NEW YORK CITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

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For Immediate Release
#9-21

NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT'S 2021 SYMPOSIUM: THE RISE OF COMMUNITIES DURING EMERGENCIES

February 5, 2021 — Emergency planning begins at the community level. When community members plan and organize, neighborhoods are prepared for emergencies and can quickly rebound. On January 28, NYC Emergency Management hosted the *2021 Symposium: The Rise of Communities During Emergencies*. The ninth annual symposium provided insight from community leaders, researchers, and emergency managers to help New Yorkers strengthen their community emergency response plans. NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell and NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities Commissioner Victor Calise delivered virtual remarks urging New Yorkers to become part of their community emergency response. You can watch the Symposium here.

"NYC Emergency Management strives to empower community members to take emergency planning into their own hands. Resilient communities are better prepared to respond to and recover from emergencies," said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell**. "The 2021 symposium provided a forum for New Yorkers to learn about the resources available to help them take the first steps toward building stronger communities."

"The current emergency management and resilience way of looking at things tends to default to looking at the economy, critical infrastructure, the natural environment and then we think about the people. The goal at Aces is to switch those dynamics and center people in how we think about ways we can do our work at emergency management," **Dr. Atiya Martin, CEO and Founder of Aces, said at the symposium**.

NYC Emergency Management's Community Preparedness symposium aims to connect New Yorkers with the community networks and resources that can help them before, during and after an emergency. During the symposium, keynote speaker Dr. Atiya Martin highlighted the importance of diversity and equity in community planning. Dr. Martin discussed the impact socioeconomic status can have on individual and community preparedness, and urged community leaders to ensure they are practicing inclusive planning. Throughout the event, speakers also stressed the need for communities to include older adults and individuals with disabilities and/or access and functional needs in their community's response plan. Following the keynote speech, participants engaged with faith-based and community leaders during breakout sessions to learn about strategies and best practices for creating community networks and emergency plans.

"When communities have plans and networks to communicate with each other they are able to manage unexpected emergencies," said **NYC Emergency Management Director of Community Engagement Moriah Washington**. "During the COVID-19 pandemic we have seen so many community, faith-based, and volunteer organizations rise up and assist their neighbors in need. The 2021 Symposium is a great opportunity to bring groups from across the

city together to share resources and information that can help their communities become more prepared."

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANNING TOOLKIT

New York City Emergency Management's Community Emergency 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 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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