003 DHS funding for Citizen Corp program has been maintained. Even today I work for the Mississippi office of Homeland security as a public information coordinator and we host the Mississippi Citizen Corp state Council at our office. We are very fortunate that the director of homeland security here has maintained that funding and Mississippi is very rural population of about 3 million and the idea of people taking care of themselves when first responders can't get to them is something very intrinsic to the population. It is an easy sell if you can get the word out. We have found out that it is not just about money with this program, it is relationship building because people will get on board and help you as long as they know what you do, who need -even if it is the time. How can you get them on board?

CERT teams our local, every CERT teams that we have and we have dozens throughout the states from all the way from the suburbs of Memphis to the Gulf Coast. The local contact is the key. Oftentimes they are mayors, teachers, fire or police chiefs or they are lieutenants, emergency managers. Originally funding for our program started with the Mississippi emergency management agency. That switched in about 2003 but the origin of some of the older CERT teams in the state come from that side. Emergency managers still play a very important role in a very involved role in the CERT teams. Sometimes the county emergency managers are going to be the local point of contact. The bottom line is that these people know their communities. They have the best idea of what the needs are. They also have the best contacts for businesses and civic organizations. Even something like the Lions Club, when you can come in and tell them what you want to do and how they can help and how they can donate. How they can sign up and protect themselves and their families.

Once you have those local contact then it is up to them and assistance from the State Council to then bring that to the elected officials. We find that bringing it to mayors and county supervisors and city council members - once again the idea of people taking care of themselves in the event of a disaster or at least having the knowledge of what to do, having a good plan, having a survival kit - these are easy sells once you can wrap them around the fact that all they need to do

is support the program. Any funding that they can push our way down to the local level is gravy but their support, getting out and talking to people because they are going to be the ones that are kind of the face. For example, the chairman, Dave Nichols who I am speaking for today, he is actually the mayor of a little town called Monticello down in South Mississippi. He attends all of these conferences like the Mayors Municipally and the like, is kind of contacts where he is able to talk to other mayors and other council members, any of the County folks in his county, Lawrence County, all of that adds up and all of that leads to cooperation from businesses from donating equipment, donating time, donating money, donating clothing. It builds. The hardest part is getting the ball rolling. Once it does get rolling it starts to take on a life of its own. Many of these CERT teams have been self-sufficient for a number of years. We were able to use the funding that typically have been going to them to kind of spread around a little bit more. Next slide.

It's important to encourage the local contacts to recruit local community leaders. The state Citizen Corp board members CERT trainers, they are all available to come and talk. For example, we had 22 CERT classes last year throughout the state. We had 22 CERT classes, CERT Olympics, CERT Refreshers, which I will explain in a little bit. The bottom line is we calculated that about 1,200 people were reached with the CERT classes. Those kind of contacts - we operate by word-of-mouth more than anything else. Being able to recruit locals to share the message that this is their community there protecting, this is their neighbors and this is their family, it is very effective. Next slide.

Local businesses have a vested interest in making sure that organizations are capable of maintaining order. Their community members themselves so they often times - we have been able to have them donate their time but donate their facilities, their equipment, donate their experience. Some of these different industries are fantastic. We have AMR come in and they donate their time to train people on CPR. We have fire departments that come into donate their time to teach cribbing and it. Finding out what you need is something that is key for them. They are more than willing to jump in but they need to be told that number one you need something and number two they have the service that they can provide.

Don't be afraid to invite the media. It's very important with my position in Communications with the Office of Homeland Security, I deal a lot with other state agencies and their public relations department. They love this kind of thing. If it is a feel-good story to have training for people that just makes sense. Especially since 2005 with Hurricane Katrina coming through and devastating the Mississippi Coast in addition to Louisiana, anything they can do to spread the message that this training is out there and that people can help and that this is how people can become more self-sufficient is key.

Also, the local media is big into PSAs. It won't cost you anything if you can get them to buy into what you're doing. For Mississippi especially since 2005 it has been a pretty easy sell. So you get TV and radio. We have even have billboards at no cost to us. Advertising the program, advertising the various modules, advertising whom they should contact within whatever county or municipality that the people reside in.

