

2010 AWARE PREPARE ANNUAL REPORT

Second Annual Report from Santa Barbara
County's Aware & Prepare Initiative

2009 – 2010 Annual Report

Orfalea Fund's Aware & Prepare Initiative



October 2010

The purpose of this report is to assist in monitoring the status of the programmatic and long-term goals and objectives of the Aware & Prepare Initiative. This document is meant to provide an update since the *2008 – 2009 Annual Report* and comprehensively describes the status of existing projects, significant gaps that need to be addressed, and recommendations for the transition of the Aware & Prepare Initiative.

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Cover Letter

Orfalea Fund Board of Directors
The Orfalea Foundations
1283 Coast Village Circle
Santa Barbara, CA 93108

Dear Orfalea Fund Board of Directors:

We are pleased to submit for your review the *Aware & Prepare Initiative's 2009 - 2010 Annual Report*. The purpose of this report is to assist in monitoring the status of the goals and objectives of the Aware & Prepare Initiative, as it is critical to assess what specific milestones are being achieved and which goals and objectives require further emphasis. The report describes the status of existing projects, identifies the gaps that still need to be addressed, and provides recommendations for the sustainability of the initiative.

As the Aware & Prepare Initiative completes its third year, the Team is working diligently to sustain the key projects and programs in which the Orfalea Fund and other local foundations have invested. We are also working with the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services to transition the initiative to their management and oversight. These efforts have been and will continue to be extremely time-intensive as we clarify roles and responsibilities; strengthen structures that will be relied on for decision-making on behalf of government agencies and non-profit organizations; and continue to nurture the trust that has been built across sectors among key stakeholders that have a role in emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

Throughout this past year, the initiative has experienced incredible success, such as the construction of a new Operational Area Emergency Operations Center and the start of community emergency preparedness programs in the City of Santa Maria and the Santa Ynez Valley. We continue to be tremendously grateful for the emergency managers and non-profit leaders that have committed their time and energy to the development and implementation of these programs. We are also very thankful for your sustained personal and professional investment in fulfilling the mission of the Aware & Prepare Initiative. Your involvement and feedback continues to be valuable to our efforts, and we look forward to a long-term partnership with the Orfalea Fund Board of Directors. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us by electronic mail at Barbara@orfalea.org or Javier@orfalea.org. We are happy to assist you in any manner possible.

Sincerely,

Barbara Andersen, Director
James Lee Witt Associates

Javier Moreno, Coordinator
Orfalea Foundations

Executive Summary

Aware & Prepare is an Orfalea Fund Initiative in partnership with James Lee Witt Associates (Witt Associates), Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services (SBC OES), and local foundations. Our mission is to create a community partnership to enhance capabilities to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency or disaster within the Santa Barbara County Operational Area.

The Aware & Prepare Initiative has made tremendous progress over (almost) three years, which has been due to several circumstances including, but not limited to, the credibility and expertise of our partners, as well as the base of philanthropic activity built by the Orfalea Foundations since 2000. Santa Barbara County has also experienced a number of major wildfire incidents that have not only emphasized the importance of the Aware & Prepare Initiative, but they have also provided us with the opportunity to continually assess the gaps that Witt Associates initially identified as part of our needs assessment, and to measure our level of impact.

When we formally began the Aware & Prepare Initiative in January 2008, the key stakeholders responsible for and/or involved in emergency services in Santa Barbara County were working independently from each other. There was a lack of communication and coordination between jurisdictions and the County Operational Area, government agencies and non-profit organizations, as well as minimal collaboration among the philanthropic community in supporting emergency preparedness and planning efforts. Close to three years later, the circumstances have changed dramatically.

Key Accomplishments

Through the efforts of the Aware & Prepare Initiative, including funding support provided by the Orfalea Foundations and other local foundations, there has been a significant augmentation of existing capabilities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters within Santa Barbara County. There are several noteworthy improvements that have been initiated and/or implemented in our key priority theme areas in the past year.

