

### Greetings!

The first half of 2010 has been busy for the NYC Citizen Corps Council and its members.

Through our new and ongoing outreach initiatives, the NYC Citizen Corps Council continues to prepare all New Yorkers for emergencies. Recent NYC Citizen Corps Council programs included the Youth Leadership Program and its Disaster Fest, and the fourth annual Disaster Volunteer Conference. September's National Preparedness Month activities are quickly approaching so keep your eyes out on how you can be involved.

To learn more about how New Yorkers should prepare to recover from emergencies, check out the [NYC Citizen Corps Council website](#).

You are a great resource, and we hope that you will see us as the same. The NYC Citizen Corps Council looks forward to continuing our partnership in preparedness.

Uniting Communities,  
NYC Citizen Corps Council

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### [SAVE THE DATE](#)

**National Preparedness  
Month Kick-off**

**September 2, 2010**

### [NYC Hazards Extreme Heat](#)



New York City's concentration of asphalt, concrete, and metal can make the city as much as 10 degrees hotter than surrounding areas. Heat can disorient, impair decision making, and even cause brain damage if body temperature gets too high. Seniors, children under five, and people with chronic medical conditions are the most susceptible. Remember to drink plenty of water and take frequent breaks in the shade when playing outdoors in the heat.

[Tips to beat the Summer Heat](#)

[Sign up for NYC OEM's tip](#)



On Tuesday, May 11, the NYC Citizen Corps Council held its fourth annual Disaster Volunteer Conference. Over 250 volunteers from organizations including [American Red Cross in Greater New York](#), [NYC CERT](#), [Disaster Chaplaincy Services](#), [Medical Reserve Corps](#), [New York Cares](#), [Ready New York](#), [Salvation Army](#), [Tzu Chi](#), and [World Cares Center](#) gained insight from leaders in the volunteer, faith-based, and medical communities on how volunteers can remain healthy before, during, and after a disaster response.

Following an organization fair, including presentations by NYC Citizen Corps Council member organizations and dinner, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno welcomed conference attendees and introduced the evening's keynote speaker.

Keynote speaker Virginia Mewborn's personal address to volunteers was a wake-up call for many. She discussed the emotional and physical drains of volunteering and the challenges of self care. Mewborn mentioned that volunteers must be "more selfish and less selfless" in their work as volunteers but relented in saying that "it is much easier said than done."

Her personal tactics towards self care can be used as suggestions for others. She writes, laughs, cooks, and has a support system.

Mewborn left the audience with these final final words: "It is a balancing act and I don't get it right every day. But I try. And I pay attention. I try to balance living in my head and listening to my heart. Because for me, that is what works."

Following Mewborn's address, John Berglund of The Salvation Army moderated a panel discussion on how volunteers can volunteer in a healthy way. Panelists included Gail Wolsk of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Reverend Willard W. C. Ashley of Abundant Joy Community Church, and Arturo Guzman, an American Red Cross in Greater New York volunteer.

Through the panel discussion, volunteers in the audience received well-rounded perspectives and insights on the mental and physical challenges of a disaster response, how to be prepared for a disaster response, and tactics to use during and after a response.



[View photos from the event on Facebook](#)

## City Helps Build Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program in Haiti

[of the week](#)

### Continuity Resources

While the success of any organization depends on many varying factors, it is important all organizations be prepared for an emergency.

Many of the same simple steps business owners and managers can take to prepare for any emergency can also be used by not-for-profit organizations across NYC.

Here are some resources that can help your organization get prepared:

#### [Ready New York for Business:](#)

The Ready New York for Businesses guide takes organizations through the basic steps of continuity planning and organizational preparedness.

#### [CorpNet:](#)

CorpNet is the City's emergency notification service for businesses and non-profit organizations. CorpNet provides organizations with current, accurate information about emergencies to enhance awareness and aid decision-making. CorpNet sends e-mails about emergency events occurring anywhere in the five boroughs.

#### [NYContinuity:](#)

NYContinuity is a monthly e-mail publication to help small businesses and non-profit organizations prepare for emergencies, strengthen continuity plans, get updates on emergency management news, and learn about events and resources.

