



INTRODUCING HOSA



The UMV MRC is honored to welcome *HOSA-Future Health Professionals* students among our newest members. HOSA (formerly Health Occupation Students of America) offers a program of leadership development, motivation, and recognition for secondary, post-secondary, collegiate, and adult students enrolled in health science. Since its start in 1976, HOSA has enrolled 175,000 members in 48 states. Massachusetts launched its HOSA program statewide in 2010. The national MRC program is proud to be a partner of this organization.

Two HOSA chapters are based at high schools in UMV communities: Westford Academy and Greater Lowell Regional Technical School. We congratulate the 12 Westford members who qualified for the HOSA Nationals in Florida in June! Four students represented their school and community well, helping to double the Massachusetts delegation this year. As they enter their second year as a formal club at WA, terrific information and ideas were brought home with which to build upon our Future Health Professionals organization in town.

Your staff gave its first presentation to HOSA earlier this year, and continues to welcome new members from this group. We are pleased to have these energetic youths participating in health fairs and community service programs!



UMV MRC
55 Main Street
Westford, MA 01886



Civilian Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities



UPPER MERRIMACK VALLEY MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

WWW.UMVMRC.ORG

AUTUMN ISSUE
OCTOBER 2014

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR STAFF

The national MRC network has just hit a major milestone: We have now reached 1000 units! The accompanying statistics are eye-opening, as shared in a bulletin to all MRC leaders: *"These units are in all 50 states and most territories, have over 205,000 volunteers, and serve jurisdictions covering over 91% of the U.S. population and more than 73% of the U.S. land area."*

It's not merely the numbers that are significant. Rather, the continued growth of our program attests to its value, as seen by those we serve. The MRC continues to have an increasingly powerful impact on the health and resilience of the United States. Our goal at this point: *"Remain a sustainable network of active MRC units that conduct and support activities in communities to strengthen public health, reduce vulnerability, build resilience, prepare for disaster, and respond to emergencies when necessary."*

As this newsletter goes to press, our unit is amidst a whirlwind of activity. It's been a busy season for outdoor health fairs. By the time you read this, members will have staffed a two-day Summerfest event, the annual Dracut Old Home Day, and Billerica's major fair. Members are quickly filling requests for flu clinic support and signing up for coming events. Training Day on Nov. 8 promises to be one of our best ever. We're also pleased to invite HOSA students to our ranks; see page 8 for details.

We welcome opportunities to celebrate these achievements – both at the unit level, and as a national network. Look through these pages to see our own statistics and our series of 'firsts' over the past year. Please know how very proud we are of our members and the service you provide to our communities! Don't hesitate to share news of the MRC's success with others.

Sincerely,

Sandy Collins, RN, Director

Nancy Burns, EMT, Coordinator



Several members who staffed the annual 'Live for Liv' event gathered for a photo. This was among our unit's many 'firsts' this year: supporting an event to raise awareness and funding for domestic violence prevention.

THE MISSION OF THE UMV MRC

The mission of the Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps is to recruit, train, and deploy members for disaster preparedness in three areas:

- Public health emergencies
- Mass casualty events
- Community service activities

CONTACT INFORMATION

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UMV MRC Web Site:

www.umvmrc.org

MA MRC Web Site:

www.mamedicalreservecorps.org

National MRC Web Site:

www.medicalreservecorps.gov

Communities Served: Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Lowell, Tewksbury, Tyngsboro, and Westford (host agency).

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NOTE FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE



Dear Members of the Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps,

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) has served to improve the health, safety, and resilience of the nation since 2002. It has grown into a locally-based network of almost 1,000 units, consisting of more than 200,000 dedicated and skillful volunteers. Your Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps (UMV MRC) consistently shines with the positive impacts you make on your community. It inspires me to learn of your successes, and I always look forward to messages from your outstanding MRC Leaders when they share, support and validate your good works.

UMV MRC members gave selflessly over the last year, as I've learned from reading the reports of your unit. The numbers reported are more than impressive. In the Westford area, for example, 68 MRC volunteers worked in five flu clinics, inoculating 1,700 residents at a savings to the town of over \$6,500. There were also the 10 health fairs and community service activities that 39 volunteers supported, which are valued at a cost savings of more than \$2,700. To say that these are the examples we look for to promote the MRC would be putting it mildly. These reports exemplify the powerful gift of the MRC to local communities. Through these initiatives and others, the Westford area is healthier, better prepared for handling disaster, and surely more resilient.

In the Upper Merrimack Valley area, reports of activities have come in regularly, with a total of 52 for the year. That's an average of one per week! Your efforts ranged from Heartsaver CPR, Chokesaver, and First Aid classes to flu clinics and trainings on sheltering. Your families, co-workers, neighbors, and community members are much better now due to your generous efforts. You prevented illness, prepared yourselves and community members for possible disaster, and gave back to the public in ways that build strength and the ability to bounce back from hard times.

