

# MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS REVIEW

"Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities"

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER SERVING THE MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS UNITS OF IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI AND NEBRASKA

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## Upcoming Events

### National Conference on Volunteering and Service.

June 1-3, 2008 in Atlanta, GA. Sponsored by the Corporation for National & Community Service and Points of Light & Hands On Network. For more information, visit <http://www.volunteeringandservice.org/index.htm>.

**Missouri State MRC Meeting.** June 16, 2008 in Columbia, MO. Sponsored by the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps, Region VII. For more information, contact Gary Brown, Regional MRC Coordinator, at (816) 426-2829 or [gary.brown@hhs.gov](mailto:gary.brown@hhs.gov).

### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Public Health Volunteers Symposium.

July 31, 2008 in Columbia, MO. Sponsored by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). For more information, contact Sharlet Howren, DHSS, at [sharlet.howren@dhss.mo.gov](mailto:sharlet.howren@dhss.mo.gov).

**New Madrid Seismic Zone Conference.** August 12-14, 2008 in Rolla, MO. Sponsored by the U.S. Geological Survey, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri State Emergency Management Agency and the Society of American Military Engineers. For more information, visit <http://conference.mst.edu/newmadridconf/>.

**2008 ASTHO-NACCHO Joint Conference.** September 9-12, 2008 in Sacramento, CA. Sponsored by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). For more information, visit <http://www.naccho.org/conferences/asthonaccho2008/index.cfm>.

**2008 Iowa Governor's Homeland Security Conference.** September 30-October 1, 2008 in Des Moines, IA. Sponsored by the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division. For more information, visit <http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/Home/GovernorsHomelandSecurityConference/tabid/173/Default.aspx>.

**Regions VII and VIII MRC Conference.** October 2-3, 2008 in Kansas City, MO. Sponsored by the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps, Regions VII and VIII. For more information, contact Gary Brown, Regional MRC Coordinator, at (816) 426-2829 or [gary.brown@hhs.gov](mailto:gary.brown@hhs.gov).

**IAEM 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and EMEX.** November 15-20, 2008 in Overland Park, KS. Sponsored by the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). For more information, visit <http://www.iaem.com/events/annual/intro.htm>.

## 2008 MRC National Leadership and Training Conference

MRC leaders from across Region VII, along with over 600 of their colleagues from across the nation, participated in the 2008 MRC National Leadership and Training Conference at the Hilton Portland and Executive Tower in Portland, OR on April 8–11, 2008.

This 4-day training, leadership and networking conference reflected the requests for training and information that the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (OCVMRC) received from both seasoned and newly developed MRC communities, and included an array of topics in public health, emergency preparedness, volunteer management and other areas of interest to MRC units.

For the first time, the entire first day of the conference was devoted to a number of training courses for new and experienced MRC leaders. In addition to a wide variety of timely, relevant and informative presentations, the conference also featured facilitated networking and information-sharing sessions which served as forums to discuss a wide variety of key MRC topics and issues with other leaders from similar housing organizations, MRC models and unit focus areas, while considering one another's similar circumstances.

Region VII was well-represented among conference speakers, with presentations involving MRC leaders from the Sedgwick County (KS) MRC, Jefferson County (KS) MRC, MRC of Kansas City (KS/MO), Panhandle (NE) MRC, and the Nebraska and Western Iowa MRC. In addition, Region VII had a spectacular Regional Resource Table on display during the Director's Reception, due in large part to the efforts of the Texas County (MO) MRC, South-Central Missouri MRC, Sedgwick County (KS) MRC and Reno County (KS) MRC.

Overall, the 2008 MRC National Leadership and Training Conference was a resounding success! Attendees used this event as an opportunity to network and share information with MRC peers and partners, and picked up valuable information that can be applied to MRC programs.

We encourage all of you to continue to strengthen your MRC units, and please remember to apply the theme from this year's conference: "Prepared Volunteers, Resilient Communities, Strong Nation." We fully anticipate that this theme will be carried on as you put

the knowledge and skills that you picked up at the conference into practice with your own MRC units.

The OCVMRC is in the process of collecting, organizing and coding presentations and photographs from the conference. These will be posted on the MRC website in the near future.

We are also in the early stages of planning with our partners at ESAR-VHP, the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), the Public Health Service and others as we join forces on a broader focused conference to be held next spring in Dallas, TX. We look forward to seeing you next year!



**RADM Steven Galson, the Acting Surgeon General, speaks to Region VII MRC leaders during the Regional Breakout Session.**



**Region VII MRC leaders and MRC program staff during the Regional Breakout Session.**



Region VII MRC leaders enjoy dinner with CAPT Jose Belardo, Region VII Deputy Regional Health Administrator (lower left), and CAPT Rob Tosatto, MRC Program Director (center left).



