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Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Southeastern District Health Department Employee Attends National Training in Rhode Island

The fifth annual Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) National Leadership and Training Conference, hosted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was held in Providence, Rhode Island, April 17 – 21.

More than 500 MRC leaders from across the country attended the conference, designed to better equip MRC units with the tools they need to effectively start and sustain their unit through partnerships.

“The MRC National Leadership and Training Conference is a great service to the local leaders of this organization. Not only did they gain greater knowledge and a better understanding of public health and emergency preparedness issues, but also shared best practices and lessons learned with their colleagues,” said Rear Admiral Kenneth Moritsugu, M.D., M.P.H, acting surgeon general.

The agenda included presentations from several government officials, including the Assistant Secretary for Health Admiral John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.P.H; Dr. Moritsugu; and Rajeev Venkayya, M.D., special assistant to the president for biological defense policy. Also participating in this was experts in sustainability and training, building partnerships, and public and disaster behavioral health.

Michelle Butterfield, MRC Assistant Coordinator, of the Southeast Idaho Medical Reserve Corp attended this year’s conference. “I was excited to attend this conference because networking with other MRC members is valuable. MRC members with many different experiences, backgrounds, challenges, and successes came together to share important information. I’ll take the knowledge I gained to my MRC volunteers which will help our unit grow, become stronger, and better prepared to assist our community,” said Butterfield.

MRC units are based locally and direct programs comprised of medical, public health, and other civilian volunteers using their specialized skills and training to provide additional surge capacity and response support in their communities during emergencies. Throughout the year, MRC volunteers offer education and prevention services to improve the public health infrastructure of their neighborhoods and communities.

The MRC, Citizen Corps, AmeriCorps, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), Fire Corps, Senior Corps, and the Peace Corps are program partners within the President's USA Freedom Corps, which promotes volunteerism and service throughout the United States.

There are approximately 640 MRC units with more than 120,000 volunteers across the nation, strengthening the public health infrastructure in their communities and responding to public health, and natural and man-made disasters.

For more information on the Medical Reserve Corps, please visit www.medicalreservecorps.gov.

For local information, please contact the Southeastern District Health Department for Denise O'Farrell @ 239-5208 or Michelle Butterfield 239-5207.

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