

SERV-OR Newsletter

State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Oregon

"Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy and Prepared Communities"



This is the place to read and learn about the latest news of the Medical Reserve Corps and the State Managed Volunteer Pool at the National, State and Local levels. We want to express our **THANKS** to all volunteers for making Oregon a safer and healthier place!

<https://SERV-OR.org>

Did you know that there are currently **470** approved State Managed Volunteer Pool members Oregon?



Members of the SMVP members pose for a photo after an exercise with Washington State in August 2010.

Oregon MRC Updates

Clackamas County Five MRC members attended and assisted at the 2010 UASI Citizen Corps conference last November. One member, Pamela Alvey, was featured as a speaker presenting on the Shelter Associated Infirmary (SAI) concept.

This fall Clackamas County held it's first MRC flu vaccination class/ waiver option as a POD participant requirement. Following shortly after the class, participants volunteered as crew leads in the Happy Valley POD giving over 350 flu vaccinations!

Coos Bay We are very excited to welcome the new MRC Unit in Coos Bay to the Oregon MRC team! **Michelle Wyatt** is

the Unit Coordinator and is working hard to build a strong foundation for the Unit. We look forward to hearing about all the great things this MRC will do. Keep up the awesome work, Michelle!

Yamhill County We bid adieu to Teri Watson, the Unit Coordinator. Thanks for your dedication, Teri and we wish you the best in your future endeavors. Additionally, we are happy to welcome **Julie O'Neil**, Preparedness Coordinator, that will also be taking on the MRC Coordinator role.

Nehalem Bay has partnered with CERT to teach triage, first aid and emergency medical techniques to freshman and

sophomore students at Neah-Kah-Nie High School in Rockaway, Oregon. This TeenCERT program empowers youth by teaching them medical and leadership skills that they can put into action in an emergency and their day-to-day lives. At the end of the quarter, the class will participate in a final exercise to test their ability to respond in a test emergency situation.

The students are excelling in activities from performing triage with stuffed animals to learning how to make splints using everyday supplies. The MRC is impressed with the awesome work of the TeenCERT class!!

National MRC Updates

The focus of MRC Units is to strengthen the health and safety of their local communities. Here are some recent examples of this occurring at the national level!

In Huntington, WV, the **Cabell/Wayne MRC** teamed up with the West Virginia Citizen Corps and the Tri-State Fire Academy to sponsor a free community Response Team training session on January 24th, 2011. The training focused on basic disaster preparedness and response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations!

The **Cape Cod MRC** in Massachusetts successfully partnered with a local Boy Scout troop on a project called "Explorer Troop" to

incorporate youth volunteers into their unit. Youth of ages 14-19 may join this group and participate in various training and educational outreach including a sun safety project where the youth volunteers distributed free sunscreen to beach patrons. This is an excellent example of how youth volunteers can have a role in MRC Units.

In southern California, another example of a successful partnership between a MRC and their local health department took place in early January. The **Santa Barbara MRC** and the public health department joined forces to provide 500 free flu shots to anyone over the age of three.

In mid December of 2010, the

Central New York MRC invited interested community members to attend a informational session about the mission of the MRC and how folks could become involved through volunteering. This MRC is proud to announce its volunteer numbers are up to 340.

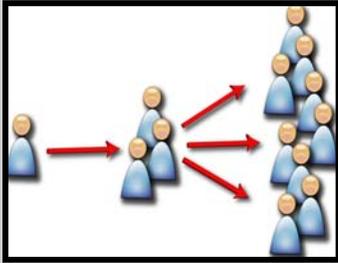
Events like these are happening across the nation everyday reflecting the dedication of MRC Unit Coordinators and volunteers! Keep up the fantastic work!

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Oregon Statewide MRC Marketing Campaign Update



In early January, the MRC Unit Coordinators throughout the state received a survey asking a series of questions about marketing priorities and goals of each MRC. There was a 100% response rate from participants. Angela Carvallo, the State MRC Intern from the University of Tampa, analyzed and compiled the results into four overarching goals and strategies.

The four goals are:

1. Make each Unit's goals clear in terms of what types of volunteers and how many of each they would like in their MRC.
2. Focus on a statewide re-

ruitment strategy for volunteers.

3. Educate the medical community about what each health care professional's responsibility would be as a volunteer within a MRC Unit.
4. Educate the medical community that they would not be signing up for duty outside their area unless they want to.

The strategies to reach these goals include utilizing a variety of avenues to recruit potential volunteers such as Public Service Announcements (PSAs), print media, online media and outreach to professional associations that could potentially

be sources of volunteers or MRC partners.