It is important to recruit somebody local to do the training if possible. Number one, it is far more efficient and less travel and lower cost. Is easier to set the schedules for all involved. But, once again, generally they know the communities if they are close enough. They have an idea of what the dynamic of that county or city or business is. And they are much more effective. We can bring people in from all across the state. We have funded trainers that have had to drive a couple of hundred miles to get to where they are going. Is not ideal. If you have the ability - we are fortunate that we have so many trainers throughout the state. We can generally find a trainer with them only one county away if there isn't already one in that particular area that is requesting the funding. If you are able to, depending on your situation, the closer the better. Next slide please.

Most important thing that we have found is to keep the volunteers and the CERT teams and the businesses and any kind of sponsors, keep them active. Keep events coming so that they don't, number one, volunteers don't forget what they have learned but the businesses don't forget that you are there. They have enough on their plate, they need subtle reminders that this is still a cause worth fighting. We offer events year-round. For CERT teams that have already been established we have CERT refresher training. We have add-on events - everything from crowd control, to how to take care of your pets in a disaster. How to take care of those with disabilities during a disaster, mental health, currently the Governor has put a big emphasis on human trafficking so we are able to add into refresher training some additional things that aren't part of the standard CERT curriculum. Just to keep them interested and keep them invested. We partner up with businesses and the best way to keep the business interested is to let them know that they are still needed. If they start losing contact with you, which is your responsibility to keep that interest there, if they stop hearing from you that source of funding, that source of time, that source of expertise is going to dry up. Next slide please.

Partner up with any organization that you can that makes sense. Currently the Mississippi State University's extension service has a program called Mississippi Youth Preparedness Initiative. They are able to go into schools, the extension service has offices in all 82 counties in the state and -- excuse me, 81 counties. One county gets left out but they kind of share everything because they are so small. They have connections in every state. Excuse me, in every county and they get into schools and have program that is geared toward teenagers. Basically 13 to about 17 or 18 and we are able to partner up with them to get CERT into the schools. They already have their own funding. We supplement some where we can but this is just an example of partnerships we find somebody that is trying to do something similar and as long as you can - as long as you can make sure that the CERT curriculum and the facets of what the program is all about mesh with whatever organization you are teaming up with it just makes sense to partner up and share some resources. We do that with the Mississippi Department of Health, various state universities, the Mississippi Department of Education. They have an introduction to law and public safety class that we are able to push CERT into. Faith-based organizations, private businesses to anybody and everybody that is willing to partner and has a like goal. We are interested in them. Next slide please

This is my final point. Basically as long as you believe what you're doing, it is going to be infectious. If you really believe in your heart of hearts that keeping people safe and allowing them to be self-sufficient in disasters is important and I can't think of anything that I think would counteract that, then it is going to show itself in the way that you describe the program and the

way you talk about it and we presented as an opportunity not only to the volunteers but to elected officials, to private organizations. It is all a matter of sales. When they see that this is something that they can make a difference in, for minimal investment, it seems to have something that they are more than willing to get into. As Brian was saying most of these businesses need to spend money on philanthropic causes and this is just one of the most valuable ones out there, in my opinion. Once again thank you all for having me and I will be happy to answer any questions.

Excellent Todd, thank you so much for being with us today. We really appreciate it.

I'd like to once again thank all three of our speakers for an excellent job today. I wanted to cover just a few additional points, before we get into the Q&A session. I'm going to be flipping through a number of different slides here without going into many of them in great detail – many of these were already covered by our speakers, but I'm including them here so that when the slides are posted online you can review them on your own. Next slide please. So the slides I prepared cover four basic topics: Strategic Planning and Budgeting; Record Keeping; Partnerships and Sources for Funding; and 501(c) (3) Status for Tax Exemption. Next slide please.

Something I hear from state and local programs all the time is how important it is to make your program essential to your community, and to work closely with those who make budgetary decisions. Work with local leaders to try identify your community's needs, and make sure that your program is strategically focusing on meeting those needs. If your program is a strong asset to first responders, emergency managers, community organizations, elected leaders, and the general population, this will help to secure clear, demonstrable support or endorsement from local leaders and organizations. Next slide please.

Record keeping , I won't spend too much time on this, but in general it is one of the most important things you can do as a CERT program manager, not just for resource development, but also for liability and a host of other important issues. Next slide please.

Partnering with other organizations with similar missions, such as the Corporation for National and Community Service, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, and the American Red Cross, is a great way to save costs and to share resources. Something I noticed as I was looking through the registration data for CERT programs, is that Campus and Workplace CERT programs that is CERT programs that are sponsored by institutions of higher learning do not seem to rely as much on funding from federal, state, or local governments as other CERT programs. It's a small sample size, but when budgets are tight, I think partnerships with local businesses and institutions of higher education can be even more important. Think critically about the organizations in your community and how they and your program can benefit each other. Next slide please.