- The capacity of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department **Reverse 9-1-1 Program** has significantly increased. The number of outgoing telephone lines has expanded from 28 to 46, thereby increasing the number of possible calls per hour from 1,500 to 2,000. If necessary, a "mass call feature" can now be employed with the ability to make 4,000 calls per hour.
- The **University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB)** is developing and implementing a comprehensive program to provide members of the UCSB and Isla Vista communities with disaster awareness and emergency preparedness training and response tools and resources. They will implement several different training programs which will include everything from basic disaster preparedness, to a more

advanced Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), as well as shelter and disaster communications training.

- The **City of Santa Maria** is building a community emergency preparedness and planning program that includes developing improved coordination and communication between the City, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), media outlets, and other related organizations; developing improved methods for providing emergency public information to targeted population groups within the City; and supporting all hazard-planning, preparedness and training for the City and the Fire Department.
- Several key non-profit organizations that have a role in responding to and recovering from emergencies and disasters in Santa Barbara County have undertaken a comprehensive and sustained effort to enhance their emergency preparedness and planning programs. These organizations include **Direct Relief International (DRI)**, **Foodbank of Santa Barbara County**, **Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics (SBNC)**, **Unity Shoppe, Inc.**, and **Community Health Centers of the Central Coast**. With the completion of the Back-Up Generator and Refrigeration Project, DRI is now able to function in the event of a local power failure and has the capability to store and ship cold-chain medications and vaccines, thus expanding its ability to meet the needs of its partners and the patients they serve. The Unity Shoppe and SBNC have each completed an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that will allow them to continue to provide critical services to the community during an emergency or disaster, and have installed emergency back-up electrical power at designated facilities. The Foodbank of Santa Barbara County has also developed an EOP as part of a larger emergency preparedness program that included a training workshop and tabletop discussion for staff and member agencies on the newly-developed plan along with the acquisition and installation of back-up electrical power at both the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria facilities.
- As part of the newly-created **Community Emergency Preparedness Program (CEPP)**, the **City of Solvang** and the **City of Buellton** have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to partner in educating and empowering residents to prepare for and respond to an emergency situation. The program goals include: (1) educating 50% of the community residents on the importance and urgency of disaster preparedness; (2) identifying vulnerable or at-risk populations to receive customized preparedness information; (3) enabling community residents including children, families, school employees, and city works to practice and fine tune emergency procedures; and (4) identifying potential volunteers to help with medical emergencies and to work with the local health department.
- Community-based and faith-based organizations, as well as non-profit service providers that have a role in emergency preparedness, response and/or recovery efforts, are now meeting quarterly as part of the **Santa Barbara County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (SBC VOAD)**. A full-time VOAD Coordinator along with a newly-established Executive Committee is developing a database of available

resources and personnel, a spontaneous volunteer processing center, as well as comprehensive policies and procedures for member organizations.

- **Goleta Prepare Now/Goleta Preparese Hoy!** is aimed at increasing the level of overall awareness and emergency preparedness in the **City of Goleta** and the Goleta Valley at large. This is being achieved through four major components including: (1) increasing readiness and promoting emergency preparedness via public information workshops, special events, meetings and media campaigns; (2) providing emergency supply kits to vulnerable populations in the Goleta Valley; (3) training volunteers in neighborhood emergency preparedness and response; and (4) celebrating September as Emergency Preparedness Month with public outreach and community displays at key locations.

Lastly, since its inception, the Aware & Prepare Initiative has advocated for a **new Operational Area Emergency Operations Center (EOC)**, having identified the current inadequacy of the facility as a significant gap in capabilities. With multiple recommendations by the Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury dating back to 1996, and a tremendous financial contribution from the collaborative of funders of Aware & Prepare, the new multi-million dollar, 11,000 square foot EOC was approved by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors on January 5, 2010. The Santa Barbara County EOC broke ground in early February 2010 and will be located off Lower Cathedral Oaks Road in the County Complex. The groundbreaking for the County EOC was a tremendous accomplishment for the Aware & Prepare Initiative and its public-private partnership. However, even greater than that has been the championing and prioritizing of the issue of emergency readiness by a multitude of government agencies, non-profit organizations, foundations and individuals working together to ensure the safety of their community and neighbors.