After organizing the data, the proposed Marketing Plan was sent back to the MRC Unit Coordinators for review. We are excited about the potential of a Statewide Campaign and would love to hear more responses from the local Units about which goals and strategies would make the most sense for them.

We would like to thank the Unit Coordinators for participating in the survey as well as thank Angela Carvallo our Intern, for her hard work in getting this project rolling. Stay tuned for more information!



News from NACCHO

NACCHO's **health reform** webpage is updated and reorganized with links to new resources and specific details that may be of particular interest to local health departments. For more information, please visit <http://www.naccho.org/advocacy/healthreform/index.cfm>. Additionally, you may find useful resources on NACCHO's website about **Advance Prac-**

tice Centers (APCs), which are networks of local health departments that exist to serve their peers by developing training and tools on topics relating to MRC activities such as biosurveillance, vulnerable populations, risk communications, and more. For more information as well as access to these tools, please visit <http://www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/APC/index.cfm>

Also, the NACCHO website features the "Toolbox" resource, which is a free, online collection of local public health tools developed by members of the public health community. It includes documents such as the "MRC Toolkit" and "Accreditation Preparedness Toolkit." Check it out at: <http://www.naccho.org/toolbox/>

VISTA Team Volunteers for MLK Jr. Day

On January 17th in honor of Martin Luther King Jr., the AmeriCorps*VISTA/Oregon MRC Partnership Project participated in a Flash Mob Dance Service Day in collaboration with **Oregon Healthy Kids** and other AmeriCorps members throughout Oregon.

The Day began with a program overview of Oregon Healthy Kids and a Q&A session. The volunteers then learned and practiced the flash mob dance routine that was later performed at the Woodburn Factory Stores in the afternoon. A flash mob dance is when a group of people

assemble suddenly in a public space and spontaneously perform a dance routine. For this event, the purpose of the flash mob was to bring awareness about the Oregon Healthy Kids program to the community. Oregon Healthy Kids is an expanded state health coverage program for Oregon children and teens. Since many of our VISTAs work with members of their local community, this collaboration was a great opportunity to spread the word about this great program! To learn more, visit their website: www.oregonhealthykids.gov

All together about 60 volunteers participated in the flash

Mob, which you can watch a video of here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHatRUzrDXU>

Thank you to Mackenzie Berkman for filming this event!

Lastly, thanks to all of the volunteers and staff who made this event possible!



Cultural Competency and the MRC

The mission of the Medical Reserve Corps is to “engage volunteers to strengthen public health, emergency response and community resiliency.” An important characteristic of MRC Units, therefore, is a cultural awareness and respect of the diversity within the local community it aims to strengthen.

The term “Cultural Competency” is a characteristic that enables our MRC Units to provide higher levels of appropriate care and education within their communities. During MRC sponsored events, a volunteer works with diverse individuals and groups from a variety of cultural and economic back-

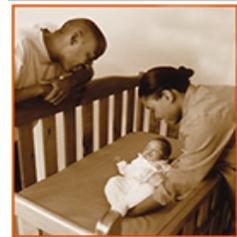
grounds. The quality of the care or education provided by MRC Units is significantly increased when the volunteers and coordinators are culturally aware of the background of the patients they are working with. Here are a few steps we can take toward improving our own “Cultural Competency.”

1. **Take time to observe**– notice what types of experiences people are having (language barriers, physical impairments, difficulties filling out forms) and take steps to assist them.
2. **Put yourself in their shoes**– seek to understand others perspectives and needs, which

could differ from our own.

3. **Learn about other cultures**– realize that simple tasks in our everyday lives could be challenging for someone unfamiliar with the resources in a community or is without health insurance.

These steps came from The **National Center for Cultural Understanding at Georgetown University**, which is an excellent resource for MRCs to utilize in educating their volunteers around this topic. “Cultural Competency” is an essential component in successfully building true community-wide resiliency around our local MRC Units.



AmeriCorps*VISTA/Oregon MRC Partnership Welcomes a New VISTA!

In early February, the Partnership Project welcomed a new member to the team: **Kaija Daniel**. Kaija is a second year AmeriCorps VISTA who is working at the **Linn County Health Department**. Kaija completed her first year of service as the Homeless Outreach Coordinator for the Lincoln Commission on Children and Families in Newport (as part of the CSC Building Bridges Corps). She organized the logis-

tics for the county's Project Homeless Connect, compiled a planning manual for small and rural communities, and partnered with the Lincoln County School District homeless liaison program. Her second year of service began with Clara Barton VISTA Corps at the Oregon Youth Authority, where she implemented an arts education and life skills training program for incarcerated youth called the

Hope Partnership Project.

At Linn County Public Health she will be working with vulnerable populations planning, and assisting with the accreditation process and other department projects along the way.

