

SERV-OR Newsletter

State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Oregon

"Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy and Prepared Communities"



<https://SERV-OR.org>

Did you know....

Over 50 SERV-OR volunteers contributed their time to the Medical Treatment Area of Project Connect on September 18 in Deschutes County? About 700 guests accessed a variety of medical services!



Arwa Meisiwala and Lisa Limongan, two AmeriCorps VISTAs, registering SERV-OR volunteers at Project Connect in Redmond, OR on September 18, 2010.

This is the place to read and learn about what is happening with the Medical Reserve Corps and the State Managed Volunteer Pool at the National, State and Local level. We want to express our THANKS to all volunteers for making Oregon a safer and healthier place!



Oregon MRC Updates

MRC Units across Oregon have been busy planning and doing lots of great work! Check out some highlights:

Clackamas County: Is gearing up for a flu vaccination clinic on November 10. Additionally, this MRC unit is looking to partner with local Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to have their MRC volunteers assist with administering vaccinations, taking pre-natal histories as well as assisting with other medical services in the near future.

Jackson County: Held a dinner of appreciation in honor of their MRC volunteers on October 27. The event was sponsored by the Jackson Medical Society. About 20 volunteers attended and enjoyed a delicious dinner, guest speaker and an awards ceremony.

Multnomah County: The Health Reserve Corps (HRC) conducted a mock activation drill on Octo-

ber 7 to test the response rates to an email and SERV-OR activation. 328 volunteers were alerted and out of all the respondents, 78% indicated they would be able to work a 12-hour shift during some point in the operation. 71.6% said they would be able to report within 12 hours of activation. Surprisingly, when asked if they had a 72-hour emergency kit at home, only 32% of responding volunteers responded, "yes".

Nehalem Bay: Has been collaborating with the Nehalem Bay Emergency Volunteer Corps to create a joint training curriculum. Most recently, MRC volunteers assisted with a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training by teaching basic field first aid, triage, and psychological first aid in disasters on October 3.

Washington County: Held two events on October 16 and 19 for its volunteers as an opportunity

to network as well as provide program feedback. Additionally, WA County welcomed Lisa Limongan, the new AmeriCorps VISTA! They are excited about the energy she is sparking among volunteers.

Yamhill County: Planned a Point of Deployment (POD) exercise on October 26 at the Sheridan School District. During the POD exercise, they tested the activation system for the MRC's. Stay tuned for their findings!

Deschutes County: Completed the Bio-detection Anthrax Post-Office exercise in September. Deschutes County has the only Post Office with this capability east of the Cascades. Five Public Health Reserve Corps volunteers, as well as three Sherriff Office volunteers participated. Thanks to the hard working volunteers that helped make this exercise a success!

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National MRC Updates

According the Medical Reserve Corps National website, there are currently 932 MRC units nationwide with a combined total of 207,509 volunteers!

Here are some exciting activities going on at MRC units across the United States:

Volunteers of the Holliston Emergency Reserve Corps (**HERC**), which is a division of the National MRC, held a free family preparedness seminar on October 26 to help families start thinking about their personal plan for an unexpected emergency or disaster.

The **Hennepin County** MRC (Minneapolis, MN) partnered with their local County Sheriff's Office, Environmental Services, Human Services and Public Health Department to coordinate an "Unwanted Medicine Collection" event. MRC volunteers helped to raise awareness about prescription abuse and safe disposal procedures for medications. More than 700 people dropped off tens of thousands of pills.

For National Preparedness month (September), volunteers of the **Liberty** MRC (Liberty, MO) participated in the sec-

ond annual city-wide emergency preparedness fair in Liberty, MO. MRC volunteers provided information as well as handed out emergency kits and equipment.

Montgomery County MRC (Crawfordsville, IN) volunteers were honored at a special awards ceremony for their efforts to coordinate various flu vaccination clinics. The director of the MRC presented the award in recognition of the volunteers' dedication and hard work.



2010 Western Integrated Training Summit

On September 15-17, the 4th Annual Western Regional MRC Training held its summit in San Diego, CA. Over 300 individuals from MRC Units across the Western Region attended the three-day event, including Captain Robert Tosatto, Director, Office of Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps, who presented on the national perspective.