Strategic Planning

Since its inception, the Aware & Prepare Initiative has undertaken a strategic planning process that includes both short-term and long-term measurement of the impact of the initiative. This process also includes a continual and comprehensive gap analysis that refines our goals and objectives in enhancing capabilities within the Santa Barbara County Operational Area.

Logic Model

The initial needs assessment provides the basis for a long-term strategic plan that more specifically articulates the goals and objectives for the Aware & Prepare Initiative from its inception through the end of the three-year commitment as designated by the Orfalea Foundations. The logic model has designated outcomes in three primary areas including institutional change, partnership development, and social marketing. The following information is an update on each output identified in the Logic Model as it specifically relates to achievements in the past year.

Institutional Change

The Aware & Prepare Team identified the following outputs to encourage and facilitate institutional change within the Santa Barbara County Operational Area. For each of these outputs, there is an update on the progress that has been made in the past year.

- **Encourage collaboration among projects and programs focused on strengthening emergency preparedness.** The Aware & Prepare Team has continued to cultivate the collaborative relationships that have already been developed, as well as facilitate the creation of new partnerships and networks that will enhance coordination and communication across the public, non-profit, private and independent sectors.
- **Continue to nurture collaboration between Operational Area and jurisdictions, as well as non-profit organizations.** The Aware & Prepare Initiative has consistently facilitated dialogue between and among these entities in addressing a number of critical issues in emergency management. Throughout the past year, we have hosted roundtable discussions to further encourage proactive, solution-oriented dialogue. We are also continuing to build a solid infrastructure for sustained coordination and collaboration through the Emergency Coordinators Committee (ECC) and the Santa Barbara County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.
- **Include SBC OES and ECC in the overall decision-making process for projects and evaluation.** The Aware & Prepare Team has worked on strengthening our partnership with the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services to solidify the long-term sustainability of the initiative. We have continued to follow our systematic approach to vetting and approving proposed projects and programs with the Office of Emergency Services, but we have also included SBC OES in initial project meetings and throughout the evaluation process to determine if measurable

goals are being achieved in coordination with the Operational Area. We are hopeful that the ECC will also be a valuable asset in providing management and oversight of projects and programs that have been developed and implemented with the support of the Orfalea Fund and other local foundations.

- **Allow for a multi-faceted support and reporting system through the Orfalea Foundations and SBC OES.** The Aware & Prepare Team continues to work with the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services to maintain our due diligence of reviewing, vetting and evaluating projects and programs. We work closely with our partners to ensure that projects and programs are achieving key milestones, and to overcome challenges that may evolve throughout the course of implementation.

Partnership Development

- **Continue to bring in key stakeholders in emergency preparedness to ECC and VOAD meetings.** Both the ECC and VOAD have grown substantially in membership over the past year. This more robust participation increases the likelihood that the partnerships that have been developed and the collaborative networks that have been created will be sustainable through larger, umbrella organizations. The Aware & Prepare Team is also working closely with both entities to create viable and effective structures that will be utilized in the future to facilitate a more streamlined granting process.
- **Meet with organizations in Santa Barbara County that will help in addressing identified gaps and incorporate them into existing collaborative networks.** The Aware & Prepare Team has continued to reach out to key government agencies and non-profit organizations that are working to address the priority theme areas for emergency preparedness improvement in Santa Barbara County. However, this proactive outreach has decreased over the past year as we work to sustain projects and programs that have already been developed and implemented.
- **Continuously vet projects through meetings with key stakeholders, including funding partners, non-profit organizations, and public and private sector organizations.** The Aware & Prepare Team and our partners are constantly leveraging all of our new and existing relationships to ensure that projects are meeting our established objectives and the strategic planning priorities for the Operational Area. We rely heavily on the Office of Emergency Services to ensure alignment with strategic planning priorities and work closely with stakeholders to ensure newly-proposed projects are being coordinated with existing efforts.
- **Highlight the importance of a secure budget for emergency operations and preparedness for government agencies and non-profit organizations.** As government agencies and non-profit organizations continue to be impacted by the economic recession, it has been important for us to constantly emphasize the need to maintain emergency preparedness and planning as a priority. During difficult financial times, emergency services tend to be the first program that experiences major budget cuts.