Regionalization is more prevalent in some parts of the country than others, but I have seen several instances of CERT programs banding together for resource development efforts. So much like we saw Cowley County, multiple organizations coming together to form a 501(C) (3). I've seen areas in Texas, Kentucky and Utah, for example, where in order to defray some of the cost associated with forming a 501 (c) (3) you have multiple CERT programs coming together to

establish a 501 (c) (3) organizations that then funds multiple CERT Programs for multiple jurisdictions. Next slide please.

Just to get through these two slides, these are some general suggestions for researching potential donors and supporters in your communities. Next slide please.

Again, just some general guidance and considerations as you are researching potential donors and supporters. Next slide please.

Again as all the speakers alluded to partnerships are incredibly important. Making it clear what you are asking for and focusing on your needs going to meetings with a clear plan but be open to accepting resources that you might not have asked for and other opportunities that might present themselves during discussion. As Todd mentioned, the efforts to increase your visibility and showcase availability gets the attention of sponsors and supporters. And remember to show partners results and to recognize and thank them for support. Next slide Please

These next two slides include tips for developing a pitch when approaching potential supporters. Here are some general tips for creating a standard pitch that you can use for outreach in general. And then next slide.

And that here is a tailored pitch, when you're focusing on a specific potential supporter just some things to keep in mind.

The last two slides include an overview and some general advice about the 501(c)(3) process which Jolan and Brian already covered in-depth. Next slide please.

As Jolan and Brian alluded both to, there are some pros and cons to having a 501(c) (3) organization. Obviously in terms of pros you have potentially greater financial independence, eligibility for a wider reach for grants, attractive to donors interested in making tax-deductible contributions. But as Jolan pointed out, It does require a significant amount of work and investment and an annual filing fee. You have to ask yourself if what you are bringing through your 501(c)(3) is worth what you are investing into it. So, in Brian's case clearly they are pulling in enough resources through that 501(c)(3) to justify the cost, but that is something each individual program will have to determine for itself. Next slide please.

Just some general advice for 501(c)(3). In general it is always smart to consult with your jurisdiction legal counsel. If you're considering using local governments tax ID number, you also want to speak with a jurisdiction financial officer. Next slide please.

Finally, if you're considering using existing 501(c)(3) to act as a fiscal agent for your program as Cowley County did, make sure that you are taking into account these considerations. Next slide please.

That concludes my part of the presentation. Now I will hand it over to Zola to explain the Q&A session process, before we open the floor to questions.

As we have already been doing, if you have a question or even a comment go ahead and put it in the Q&A pod. And then we will assign them.

I see we already have several questions so we will be able to get right into it. Actually there is one question that I saw that is a great segue. Someone asked to learn more about CERT rodeos. And in fact we recorded a webinar six months ago that included one of our future presenters was Dave Nichols from Mississippi about search competitive events. We had presenters from Nevada, Kansas City and Mississippi all talk about CERT rodeos, Olympics and other competitive events they do. We will be posting a link right now, <http://www.ready.gov/preparedness-leader/webinar-library>. So we are going to be putting that up. It is available in the notes box section. You should see it at the very bottom of the screen in the center. Again, if you go to that page, that is our entire webinar library and we will be posting this webinar recording and the transcript and the slides from this presentation to that link as well. All of our presentations are under the subheading Citizen Corp Partners and Affiliates. If you go there you will also be able to view the recording for the webinar we did on CERT competitive events and the transcript and PowerPoint slides in a PDF format for that presentation. Let's go ahead and we will pull up some of the other questions.

A couple things I have seen, I think we can say this is for all three of you -- obviously when people sign up for CERT programs their interest is primarily is the emergency response aspect but volunteer is an important asset for fundraising, collecting resources and so how do you keep volunteers engaged and how do you motivate them to participate in these types of activities?

