

# Newsletter

July, 2024



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## The Putnam County MRC Celebrating 20 Years

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The MRC began at a national level in 2002, following President George W. Bush's State of the Union Address, to improve overall health and safety in the United States. This was established with the Office of the Surgeon General and the Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health with community-based projects to strengthen local health. Today, there are over 800 Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units and over 300,000 MRC volunteers across the country.

The Putnam County MRC was founded following the development of the Putnam County Bioterrorism Task Force which was formed after September 11th. The Putnam County MRC was registered in July 2004 and became a member of the Citizen Corps Council in January 2005. The Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH) serves as the housing authority. Throughout its history, the Putnam County MRC has assisted with PCDOH emergency preparedness activities. In 2005, at one of the first Point of Dispensing (POD) exercises, MRC volunteers were trained, activated and utilized. Since then up to the present, MRC volunteers have participated in drills, exercises and real-life events. MRC volunteers have worked alongside PCDOH staff during drills and exercises, influenza clinics, large scale PODs and COVID-19 activities.

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## MRC National Summit May 22-24, 2024 - Chicago, IL

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Message from our Preparedness Coordinator - Connie Bueti:

From May 22 – 24, I was fortunate to participate in the National MRC Conference In Chicago, Ill. Over 600 MRC leaders from all over the country attended. The theme of the conference, "The Power of Community, Collaboration, and Connection: MRC Leading the Way for the Next 20 Years," provided an opportunity to reflect on the successes of the network's growth and value during the first 20 years and discover ways to expand our reach in communities to position the network for continued excellence.

Day one opened with the general session, "Celebration of the MRC and Reflection on the COVID-19 Response," which included a chat with National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) leadership. Throughout the first day, participants learned from peers in over 30 presentation sessions based on the MRC Factors for Success (FFS). A Lunch & Learn session explored the critical and overlooked concepts of Spontaneous Responders in the Disaster Gap: the smallest (biggest) interval you've never heard of and steps to creating an MRC team to address mental health needs after a critical incident.

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Day two opened with an overview of current and future partnership opportunities between the American Red Cross and Medical Reserve Corps units and volunteers. Participants then joined over 25 special learning sessions and workshops on a range of topics. MRC State Coordinators also gathered to share best practices and examine opportunities to strengthen the MRC network. The second day of the conference concluded with leaders exploring posters and resource tables and networking with peers.

The final day of the conference opened with a discussion on the need for a shift from crisis-driven care to one that adds evidence-based prevention. Unit leaders then joined peers in their regions to connect and share best practices. Colleagues from Region II (NJ, NY, PR, USVI) were addressed by Teresa Blakeslee, ASPR MRC Region II Liaison and Jack Porter, NYS Dept. of Health Volunteer Program Coordinator. All Region II units received a Certificate of Appreciation from Teresa.

Throughout the conference, I was able to network with fellow unit leaders and bring back lots of good information and ideas to implement.



## Certificate of Appreciation

PRESENTED TO

Putnam County Medical Reserve Corps, NY

(Unit #222 - Established: 7/23/2004)

*People like you, what do they do?  
A light in the darkness; saving lives.  
Thank you! Thank you!*

May 24, 2024

Date

*Teresa D. Blakeslee*

Teresa Blakeslee, MRC Region 2 Liaison  
NJ, NY, PR, USVI

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## MRC Represented at Putnam County Events



Lake Carmel Fire Department Open House  
April 14, 2024



Putnam Valley Ambulance Corps Open House  
May 4, 2024



Putnam Pride - June 1, 2024



Putnam County Culture Fest - June 15, 2024

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## MRC Volunteers in Action: June 6, 2024 Putnam County Healthcare Summit

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Several MRC volunteers were present for the June 6th Putnam County Public Health Summit which was held at the Putnam County Golf Course in Mahopac. The theme of the summit was “Making Connections,” and it aimed to put a spotlight on health challenges and successes throughout the county. Community health improvement professionals showcased their accomplishments and connected with colleagues by creating posters to demonstrate their missions and how they are addressing issues identified as challenges within Putnam County. MRC volunteers assisted with the registration process and played a vital role in setting up and dismantling the displays in the poster competition room. Some volunteers attended the event and got a chance to learn from the very informative presentations.

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