With the vulnerability of Santa Barbara to significant natural and man-made disasters, this community cannot take that risk. Despite this, the Office of Emergency Services has successfully increased the allocation provided to them through Homeland Security and the Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG).

Social Marketing

- **Encourage SBC OES to work directly with funded organizations, namely public education programs, to further increase citizen awareness and preparedness.** The Operational Area is taking on a more proactive role with regards to increasing individual and family preparedness so that information is comprehensive, accurate and available county-wide. SBC OES partnered with California Concern to facilitate the *Radio Ready* program that has been very successful in educating the public on the importance of having a hand-cranked radio in their disaster kit. This level of engagement has also been seen with the development of public education and awareness campaigns in each jurisdiction as well as with the implementation of the *Listos* pilot program. Most recently, the Aware & Prepare Team facilitated a roundtable discussion with jurisdictions on Public Education and Awareness to develop an outline for an Operational Area strategic plan. This information will be shared with SBC OES during the next Emergency Coordinators Committee meeting in October.
- **Host topic-specific roundtable discussions with key stakeholders on each issue for networking opportunities and the development of action plans.** Smaller group discussions emerged as one of the follow-up items during the Aware & Prepare event in March 2009 so that stakeholders can have the opportunity to build on new and existing relationships, clarify roles and responsibilities, and identify solutions that can address identified gaps. Since that time, Aware & Prepare has hosted roundtable discussions on functional access needs, non-English speaking populations, institutions of higher education, and public education and awareness.
- **Initiate stronger relationships with media outlets to further enhance emergency public information and media collaboration with SBC OES.** Public information emerged as one of the more pressing issues for the residents of Santa Barbara County during an emergency response. Aware & Prepare has helped facilitate stronger relationships between the media and the County Office of Emergency Services to ensure that the information provided is accurate and regularly updated throughout the incident. The County Board of Supervisors and SBC OES have also initiated the creation of a *Media Roundtable* that is meeting regularly to build relationships and discuss pressing public information issues.

Gap Analysis

The Aware & Prepare Initiative has been working over the past year to focus more on the priority theme areas of *Coordination and Communication* as well as *Authority and*

Management. These two are significant because they emphasize strategies and capabilities to develop strong relationships within the community, and specifically between the local government and non-profit organizations. These efforts include facilities (Emergency Operations Center) and capabilities for community leadership to provide command, control and coordination of disaster response activities. The greatest impact in these priority theme areas has been the construction of a new Operational Area Emergency Operations Center. However, the new building will only increase effectiveness and efficiency in managing a large-scale emergency or catastrophic disaster if designated personnel are well-trained and properly equipped. The Aware & Prepare Team will continue to focus on enhancing Coordination & Communication throughout the next year and work directly with the Office of Emergency Services in developing an Operational Area-wide training and exercise program that will be initiated after the completion of the new facility.

Aware & Prepare will also be facilitating the development of an Operational Area-wide public education and awareness program that will serve as the high level of support and coordination for jurisdictional efforts. We are working directly with local emergency managers and other representatives to identify documents and visual aids that will be consistent county-wide and complement existing materials that have been developed and distributed by Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, Goleta, Solvang, Buellton and Santa Maria. The Office of Emergency Services is also partnering with City of Santa Barbara TV to develop an innovative Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign that will be adopted county-wide and a parallel PSA campaign that will be specifically tailored to and culturally-appropriate for non-English speaking populations.