In the future, Kaija hopes to continue her education and pursue a Masters of Social Work. We are very excited to welcome her to the team!



Regional HRC/MRC Develop Strategic Plan

The Regional Health Reserve Corps/Medical Reserve Corp group met to discuss a regional approach in streamlining MRC volunteer guidelines so that in a Governor-declared state emergency, MRC Units would be able to share volunteers if needed. The Public Health Leadership Group, which consists of public health leaders from Clackamas, Multnomah, Columbia, Clark and Washington Counties, proposed that the regional group look at six core service areas to consider streamlining. During the **HRC/MRC Strategic Meeting** in mid

January, Zumana Rios, the Regional HRC/MRC Coordinator, led representatives from MRCs in Columbia, Multnomah, Washington, Nahalem Bay, Clackamas, SW Washington and the State in creating guidelines within each focus area. Four of the following six core areas were developed. The focus areas are:

1. Volunteer activation protocols
2. Registering all volunteers in SERV-OR
3. Volunteer approval process including screening, credentialing and background checks

4. Standardized volunteer training requirements
5. Joint exercises and shared training opportunities
6. Common roles and/or job descriptions for volunteers

The PH Leadership Group will review the draft guidelines in June and the Regional HRC/MRC will continue moving forward. Additionally, the idea for a one-day training conference for Region 1 volunteers was discussed and agreed upon at this meeting and will occur Saturday, April 16th. See page 4 for more information.



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Upcoming Trainings/Classes

Mark your calendars for the upcoming new volunteer orientation for State Managed Volunteer Pool (SMVP) volunteers in SERV-OR. The orientation will take place on **Tuesday, March 29th** from **6-7:30pm** at the **Hollywood Senior Center in Portland, OR**. The address of the Holly-

wood Senior Center is located at **1820 NE 40th Ave, Portland OR 97121**.

The Regional HRC/MRC will host a one day training on **Saturday, April 16th** at the **Monarch Hotel** near the Clackamas City Town Center. The training will include

classes on radiological emergencies, psychological first aid and more. It is open to Region 1 MRC volunteers first and then will be opened up for others. Stay tuned for more information.

SERV-OR Welcomes New Systems Coordinator

We are very pleased to welcome our newest Public Health Emergency Preparedness member: **Eric Gebbie**.

Eric has been hired as the **SERV-OR Systems Coordinator** and will be working on developing a system that will verify our volunteers to Level 1 (certify hospital privileges). He will also be working to improve our current volunteer registration process and streamline our badging system.

We are incredibly fortunate to have Eric on our team. He has worked on public health preparedness and workforce development projects in schools of pub-

lic health in New York and Illinois for about ten years. His other experience includes fieldwork on human rights violation monitoring, foreign language studies, and oral history collection. His international experience totals approximately 5 years in 30 countries. He studied social anthropology and linguistics at the University of St Andrews in Scotland, and human rights and humanitarian affairs at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. He expects to complete a DrPH this May!

Eric is available to answer questions regarding the SERV-OR System. He already facilitated a

two-hour training on SERV-OR at the end of January, so he is off to a running start. Please join us in welcoming Eric to the team!

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Spotlight on MRC Core Competencies

The Office of the Surgeon General suggests that all MRC volunteers have a basic understanding of key areas relating to emergency preparedness and response. This knowledge builds their skills as well as increases the efficacy of interoperations between Units. These areas are referred to as "**Core Competencies**" and for this newsletter, we will take a closer look at the specific competency that describes the importance of personal preparedness. This competency includes:

1. Developing a personal and family preparedness plan and reviewing with family and friends.
2. Recognizing the potential barriers to executing the plan as well as planning contingencies.
3. Knowledge of key components

of a variety of preparedness kits (i.e. home kit, go kit, work kit).

4. Identifying components to keeping one's self, family, team and community safe from environmental and incidental hazards and implementing them into personal plans.
5. Setting up occasions to have practice drills.

As leaders in the MRC Units, the coordinators and other staff strive to promote and embrace the value of personal, family and work life preparedness. We can encourage our members to develop their knowledge within this competency by asking them whether or not they have a personal and family preparedness plan and whether or if they possess a disaster kit. We can also encourage volunteers to

access information about these topics (see training links below) or we can coordinate related training opportunities to help our volunteers build skills within this competency.

Online Trainings:

FEMA *IS-22 Are you Ready?*
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWEB/IS/is22.asp>

CERT-Module 1, Lesson 2: Family and Workplace Preparedness
www.citizencorps.gov/cert/IS317

Ready.GOV
www.ready.gov/america/index.html

More Info on Core Competencies:
[Click here.](#)

You can also visit the National MRC website for other resources.