The Summit also featured presentations from the Office of Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps about the vision of the new leadership at the Department of Health and Hu-

man Services as well as workshop sessions about the new national MRC Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping capabilities. Presentations about Boarder Health and San Diego also provided interesting perspectives for consideration.

The MRC/AmeriCorps VISTA team attended the training summit and took part in the "New Leader" workshop that introduced topics such as MRC Unit operations, goals, and sustainability, as well as volunteer recruitment and retention strategies.

The Western Training Summit was an excellent opportunity to build business partnerships and friendships to strengthen the operations and sustainability of our MRC Units. Thank you to the organizers of the event!

Presentation recordings can be accessed online at:

<http://www.naccho.org/topics/emergency/mrc/westerntrainingsummit.cfm>



The new VISTA team poses for a photo after completing their orientation training in Portland.

MRC/VISTA Project in Full Swing

The MRC/AmeriCorps VISTA Partnership Project began its second year in August with 12 new members serving in local MRC Units and health departments throughout the state of Oregon.

The new members attended lots of training in preparation for their year of service. VISTA members attended a long training

Pre-Service Orientation followed by MRC/Accreditation-specific training before beginning to work at their individual sites.

The VISTA members work on a variety of projects during their year of service. The MRC VISTAs assist with program development and capacity building projects to help strengthen their MRC units. The Accreditation

VISTAs are helping local health departments build their infrastructure to a standard at which they can respond to the public's needs. Special attention is given to the community's vulnerable populations.

We wish the VISTA members a successful year and thank them for their service!

The VISTA Team Volunteer in Honor of 9/11

In honor of 9/11 Day of Remembrance, the 13 new MRC/AmeriCorps VISTAs gathered at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds in Redmond to volunteer at the 4th annual Project Connect. On September 18, 2010, despite the rain and cool weather, about 2,600 guests attended the event to access services provided by 150 organizations and 600 community volunteers.

Project Connect is a "one-stop-shop" services and resource event for low-income and homeless families and individuals to access a variety of health

and social resources that can often be challenging for this population to receive. Many of the guests who attended the event not only received essential health services but were also connected to services that will be provided long after the event ended.

The VISTA team contributed their time by volunteering in various service areas such as child care, guest interviews, gift bags distribution, guest escort services, guest translator, and the medical services area. Everyone felt that the day was in-

credibly rewarding and eye opening.

Project Connect in Deschutes County is truly a community effort spearheaded by the Partnership to End Poverty in Redmond, OR and their partners. Next year's Project Connect is one of the main assignments of the VISTA member, **Megan Drabinski**, who is already working hard in preparation for next year's event! The Partnership to End Poverty is grateful for her efforts. More information about Project Connect can be found at:

www.projectconnectco.org



Mass Casualty Training with WA State

On August 28, 2010, Oregon Public Health offered an exciting opportunity for SERV-OR volunteers to participate in the 2010 Northwest Citizen Corps Expo training in North Bend, WA. About 30 volunteers attended; 15 of which were from the Oregon State MRC volunteer pool.

The Expo is an annual exercise in that offers voluntary disaster responders from CERT, MRC and amateur radio the opportunity to practice their skills while working together in a

realistic disaster exercise. This year's training included a full scale mock disaster situation as well as a CERT training class.

The event also provided the opportunity to practice deployment. All 15 Oregon State MRC volunteers reported to the Portland State Office Building after receiving an alert through SERV-OR. The volunteers brought their badges and Drivers Licenses so that staff could scan them and capture the volunteer's name, emergency contact information, and their

medical licensing number. This same process would be followed in a real disaster situation.

Overall, the training was a success. Volunteers enjoyed utilizing and perfecting their skills in partnership with WA volunteers. Thank you to all of the individuals who organized and participated in the annual exercise!

This exercise was possible through a MRC grant from the National Association for City and County Health Officials.



Group photo on the day of the exercise.

First Lady's New Anti-Obesity Initiative Gets Moving

First Lady Michelle Obama recently created the "Let's Move" campaign in response to the increasing rate of childhood obesity in the United States. This nation-wide initiative promotes healthy choices, increased access to quality food and higher rates of physical activity.