Transition into 2011 and 2012

Since its inception, the Aware & Prepare Initiative has had an “exit strategy.” It was understood that the significant financial commitment made by the Orfalea Foundations would be for a three-year period and that after that time there would be a transition of leadership to our other partners. In January 2010, the Orfalea Fund Board of Directors approved a transition plan, as well as additional funding for the Aware & Prepare Initiative in FY2011 and FY2012 to support on-going programs and sustainability. We also envisioned that we could rely on current structures to provide the management and oversight of key programs. These structures included the Emergency Coordinators Committee and the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

The ECC is comprised of all personnel responsible for emergency services throughout the Operational Area and is organized by subcommittee to address critical planning components, such as public education, emergency public information, and training/exercises. The goal of each subcommittee is to determine the key milestones to be achieved in the designated area within each fiscal year and facilitate the completion of projects to accomplish those objectives. After more than a year, frustration grew as subcommittees failed to address strategic planning priorities. In May 2010, the Aware & Prepare Team brought together a group of volunteers from the ECC to delve deeper into this issue. The feedback provided to us was that the ECC was not an effective or viable

structure in its current state. These participants did not believe that it could be utilized as the entity to sustain the efforts of the Aware & Prepare Initiative. This was clearly a setback in implementing our “exit strategy.” We subsequently facilitated a discussion to create a new structure for the ECC. This structure is currently being “tested” to determine if, over the course of the next year, it will be sufficiently effective to manage existing projects and programs, as well as facilitate a more stream-lined granting process as part of the transition of the Aware & Prepare Initiative to oversight by the Office of Emergency Services.

The Santa Barbara County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster is also under-going significant challenges in its transition to becoming a sustainable organization. Over the past two years, Aware & Prepare has invested in a full-time VOAD Coordinator to: (1) develop plans, policies and procedures; (2) implement a structure that will be utilized for operational and policy decision-making; (3) recruit and maintain membership; and (4) acquire key emergency supplies. Once these objectives were accomplished, the goal of Aware & Prepare was to discontinue funding for personnel as the organization was created to rely solely on membership dues to sustain its operations. Due to the fact that members of the Executive Committee and chairs of each Subcommittee are existing non-profit executive leaders, they are already overwhelmed with existing responsibilities. This has created a heavy reliance on the VOAD Coordinator to manage the organization. Consequently, the Aware & Prepare Team has been and will continue to work closely with the Executive Committee to facilitate the transition of VOAD from reliance on its full-time personnel to be managed solely by its members. We have also already initiated review of grants submitted by non-profit organizations to the Aware & Prepare Initiative by the VOAD Executive Committee. This process has proven to be very beneficial as these members become more empowered to prioritize how funds are allocated in support of non-profit organizations that have a role in emergency response and recovery throughout the Santa Barbara County Operational Area.

Due to these on-going challenges, the Aware & Prepare Team has decided to maintain a liaison between the ECC and VOAD organizations and the Funder Collaborative. Javier Moreno will maintain his role within the Aware & Prepare Initiative as we transition into 2011 to ensure that we are providing adequate support to our partners and key stakeholders in sustaining key projects and programs. This will also maintain the high level of accountability that we have guaranteed to our funders while they continue to significantly invest in our efforts. Aware & Prepare has also requested a considerable financial commitment from the Orfalea Foundations in the next fiscal year to address substantial carry-over commitments for existing grants, and to assist in the achievement of designated objectives within the top priority theme area of Public Education & Awareness. Furthermore, to reduce overhead costs and help transition management to the Office of Emergency Services, Witt Associates will be minimizing its role after the first quarter of FY2011. Although Witt Associates will always maintain its commitment to the public-private partnership, it is important that the firm step back at this stage to further empower our partners to take on more of a leadership role within the Aware & Prepare Initiative.

Outreach

In an effort to continue to address existing gaps in emergency preparedness in a multi-sector, collaborative manner throughout the county, Aware & Prepare has continued to host roundtable discussions on various topics including Functional Access Needs and People with Disabilities, Non-English Speaking Populations, Isla Vista and the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), Institutions of Higher Education, and Public Education and Awareness. Not only has this effort warranted discussions on critical gaps, but it has also served the purpose of strategic outreach and developing elements of sustainability through addressing issues in collaborative networks. Addressing gaps through small roundtable discussions was a direct outcome from feedback received at the Aware & Prepare event in March 2009.