Resilience comes from putting in the effort and work prior to being tested. When you have exercised all of your health, wellness, and response muscles, you are strong enough to fight back, and may even become better in the process. The Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps is helping across its jurisdictions to achieve this strength. With thanks to you and your MRC Leaders, you remain one of the most outstanding units within the MRC network. You are a shining example of all that volunteers can do, and are doing, to make our nation healthier and stronger – one community at a time. Thank you for your ongoing contributions and for remaining engaged and empowered.

Congratulations on another outstanding year of service! I look forward to reading and hearing about all that is to come next.

Kind regards,

CAPT Robert J. Tosatto

Director, Division of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps

MEMBER CONNECTIONS

We are *always* glad to hear from our volunteers and prospective members! To reach the staff directly, see our contact information on the front of this newsletter. In case you'd like to connect through the Advisory Council rep for your town, here's the slate of this year's officers: **Brian Luttrell** (Billerica), **Patricia Wojtas** (Chelmsford), **Rich Patterson** (Dracut), **Laurie Lotti** (Lowell), **Ray Barry** (Tewksbury), and **Tom Arsenault** (Tyngsboro). Westford is represented by staff.



If you have NOT heard from us in recent months, then please call or send e-mail right away, to ensure that we have your latest contact information. We need to be able to reach our members in an emergency, and also want you to hear about coming events!

COMING EVENTS

Please contact the Coordinator at 978-399-2549 or NBurns@WestfordMA.gov to sign up for activities of interest. Also check the web site, www.UMVMRC.org, for updates. These courses are free of charge to members, though pre-registration is strongly encouraged.

New Member Orientation – We ask all our of members to complete an orientation to learn about the basic operations of our unit. This is the time to meet the staff, ask questions, and receive your UMV MRC badge and polo shirt for identification as a member. If you have not yet had an orientation, or if you know someone who'd like to join the unit, then please register!

Day/Date: Tuesday, Sept. 30
Time: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Location: Westford Town Hall
Address: 55 Main Street, Westford

AHA First Aid – Two-year American Heart Association certification in first aid. Sign up early; maximum class size is 20. Certification cards cost \$10 (at-cost through our training center).

Day/Date: Tuesday, Oct. 7
Time: 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Location: Chelmsford Police Dept. Training Room
Address: 2 Olde North Road / Rt. 4, Chelmsford

Bay State Marathon – Volunteers needed to staff medical tent on Sunday, October 19 by Rourke Bridge in Lowell. Final details underway. Please call to sign upMPπ.

Training Day – Our unit's signature event! All members are strongly encouraged to participate. Continuing education credits (CEUs and OEMS hours) are available for attendees with medical certifications. See the separate flyer for the registration form and course descriptions.

Day/Date: Saturday, Nov. 8
Time: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Location: Middlesex Community College
Address: 591 Springs Road, Bedford MA 01730

Emerging Infections – Special presentation by Dr. Alfred DeMaria, Medical Director of the Bureau of Infectious Disease at the MA Department of Public Health. Dr. DeMaria will discuss the origins of emerging infections and the threat they present in his talk, "What is Here and What Might be Coming." He will review the current situation with Ebola virus, chikungunya and other mosquito-borne infections, MERS and novel influenza viruses.

Day/Date: Tuesday, January 13
Time: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Location: Stony Brook Auditorium
Address: 9 Farmer's Way, Westford MA

CPR/AED – Classes are being scheduled for February, in honor of National Heart Month. Let us know if you'd like to sign up for [Heartsaver](#) (non-medical) or [Healthcare Provider's](#) (medical).

Managing the Functional Needs of Patients at an EDS – Lisa Crouner of the MA Department of Public Health will discuss the basics of an Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS). Attendees will then walk through EDS stations and address various scenarios that deal with the functional needs of patients. The class will wrap up with a large group discussion about how the needs of people were met. This session offers 2 CEU credits. (Snow date Weds. March 11.)

Day/Date: Weds, Mar. 4
Time: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Location: Millennium School
Address: 23 Depot Street, Westford

Bacteria Versus Virus: How to Protect Yourself – Suzanne Bonenfant, RN. will explain the differences between these two categories of disease agents, and how to protect yourself and other from their effects. Two continuing education credits (CEUs and OEMS hours) are expected.

