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NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS SYMPOSIUM TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY TIES FOR RESILIENCE

The 12th annual symposium, titled 'Path To Preparedness: Empowering Community Action' was held at Baruch College



March 8, 2024 — On Wednesday, March 6, NYC Emergency Management’s Community Engagement Bureau held its 12th annual Community Preparedness Symposium: Path to Preparedness: Empowering Community Action at Baruch College. It is vital for communities to be prepared ahead of a disaster and have access to resources in order to expedite their recovery period. By preparing an emergency plan before a disaster strikes, community groups and organizations can leverage their networks to better position their members and communities to respond and recover from emergencies.

With a record turnout, the 12th annual symposium focused on how to empower community organizers, leaders, and government to be prepared ahead of emergencies. NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Zach Iscol, Deputy Commissioner of Community Engagement Herman Schaffer, keynote speaker Syeda Ahmed, high school

student, and Ayman Naseer, NYC Emergency Management's Commissioner for the Day contest winner, delivered remarks on the importance of building a network of resources and community connections for emergencies.

"NYC Emergency Management's annual Community Preparedness Symposium brings together a network of resources to community groups, organizations, and government agencies that help streamline the recovery process after an emergency," **said NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Zach Iscol**. "We're grateful for the dedication and expertise of all those involved in making this event possible. Our mission at NYCEM goes beyond response—we strive to empower communities to prepare for, endure, and emerge stronger from emergencies - this can only happen with strong community partnerships and engagement."

This year's theme is "Path to Preparedness: Empowering Community Actions." Participants heard from youth on the importance of including young voices, inspiring speakers who shared their best practices, and attended workshops that discussed emergency preparedness for older adults, effective communication strategies for diverse communities, accountability in inclusive resilience, and new flood disclosure laws in New York City for tenants and homeowners.

Symposium participants and attendees also heard from: Ben Regas, Community Organizer for Waterfront Alliance, Husein Yatabarry, Executive Director of the Muslim Community Network, Yujung Jung, Program Coordinator for Community Inclusion and Development Alliance (CIDA); Liza Cantillo, Director of Operations for City Meals on Wheels, Hein Oo, New Americans Initiative YMCA of Greater New York, and Deborah Costa, Community Preparedness Officer for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 2.

"The annual Community Engagement Symposium showcases the amazing work of our community partners and continues to build and sustain important connections within our community," said **NYC Emergency Management Deputy Commissioner Herman Schaffer**. "Emergency Management's work is only successful with continued partnerships. Participants of the symposium will gain new strategies and tools to make New York City more resilient."

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANNING TOOLKIT

New York City Emergency Management's Community Preparedness Planning toolkit is an interactive booklet tailored to any community, and can be used by congregations, housing developments, tenant or civic associations, community boards or coalitions, community-based organizations, or Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs). From emergencies like hurricanes and heat waves to fires and utility disruptions, the toolkit reviews the varying threats and hazards New Yorkers may face and provides an overview of the key response roles communities can play to mitigate risks. For more information visit, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/ready/community-preparedness.page>.

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