All-Grantee Stakeholder Meeting

This meeting served as the kick-off to the series of topic-specific roundtable discussions. The purpose of this discussion was to encourage information sharing and strengthen collaboration among and between governmental and non-governmental organizations, as



well as more comprehensively assess the impact of the initiative in enhancing capabilities within the Santa Barbara County Operational Area. The meeting resulted in thirty (30) participants from nineteen government agencies and non-profit organizations. Outcomes of this meeting were the beginning for many new partnered efforts for emergency preparedness. One example of a new partnership is the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department working with the

American Red Cross Santa Barbara County Chapter to collaborate storing the cache of supplies for the Medical Reserve Corps at the ARC facility in Santa Maria.

Functional Access Needs, People with Disabilities and Elderly in Times of Disaster

This roundtable discussion was held in coordination with the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) in October 2009. This discussion also served as a follow-up on the sheltering of people with access and functional needs during the Jesusita Fire that occurred in May 2009. This event brought together thirteen stakeholders from various government agencies and non-profit organizations including: Cal EMA, Santa Barbara County Public Health Department, Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services, Office of Emergency Services, The Independent Living Resource Center, City of Santa Barbara Access Committee, and the American Red Cross Santa Barbara County Chapter.

A direct outcome from this meeting was the potential to develop capacity in Santa Barbara County for Functional Assessment Service Teams (FAST). FAST is a program that has been developed by the California Department of Social Services to train individuals in counties

throughout the State on providing a more comprehensive service in general population evacuation shelters.

Non-English Speaking Populations in Times of Disaster

In November 2009, Aware & Prepare hosted the second roundtable discussion with key organizations from throughout the county that have a direct link to low-income, Spanish speaking populations. This discussion included a range of participation from twelve individuals representing community-based organizations and service providers to Spanish speakers including, but not limited to, KPMR-Univision, Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics, and La Casa de la Raza. Various areas of emergency preparedness were covered including alert and notification, evacuation and sheltering, emergency public information and media coverage. However, the issue that was the most prominent was public education and awareness. The idea that public education and awareness programs needed to address cultural sensitivities and illiteracy, specifically with the Spanish speaking, Latino population in our community, was brought up more than once. As a direct outcome to this meeting the idea for what is now the *Listos* program was further considered and has now developed into the Aware & Prepare Initiative's Spanish language pilot program.



University of California, Santa Barbara and Isla Vista Community Preparedness

At the beginning of 2010, Aware & Prepare and partners at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) came together to begin discussions on addressing the preparedness of the Isla Vista community. From this meeting, we initiated strategic outreach to key stakeholders in the Isla Vista and UCSB community, and arranged for a roundtable discussion with the goal of eventually developing an emergency plan for Isla Vista. This roundtable discussion was hosted in March 2010 and involved nineteen individuals from key non-profit organizations, businesses and government agencies in Isla Vista as well as representatives from UCSB. Individuals have continued to meet in addressing this critical gap in Santa Barbara County and will be developing a committee of community stakeholders to address preparedness needs. In addition, partial funds from the recent grant awarded to UCSB by the Aware & Prepare Initiative have been allocated to further developing the preparedness efforts of Isla Vista and the coordination and communication among key community leaders. The UCSB Emergency Manager has also been given permission by University administration to include Isla Vista emergency preparedness as part of his job responsibilities.

Institutions of Higher Education and Disaster Readiness

After the Tea Fire and the impact the incident had on the Westmont campus, Aware & Prepare felt it necessary to bring together the various institutions of higher education in Santa Barbara County to initiate a grounded relationship and share best practices. A roundtable discussion was hosted in April 2010 with representatives from Allan Hancock College, Santa Barbara City College, UC Santa Barbara, Westmont College, and the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services. Outcomes of this discussion not only led to collaboration on training opportunities, campus plan enhancement and developing a relationship with county representatives, but also served as the first meeting opportunity for the individuals responsible for preparedness at each of their respective campuses.

Emergency Preparedness Public Education and Awareness

In October 2010, the Aware & Prepare Team facilitated a roundtable discussion with representatives from each jurisdiction to share lessons learned and best practices from the development and implementation of their public education and awareness campaigns. The outcome of this meeting was an outline of a strategic plan for an Operational Area-wide public education and awareness campaign. This included identification of best practices from jurisdictional efforts as well as materials and visuals that can be utilized throughout the entire county. This information will be shared with other government agencies and non-profit organizations at the next schedule meeting of the Emergency Coordinators Committee. In addition, the ECC Subcommittee for Public Education & Awareness will be identifying key priorities to be addressed within the next year.