Day/Date: Thurs, May 14
Time: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Location: Westford Town Hall
Address: 55 Main Street Street, Westford

UMV MRC “Firsts” for 2014

This year our unit participated in several activities for the first time:

- **Chokesaver** – Developed a new curriculum based on AHA (American Heart Association) guidelines, plus field experiences from our training center, to provide these skills for 27 food service workers in one of our UMV communities.
- **Sponsorships** – Provided funding and support for two major community service activities, and were recognized as such with our logo displayed on promotional materials.
- **First Aid for Teacher Assistants** – Adapted a two-hour module from AHA and trained 70 K-5 Teacher Assistants as part of their Professional Development Day.
- **Live for Liv** – Provided a large team of volunteers in support of an event to raise awareness and funding to address domestic violence.
- **Shelter Teams** – Worked with international disaster response leaders, and leveraged statewide MA training resources, to deliver a series of shelter workshops and a hands-on sheltering exercise to our members. Recruitment and training for these teams has become an ongoing initiative for our unit.
- **PrepareAthon** – Staffed an exhibit at a monthly gathering of 70 EMS professionals, offering a ‘Step into Preparedness’ challenge for this first-of-a-kind event. The national kickoff involved five million participants, including the President!
- **Wake-Up Call** – Because the timing coincided with our 10th anniversary of active membership, our volunteers assembled to film a brief video message that was aired twice on a major New England ABC affiliate.

Perhaps more significant, 2014 has been the first year – so far – in which our members were NOT involved in a disaster response!!! Each year since our inception, our volunteers have responded to at least one emergency.

Year	Event	Response
2004	Vaccine shortage	UMV MRC volunteers provided phone screening of the public for registration at flu clinics, to ensure that high-risk residents would be vaccinated, and staffed clinics.
2005	Hurricane Katrina help	Ten of our volunteers responded to Otis Air Force Base on Cape Cod to assist evacuees at the health clinic. Four members responded through the Red Cross to devastated Gulf communities.
2006	Flooding disaster	Nurses and EMTs provided hospital backfill for senior citizens who’d been evacuated from a nursing home. Members assisted at two emergency shelters in the City of Lowell.
2007	TB exposure	Nurses assisted with screening residents who could have been exposed to a student with a positive TB test.
2008	Ice storm	Members staffed emergency shelters in five UMV communities around the clock, when communities across the region were without power for up to two weeks.
2009	H1N1	Our unit set a record for staffing the region’s flu clinics!
2010	Feb. storm call-out, July heat deployment	Members were on standby over a weekend when 1600 area residents lost power due to a heavy rainstorm. That July, we also made well-check calls to senior citizens during an extended heat wave.
2011	Tornado disaster	A series of tornados devastated towns in Western MA. Members served at two emergency shelters.
2012	Hurricane Sandy	Medical and non-medical members served at a warming center, and stood by for additional requests.
2013	Boston Marathon	One member was providing medical sweep team service when the bombs went off; others were poised to help upon request.

UMV MRC By The Numbers...

Here is a snapshot of our unit today and its accomplishments over the past year.

MILESTONES

The national MRC program was launched in 2002. Our host agent, the Westford Health Department, was awarded the grant to form our regional unit in 2003. This season brings yet another anniversary. Our first members joined in June 2004, and were trained and deployed by September to serve during a flu season that was facing a vaccine shortage. That means 2014 is our tenth year of active membership. We’re also celebrating National Preparedness Month exactly a decade after our first deployment!

MEMBERSHIP

Our unit now has 551 members. We do our very best to keep our list up to date, periodically calling those we haven’t heard from in a while, to ensure that they’re still interested in remaining on our roster. Those who leave the unit generally do so because they’ve moved out of the area, for health reasons, or for scheduling conflicts. Otherwise, they typically go ‘on hiatus’ until they can rejoin our activities.

The unit’s membership has remained steady for several years, which speaks volumes about the commitment of our volunteers. Here’s the composition of our unit today.

Membership by specialty:

Nurses (RN, LPN, RNP): **246**

Non-Medical: **206**

Allied Medical / First Responder: **56**

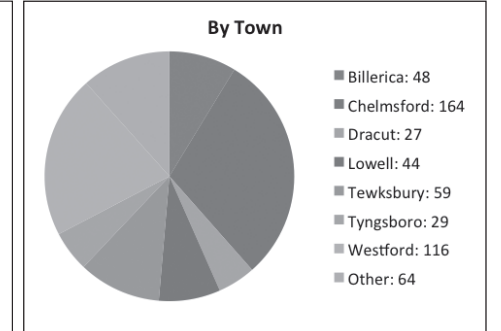
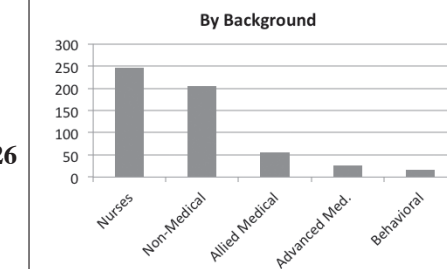
Advanced Medical

(MD, DMD, DDS, PA, Ph.D, R.Ph.): **26**

Behavioral

(Psychologist, Counselor, MSW): **17**

Member Composition



ACTIVITIES

Some eye-popping statistics emerged when we were asked to provide data for Westford’s annual report, through the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014. In particular, there were 227 individual members filling 624 shifts at our activities across a single year. The following list shows what we’ve been doing over the past 12 months (August 2013 to August 2014).

