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Addressing Disaster Workforce Needs During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires, and other hazards have continued to emerge since the appearance of the novel coronavirus, straining emergency response personnel under the pressure of concurrent events. With so many concurrent needs and crises, how can decision makers provide support to the disaster workforce? What strategies can be used to promote resilience and reduce worker burnout? Panelists from the public health and emergency services sectors will discuss approaches for addressing worker burnout, promoting individual-level resilience, and mitigating the impacts of worker shortages as the COVID-19 crisis continues to evolve.

Webinar Agenda

Thursday, September 30, 2021

2:00pm — 3:00pm ET

2:00 pm – 2:05 pm Welcome and Framing

Emily Backes, Societal Experts Action Network
Nnenia Campbell, Natural Hazards Center

2:05 pm – 2:10 pm White Paper Summary

Sue Ann Sarpy, Sarpy and Associates, LLC

2:10 pm – 2:15 pm Panel Introduction

Phil Ambrose, Battalion Chief, Los Angeles Region
Curry Mayer, Seattle Office of Emergency Management
David Miller, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

2:15 pm – 2:35 pm Panel Discussion

- Addressing Worker Burnout and Promoting Resilience
- Mitigating the Impacts of Worker Shortages

2:35 pm – 2:55 pm Moderated Q&A

Nnenia Campbell, Natural Hazards Center

2:55 pm – 3:00 pm Closing Reflections

Nnenia Campbell, Natural Hazards Center

Panelist Bios

Phil Ambrose

Phil Ambrose is a Battalion Chief and Hazardous Materials Specialist at a metropolitan fire department in the Los Angeles Region. In this position, he directs the regional 911 dispatch center serving 13 agencies and over 800,000 residents. He also serves as Plan Section Chief for city pandemic planning and execution and has extensive experience directing multiple functions and critical operations, including emergency management, regulatory compliance and environmental health and safety. Prior to joining the fire service, Phil held positions within EH&S and Hazardous/Radioactive materials management with the University of California at Los Angeles UCLA. Phil is also founder and CEO of HAZ/SIM LLC which specializes in hands-on, interactive, real-time training simulations for first responders and hazmat workers. Phil received the Exceptional Public Service Award from the United States Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) for serving as a training liaison to their Hazardous Materials Response Team, and is currently the Board Secretary of the LA Based Consortium of Technical Responders (CTR).

Nnenia Campbell

Dr. Nnenia Campbell is a research associate at the Natural Hazards Center and Deputy Director at the Bill Anderson Fund. Her research interests center on the intersections between disaster vulnerability and resilience, particularly within marginalized communities, and the role of community-based organizations in disaster response and recovery. Campbell's work with the Natural Hazards Center involves projects that translate empirical research into tools and information products designed for practitioners and decision-makers. With funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, she leads the development of reports related to COVID-19 and concurrent disasters as part of the Societal Experts Action Network coordinated by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Her current research collaborations include projects related to disaster planning and response capacity among food banks and other community-based organizations; risk communication in the context of concurrent and successive disasters; and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth and older adults. Her work with the Bill Anderson Fund supports leadership and professional development training among historically underrepresented minorities pursuing doctoral degrees in fields related to hazards and disaster research. Campbell's previous research includes studies examining risk perception associated with induced seismicity and toxic exposure; analyses of scientific collaboration and communication in disaster scenario development; and the role of social capital, community context, and organizational capacity in shaping disaster outcomes at later stages of the life course.

Curry Mayer

Curry Mayer is the Director of Emergency Management for the City of Seattle. Prior to working for Seattle, she served as the Emergency Manager for the City of Bellevue, WA for 4 years. Ms. Mayer has over 25 years of experience in emergency management and homeland security. She

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came to Washington State after 20 years in California developing and supporting state and local emergency management programs. Her experience includes serving as the Emergency Management Advisor to Undersecretary at the CA Department of Food & Agriculture, as Director of Training & Exercises for the CA Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and as a contractor for Booz-Allen & Hamilton working for the White House Military Office in Washington D.C. She is Master Exercise Practitioner Program (MEPP) certified and has taught in that program. Ms. Mayer is a Board member for the 211 Information Network and the Co-Chair of the Advisory Board for the WA Center for Excellence in Homeland Security & Emergency Management. She is an adjunct professor in emergency management at the University and Community College levels. Ms. Mayer has many years of emergency operations center experience as a Plans Chief and EOC Director. Ms. Mayer has an Bachelor's degree in Communications from CA State University Long Beach and a Master's degree in Education.

David Miller

Leading the New York City Healthcare Coalition and federal grant programs including the ASPR Healthcare Preparedness Program (HPP), David Miller serves as the Executive Director of Healthcare System Readiness in the Bureau of Healthcare and Community Readiness in the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. In 2020, David developed the Public Health and Medical Operations Group to support Alternate Care Sites, surge patient movement, and healthcare facility outreach during wave 1 of New York City's COVID -19 response. Currently, he serves as the branch director and special advisor for the Healthcare System Support Branch as well as a Vaccine Hub Team Lead in the agency's ongoing response to COVID-19. A public health emergency manager, former fire-medic officer and hospital operations and emergency manager, David additionally responds to National Special Security Events and disaster deployments as an emergency operations officer with the National Disaster Medical System in the US Department of Health and Human Services' National Incident.

Sue Ann Sarpy

Sue Ann Sarpy, M.S., Ph.D., is an Industrial/Organizational Psychologist with over 20 years of experience in a variety of academic and applied settings. Dr. Sarpy was a Clinical Assistant Professor of the Department of Environmental Health Sciences at Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and served as Lead Evaluator for the South Central Center for Public Health Preparedness in the Gulf South region. Currently, Dr. Sarpy is Principal and Founder of Sarpy and Associates, LLC. Dr. Sarpy has served as principal scientist and lead evaluator on several interdisciplinary teams examining effectiveness and impact of various interventions, including public health workforce development programs and occupational health and safety and emergency preparedness and response and resiliency trainings, to ensure continuous quality improvement and guide related policy development. She has presented at national and international conferences and written a series of articles, book chapters, and technical reports on these efforts. Dr. Sarpy serves as the Behavioral Economics Advisor of the Research to Practice Initiative for CPWR: The Center for Construction Research and Training, Board Member of the Collaborative for the Social Dimensions of Disasters Non Profit Council,

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and recently appointed to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences/National Institutes of Health Evaluation and Data Advisory Board for the Corona Virus Response Training for Essential Workers. She is Co-Chair of the Disaster and Emergency Management Evaluation and Program Chair of the Leadership and Organizational Performance committees of the American Evaluation Association. Her areas of expertise include monitoring and evaluation systems, behavioral economics, social network analysis, and organizational effectiveness.