This is Brian with Search and Rescue Ohio, basically this is something that we were just discussing not too long ago. So we try to reemphasize the fact that this whole organization is based on volunteers. The average lifespan of most volunteers in our organization is a little over three years. You are constantly always recruiting. We try to emphasize that to the folks on our team. We let them know this team does not exist in a vacuum, we are always looking for new folks and new forms of revenue. So we reemphasize our donations and different low hanging fruit they can reach out to friends, coworkers, loved ones through the Amazon Smile and Kroger rewards but we create efforts for individuals. We have been invited to a number of weather spotting training courses put on by the National Weather Service. They will typically have nonprofits or emergency disaster type groups come in and set up booths to explain what they do and how they operate. We will go out and recruit from those areas. We will speak to other -- CERT teams. It's a combination but this getting them involved and there is a little bit of teeth pulling sometimes in the beginning, but once you get them out there and they're talking about the groups that they love to take part in anyways a lot of them find it is a really easy thing to do because it is something they are used to doing so they are talking it up and sharing some of their personal experiences. Usually when they start sharing personal experiences with strangers or whatever these events people start to loosen up and they feel more confident and the individual there speaking with is able to feel that as well.

Great, thank you Brian. Todd did you want to chime in on that as well?

Sure, this is Todd from Mississippi. As was mentioned earlier Mississippi is pretty big into the CERT competitive events. We have CERT Olympics that is a statewide event. We try to do one

large event a year and it is on a rotating basis. The first year is a CERT conference. The second year is a CERT Olympics. The third-year is a team CERT exercise. And at one point we were doing two a year and it was difficult to get people away twice because it is a whole weekend. But currently we get first 10 teams that register and they compete against each other in a series of training events from cribbing and search and rescue to anything and everything that will keep their interest and add to what they have already done. We have lectures in the morning and then we will go out and they will have events where they rotate through a series, a series of trials where they have to work and use teambuilding. It works really well to get people to kind of compete for team pride, if you will. You are representing your county and representing your city. Once they get back into it often times we will hear feedback that they are remembering why they got started in the first place and remembering why they thought it was important in the first place. You are saying what other teams are doing and you are kind of putting your head together for best practices. If you see another team that is doing something in a way that might work better for you, we have had a lot of cross collaboration on what they want to do, what they want - how they want to equip themselves and how they dispatch themselves. So competitive events for sure they kind of add-on training. In addition to the refresher courses we try to do a refresher for each team two years out from the original training. And that seems like a long time but there are some a CERT teams in the state that it is really difficult to have one sooner than that. But, in addition to the refreshers every year we offer one day add-on training that are a few hours opened up to anybody that has CERT training. It is basically covering components of search and rescue or disaster scenarios or volunteers that are not covered in the CERT program. You are still getting them together but you are giving them a little bit of new and fresh information, which stimulates them once again.

Hello. This is Jolan chiming in, if I may.

Absolutely.

I think we are all on the same page as far as trying to keep volunteers engaged. I noticed they talk about refreshers like every two years or so. We figured out a couple of years ago the just having a business meeting once a month just really didn't draw people in. However, if we had like a 30-minute business meeting and talked about coming up events that we were going to need to work as far as traffic control or for the health and safety fairs we participate in and that type of thing, people do that well and they can get that information through the emails or whatever. If they came and we would - we have a training coordinator so there is always, at least a 30 minute training session going on as a refresher course because if you don't use markings on a structure that you have gone through, if you don't use those markings you forget them. We bring things like that up on a regular basis. A lot of our CERT members are really interested in new classes. We only do like one or two a year. You should have about 15 to 20 new people come in to the CERT program. I try to go ahead and use the CERT members as much is possible to do the training because that keeps them engaged they are also the ones that plan the exercise. We just do a lot of different things. One of the things - I know this is all about CERT, but there is also CART and MRC and we have also have the Storm Spotters. One of the things that we have emphasized is that if a disaster hit we will all be working together in some form or another as CERT members as the two search and rescue members also need to know what to do with stray animals that are around and that type of thing. So we really encourage all of our volunteer groups

to work together. One of the things we do is what they call a low ropes. We go out to camp horizon, a really neat place in the Walnut Valley area and we do some exercises that build trust and recognition and that type of thing and have lunch together. We just try a lot of different things and kind of let the volunteers lead the way as to where they want to go and give them the opportunities and encourage them to grow in whatever it is they want to do to help the organization.

Excellent Jolan, thank you so much. And thank you all three of your for your response to that question. I know we are almost at four o'clock. Are you able to stay on for just a couple of more minutes so we can get to a couple of additional questions?

Yes.

Great. thank you. We have a couple that are directed specifically to Brian. Brian, we have got a couple questions for people wanting to know, what the name is of the insurance company that you used and if you could -- if you wouldn't mind repeating what the coverages are.