Provided 6 CPR/AED classes:

- Heartsaver for municipal employees
- Heartsaver for non-medical members (3 classes)
- Healthcare Provider for medical members (2 classes)

Staffed 11 Health Fairs / Public Health promotions:

- Tewksbury Night Out for Safety
- Pig ‘n Pepper 2013
- Dracut Old Home Day
- Yankee Doodle Homecoming Weekend
- Emerson Hospital Health Fair
- Hula Hoop Jam (MRC staff only)
- Chelmsford Wellness Fair
- Tewksbury Wellness Fair
- Billerica Wellness Fair
- Blues & Brews Festival
- Pig ‘n Pepper Festival 2014

Offered public education at 9 community service events:

- First Aid module for 70 teacher assistants (2 classes)
- Tewksbury Fire Dept. Open House: CPR demos
- Westford Volunteer Fair
- L’il Iguana Child Safety Event
- Chokesaver for food service workers
- Chelmsford Volunteer Fair
- Westford Town Meeting (MRC staff only)
- Tewksbury Bike Rodeo

Staffed 10 flu/pneumonia clinics and 1 shingles clinic

Participated in 9 training events:

- Intro to Sheltering (3 classes)
- Training Day
- Psychological First Aid (through MDPH)
- Evaluation of FSX (MRC staff only)
- Shelter Exercise (60 participants)
- Mass Medical Society Disaster Response Forum
- Resilient Communities Forum

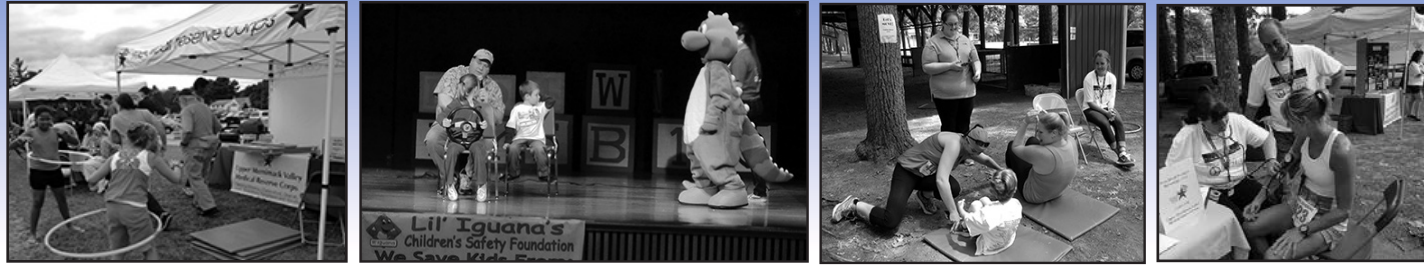
Conducted 8 administrative activities:

- New Member Orientations (4 sessions)
- Advisory Council (3 meetings)
- Member Appreciation Event

This progress is made possible only through the efforts of our incredible members. Thank you for making us proud!

The tenth year in the life of our active unit!

Family health promotions expanded from 'Let's Move' activities that avoid childhood obesity, to a new Lil' Iguana safety event, and the 'Live for Liv' campaign to address domestic violence.



We promoted cardiovascular health by supporting our first blood drive, and by offering several Heartsaver (non-medical) and Healthcare Professional (medical) CPR classes to our members.



Public service was offered at numerous wellness fairs and regional events. The Lowell Spinners Canalagator joined us at this year's bike rodeo for safety.



One of our annual public service activities is teaching CPR to municipal employees. This year we developed two new classes that were delivered two to large groups: First Aid modules for K-5 teachers assistants in schools, and Chokesaver certification for local food service personnel.



We vaccinated against shingles, in addition to our usual flu and pneumonia clinics.



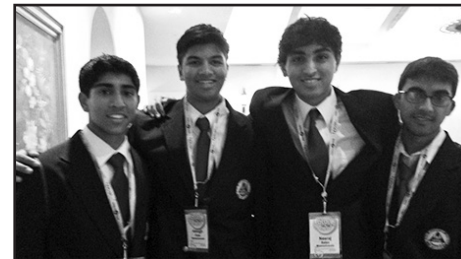
For the nation's first PrepareAthon, we challenged 75 EMS professionals to a "Step into Preparedness" pledge.



Statewide training included a Resilient Communities forum and a disaster conference sponsored by the MA Medical Society.



One of our HOSA members qualified for the Nationals in FL.



Our unit's major educational events included three modules of shelter training, and a sheltering focus on our special Training Day.



See the website for more about our shelter exercise.



We always welcome new members, and encourage them to attend MRC orientations!