Notify NYC



On Tuesday, June 1, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno and Fire Department (FDNY) Commissioner Salvatore J. Cassano, and Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Commissioner Dr. Thomas A. Farley announced that a 11-member FDNY, NYC OEM and Department of Health and Mental Hygiene team, including NYC Citizen Corps Council's own Herman Schaffer, would be sent to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to help build a local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program.

During the very successful two-week deployment, the City's team trained more than 400 people in life-saving techniques including fire safety, first aid, triage, light search and rescue, public health, water and sanitation, and disaster psychology. The team left for Haiti on June 7 and returned on June 19.

[Read the press release](#)



[Read journal entries from the team on Facebook](#)

## Disaster Fest

### Culmination of Youth Leadership Program



Notify NYC is the City of New York's official source for information about emergency events and important City services. What you need to know, when you need to know it.

In addition to emergency notifications and alerts, participants can also receive public health notifications, public school notifications, and unscheduled parking rule suspensions.

Individuals can sign up to receive notifications through e-mail, text message, or phone.

Register for free at [www.NYC.gov/notifynyc](http://www.NYC.gov/notifynyc) or by calling 311.



## NYC Citizen Corps Council



The NYC Citizen Corps Council brings together local leaders from community organizations, government agencies, local elected officials' offices, the private sector, and volunteer programs to promote community preparedness and volunteerism.

For more information about the NYC Citizen Corps Council, its members, and activities, visit our [website](#) or [contact us](#).

On Wednesday, June 8, participants in the NYC Citizen Corps Council's Youth Leadership Program hosted Disaster Fest, an emergency preparedness outreach event designed by and for high school students.

At the end of the semester-long Youth Leadership Program, the 19 high school participants were challenged to design and host an event for their peers. This program works to educate high school students about emergencies and how to be prepared.

The challenge was met, and 70 high schoolers from around the city gathered at the American Red Cross in Greater New York headquarters to learn about emergency preparedness through karaoke, picture, charades, a first-aid station, and trivia games. Attendees also realized the importance of being prepared first-hand through a simulated blackout. It was an evening of prizes, food, emergency preparedness, and fun.

A special thanks to all of the hard work by the Youth Leadership Program participants, and staff from the American Red Cross in Greater New York, NYC Office of Emergency Management, and World Cares Center.



[View photos from the event on Facebook](#)

## First Day on the Job:

### An Outsider's Perspective on Disaster Fest



I was not quite sure what to expect when I learned that I would be helping a group of high school students prepare for a festival promoting emergency preparedness at the American Red Cross in Greater New York.

In the past, the only organizations I had witnessed actively promoting preparedness were the Boy Scouts of America (usually to fellow troop members), Red Cross chapters providing CPR, babysitting, and lifeguarding classes, and local police and fire departments giving presentations at school assemblies and other community gatherings. I was impressed to learn that a group of high school students had come together as part of the NYC Citizen Corps Council Youth

Leadership Program to take such an active role in learning about emergency preparedness and developing a festival to teach other students more about the subject, too.

On my first day interning with the Citizen Corps and CERT Programs at the NYC Office of Emergency Management, I attended the last planning session for the youth event. Each youth leader promised to bring at least five friends to the following week's "Disaster Fest," but while I had high hopes for the festival, I was concerned about how many students would actually attend.

The following Tuesday, the day of Disaster Fest, we set to work preparing the space for the students' arrival. Before long, balloons, streamers, and video projectors helped create a festive atmosphere, and we were all impressed by the decorative stations that the youth leaders had designed. Activities with an emergency spin included karaoke, Picture, charades, a Jeopardy-style game show, guessing game, and a hands-on first aid station.

Overall, the event exceeded my expectations. I was very impressed not only by the large number of youth leaders' friends who attended the festival, but by how the

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students actively participated in the events and took a genuine interest in learning more about emergencies and how to prepare for them.

*Written by Thomas Christy (recent Davidson College graduate) in collaboration with Gina Dinoia (Junior at Central Connecticut State University). Thomas and Gina are NYC Citizen Corps/CERT Summer Interns.*

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