Yes. The company that we go through is VFIS -Volunteers Firefighters Insurance)or something to that effect we have used them since we basically started. They are familiar with the volunteer programs because they have been around for like over 100 years with volunteer firefighters departments throughout the country. They are used to working with volunteer organizations. We do search and rescue and disaster response so it was right up their alley. As far as cost goes, again we carry liability, personal, property, we do carry a death benefit on all of our members. I am trying to remember every different Avenue. We have an umbrella policy. Altogether we are looking at over a little over \$3800 per year for all of that insurance. We have actually used it, unfortunately, once. We actually had one of our trailers stolen. We had a lot of heavy equipment with some chainsaws, lighting, all kinds of things for disaster response, somebody stole the entire trailer. By no means am I sponsoring them - I'm just saying speaking from my own experience they were able to cut a check pretty quickly and we were able to collect all of that equipment and find a safer location to store the trailer. That covered us and we didn't have to jump through any hoops or anything like that. We also - we carry property insurance so like we have and off-road called a Ranger or a six wheeled ATV or whatever you want to call it. We carry insurance so if somebody is driving that and they were to do damage we are covered. We are definitely covered insurance wise through a number of different ways or avenues. As a mentioned before, that, helps open the door to a lot of agencies because we are not directly funded by a government agency we are not covered under workers comp or anything like that like some CERT organizations are. So we are able to not only get the door open in other counties but also outside of the state of Ohio. We can travel for disaster and search related events.

Okay great, thank you Brian. We have another question here and I think this one might be directed to Todd. Any advice for unincorporated county areas that have no true local government but to have a CERT group?

If there are any unincorporated county areas in Mississippi?

Well, as far as CERT groups that are very rural and don't really have really just a County group rather than or maybe a community specific, but they don't have a mayor or a town council or something like that, we have a few of those. The best thing that we found that they do is they work well with latching on to some neighboring larger groups. We are able to provide a little bit of funding to the larger group to help them train and outfit them. Having that kind of connection where they are able to still maintain the unity but share some resources with -I think Brian mentioned doing the same thing on a little bit larger scale - but sharing resources from unit that has got a little bit more in terms of manpower and equipment, that is what we recommend. We encourage those small areas to form a CERT team because they are specifically at risk of being on their own for an extended amount of time if something should happen. Just two years ago we had excuse me, last year we had a terrible tornado that came through central Mississippi and it isolated a couple of these small communities for over a week. That is the kind of community that would benefit the most from this training. We love getting those kind of requests, but the easiest way to do that is to partner up with a nearby team or town or even the county in general and use their resources to help get the job done.

Great, thank you Todd. I think we will take on one more question , what we may do is take some of the questions that we received today but did not have time to respond to, what we may do is we may circulate those to our presenters and see if we can get responses to those and circulate them back to the asker. We did get quite a few questions today. I don't want to keep people on here for too long. Last question I will direct to your Jolan. You mentioned reaching out to local businesses and the KCA pipeline. How did to go about doing that? What was your approach in getting the support of KCA pipeline and local businesses in your community?

The KPA Pipeline Association has several people in Winfield that were kind of associated with law enforcement in that type thing once upon a time. They are kind of familiar with our organization and we usually meet with a group like about once a month, excuse me, when the year just to kind of - see what is going on and the kind of give us a little bit of the training because of the potential hazmat situations. In the course of conversation they mentioned that they were going to start doing grants. Of course we jumped right on that. We took advantage of the fact that they are here and we meet with them and we also have, there is like about 13 to 17 pipelines running through the County. It was actually to their benefit to kind of assist us, to give us money for the anemometers and the additional radios that we would need and the safety vests and everything. In case of a disaster with the pipeline of course we would be first responders. It was just kind of a natural for them to support us.

Great, thank you so much Jolan I would once again like to thank all of our presenters today. Before we close we are going to have a brief poll. Please do participate before you sign out. Let us know how we are doing and let us know how you think today's webinar went. I want to thank all three of our presenters. We will try to get the recording, the presentation and the transcript posted to the link that Zola posted as soon as possible off of ready.gov. Thank you so much for joining us today. We will do our best to address the questions you have asked and to get those back to you. Thank you again. Just to say a quick plug, we are going to try to start doing these webinars every two months so what we are planning to do two months from now is another webinar in partnership with the FEMA office of Disability Integration Coordination. That is going to cover providing CERT training to individuals with disabilities and others with access

and functional needs. I hope you will all join us for that. Thank you again and have a great afternoon.

[Event Concluded]