CAPT Rob Tosatto addresses the conference participants.

## 2008 Hospital Preparedness Program Grants Urge Support of MRC Units

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), has announced the availability of its 2008 Hospital Preparedness Program grants. These grants are intended to enable eligible healthcare facilities to improve surge capacity and enhance community and hospital preparedness for public health emergencies.

The 2008 Hospital Preparedness Program grant program is significant in that eligible healthcare facilities are encouraged to use this grant funding to support local

MRC units. The grant program guidance states (see page 20):

*In order to promote and ensure the integration of public and private medical capabilities with public health and other first responder systems, awardees may consider using HPP cooperative agreement funds to support the integration of MRC units with local, regional and statewide infrastructure. Awardees are also encouraged to use multiple sources of funding to establish/maintain the MRC program. HPP grant funds may be used to:*

- Support MRC personnel/coordinators for the primary purpose of integrating the MRC structure with the State ESAR-VHP program;
- Include MRC volunteers in trainings that are integrated with that of other local, State, and regional assets such as hospitals, Community Health Centers, Long-Term Care Facilities, or volunteers through the ESAR-VHP program; and/or
- Include MRC volunteers in exercises that integrate the MRC volunteers with other local, State, and regional assets such as personnel who work in hospitals, Community Health Centers, Long-Term Care Facilities, or volunteer through the ESAR-VHP program.

MRC units are encouraged to contact their state's Hospital Preparedness Program project officer, as well as participating healthcare facilities, to find out how MRC units might participate.

Detailed information on this grant program is available at:

<https://www.grantsolutions.gov/gs/preaward/previewPublicAnnouncement.do?timeZone=EST&cancelMapping=cancelToAnnouncements&id=9808>

## Reminder to Update Unit Profiles on the MRC Website

It is very important that MRC units keep their unit profiles on the national MRC website updated. As a registered MRC director and/or coordinator, you have permission to change the information for your unit on the MRC website. You may change or update your unit information as often as you like. However, the MRC national program office requests that you update this information at least once every three months (**please**

**note: if your MRC unit is a recipient of an MRC-NACCHO capacity-building award, you are required to update your unit profile at least once every three months**). It is important to update your unit profile on a regular basis. Your unit profile may be one of the first places a potential MRC volunteers goes to find information about joining your unit. If your unit profile does not contain any information, or if it contains old information, the individual may lose interest in becoming a part of your unit, and you may have lost a potential volunteer. In addition, current unit contact information is very important during emergencies, when local officials or the MRC national program office may need to contact you quickly.

To make adjustments to your unit's information, log-on to the MRC website ([www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)) using the username and password you created at registration. Once logged in, you will be given the option in the left hand frame of the website to "Edit MRC Unit." Click on this tab. The next page will include the fields for your MRC unit, which you have the ability to maintain and keep accurate. These fields include:

If you haven't updated your profile recently, you'll notice that there are a number of new questions within the profile. Please be sure to review, update and add information in the applicable fields in all of the sections, including:

- Basic Unit Information
- Unit Information (Unit Address)
- Jurisdiction Information
- Points of Contact
- Emergency Contact Information
- Unit Volunteers
- Unit Activities
- Additional Unit Information

Of particular importance is the "Additional Unit Information" section. This section was added to the profile system in August 2007 and it includes a number of objective questions about the organization, composition, integration, and planning of your MRC unit. This information is not part of the unit profile that is visible to the public. This section is critically important; it allows the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps to have an accurate, comprehensive picture of an MRC unit, including its strengths and weaknesses, and is integral to the conduct of technical assistance (TA) assessments. In fact, it is not possible to conduct the TA assessment without this section being completed. If your MRC unit has been scheduled to

participate in a TA assessment with the Regional Coordinator, please be sure to update your unit profile and completely answer all the questions in the "Additional Unit Information" section prior to the TA assessment.

After updating any of the aforementioned sections, simply click the "Submit" button at the bottom of the page. This will save your updates and post them to the MRC website for all to reference. Please keep in mind that only the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps staff and you are able to see the emergency contact and activation process information, as well as the information in the "Additional Unit Information" section. This information will not be shared with other users of the MRC website.

If you have any technical problems with this feature, please e-mail [MRCWebmaster@ztechcorp.com](mailto:MRCWebmaster@ztechcorp.com). For all other questions, feel free to contact the MRC national program office at (301) 443-4951 or send an e-mail to them at [MRCcontact@hhs.gov](mailto:MRCcontact@hhs.gov).

Thank you very much for ensuring your unit profile is current and reflects your activities and contributions to your community!

### And One Final MRC Conference Photo . . . .



RADM Steven Galson (left), the Acting Surgeon General, greets Charlie Bryan (right), MRC of Kansas City unit coordinator.