The Medical Reserve Corps Units

have an important role to play in supporting the Let's Move Initiative since MRCs' goals are also concerned with improving their local community's health and well-being. The "Let's Move" campaign is an excellent opportunity for units to get involved locally by focusing their efforts on education about food safety, nutrition, and exercise. This would be an appropri-

ate time to develop and strengthen new partnerships with local health departments and non-profit organizations to increase community support and awareness for this initiative. Please visit the initiative's website for creative ideas to get people involved: www.letsmove.gov

Let's get moving!



America's Move to Raise a Healthier Generation of Kids

Award Received by Multnomah County

On August 8, 2010, the Multnomah County Health Reserve Corps (HRC) received the 2010 Volunteer Organization award at the Annual Flu Summit! This award was presented by the Oregon Adult Immunization Coalition (OAIC) and the Oregon Partnership to Immunize Children (OAIC).

The Multnomah County HRC was recognized for its efforts during the 2009 H1N1 vaccination clinics. In addition, volunteers also supported the Ac-

cess to Influenza Care nurse triage call center to provide assistance to eligible community members who wanted to talk to a nurse about their flu symptoms.

Zumana Rios, MHA, accepted the award on behalf of the Multnomah County HRC and discussed some of the challenges she foresees for this year in regard to H1N1. She explained that the mildness of the pandemic and problems with getting the H1N1 vaccine

last year challenged the public's perception about the efficacy of the flu vaccine. This coupled with public burnout and message fatigue around flu prevention may be a key factor in people not getting vaccinated this year. The overall challenge for this year is to increase the public's awareness and values regarding immunizations in general.

Congratulations to the Multnomah County HRC and to Zumana Rios!



Zumana Rios - Multnomah County Health Reserve Corps Coordinator, pictured here with the award.



ESAR-VHP Grant Awarded to Oregon

SERV-OR is excited to announce that a grant has been awarded to fund future training opportunities and an FTE! The grant is from the Emergency System for the Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP), which is a federal

program designed to establish and implement guidelines and standards for the registration, credentialing, and deployment of medical professionals in the event of a large scale national emergency. The program is administered by the Public

Health Emergency Preparedness Program in the Oregon Public Health Division's Director's Office. Be on the look out for upcoming dates for Basic and Advanced Disaster Life Support, and Burn classes in the Spring of 2011!

SERV-OR System Updates

The SERV-OR System is growing steadily! There are about 1,400 active volunteers. The State Managed Volunteer Registry Pool (SMVP) has 456 members, 75% are Registered Nurses and 12% are physicians.

Since SERV-OR is a new volunteer registry system, it is increasingly important to evaluate the application process. According to a recent survey conducted by last year's AmeriCorps VISTA, Zachary Wekhoven, 75% of current volunteers would like orientations to be available on-line. We are in the planning stages of making this

training available online. Stay tuned for further information.

A similar survey was conducted to collect specific information about the application process. The responses indicated that more than two-thirds of 60 total responses said the application was "fairly easy" and 82% were able to complete their application in a single sitting. 79.6% of the respondents completed the application in 15 minutes to an hour. This survey provided helpful feedback for improving the registration process as well as reducing obstacles between volunteers and service.

Thank you to all of the volunteers who provided feedback. The responses will be considered in future system edits.

We are working on developing an online volunteer orientation for SMVP volunteers and will hopefully have this available in late February of 2011

Lastly, two new Healthcare Provider Type options have been added to the volunteer application: Licensed Acupuncturists and Chiropractors.



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Quarterly Partnership Highlight

The Oregon Health Authority is proud of the new Healthy Kids program that provides free or low-cost health care coverage for Oregon kids and teens up to age 19. Vivian Levy and Maggie Weller have reached out to the MRC program in Oregon to help spread the word about this opportunity for free or low-cost health insurance.

Since local MRC units are active and visible in their communities, they will be receiving informational materials that they can pass out at events targeting low-income and homeless individuals and families. Materials will include

resources available to help interested folks apply.

Additionally, the AmeriCorps VISTA members working at MRC units and local health departments will partner with the Healthy Kids program at future health fairs and community events to also help increase awareness of the program. This is a great opportunity for MRCs and VISTAs to make a connection with low-income populations and assist them in accessing health care coverage. More information about the Healthy Kids program can be found at: www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthykids/apply.shtml



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