
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#12-23

NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT'S LATEST *¡PREPÁRATE!* PODCAST EPISODE HIGHLIGHTS NATIONAL VOLUNTEER MONTH WITH NYC CERT AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

¡Prepárate! {[Click to listen to episode 17](#)}

April 25, 2023 — In recognition of April as National Volunteer Month, the latest episode of New York City Emergency Management's Spanish podcast *¡Prepárate!*, features Grisel Amador and Oscar Rojas, members of the department's NYC Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). CERT is a national volunteer program that came to New York City after the September 2001 terrorists attack and has empowered New Yorkers to assist their communities during emergency and non-emergency events. The program began in 2003 with 106 volunteers, and to date, they have worked over 265k volunteer hours and assisted their communities during events such as Hurricane Sandy, the East Village building gas explosion, the annual Homeless Annual Population Outreach, the New York City Marathon, and with the Dyker Heights Christmas Lights.

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of NYC CERT with various events throughout the year, Grisel Amador and Oscar Rojas joined the podcast to share what let them to join the program, why they continue to volunteer, and where they would like to see the program in the next 20 years. Amador and Rojas, who are from Puerto Rico and Colombia respectively, want to encourage all New Yorkers and new transplants to the Big Apple, to join CERT and build stronger communities with their neighbors.

"I continue to serve as a volunteer, because I see it and feel it as an act of love for humanity. It is an act of service that connects people from all backgrounds and all languages," **Oscar Rojas said.**

"To me, volunteering is an opportunity to help New Yorkers during emergencies, and help them be prepared for the next one," **Grisel Amador said.** "New York City has a very large Latino population, and while we may use a different vocabulary or have different experiences, disasters and emergencies can happen at any time, and you should always be prepared."

You can listen to the latest *¡Prepárate!* episode on [SoundCloud](#).

Profile

Grisel Amador joined the NYC CERT program in 2007, and has supported volunteer efforts in New York City, as well as Puerto Rico and Haiti. Amador is the executive director of the United Senior Center of Sunset Park.



Oscar Rojas joined the NYC CERT program in 2017 after seeing a flyer about the program. Rojas is a building construction inspector performing quality control for new buildings across the five boroughs.

About CERT

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. Today, there are 24 divisions of credentialed volunteers covering all 59 NYC community boards. NYC CERT volunteers participate in a 11-session basic training program where they receive instruction from active members of the FDNY, FDNY-EMS, NYPD, and NYC Emergency Management. For more information about the program, or if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, call 311 or visit NYC.gov/cert.

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT: Press Office (718) 422-4888

STAY CONNECTED: Twitter: @NotifyNYC (emergency notifications)
@nycemergencymgt (emergency preparedness info)
Facebook: /NYCemergencymanagement