On-going Efforts for Networking Opportunities

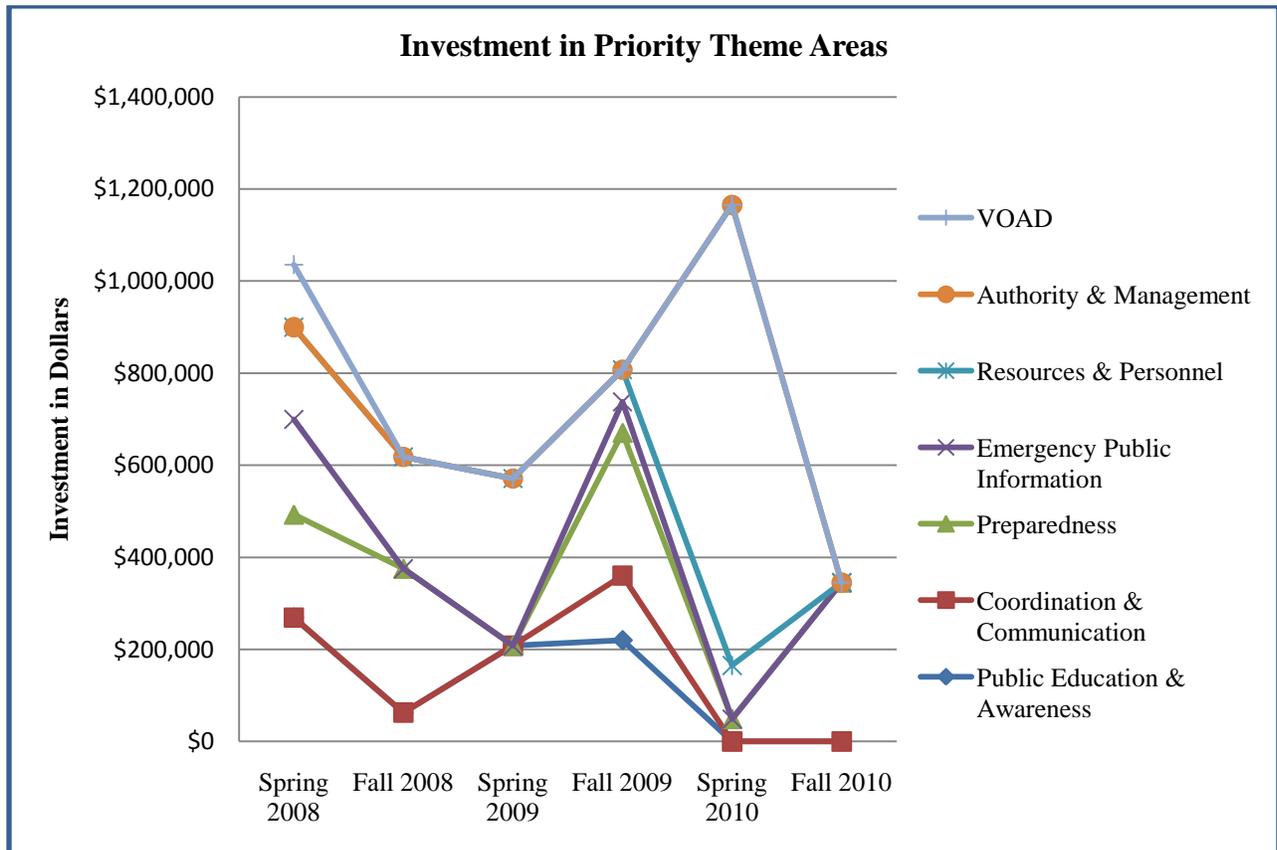
Aware & Prepare will continue to assess gaps and identify areas where a roundtable discussion may enhance relationships and move a specific issue forward. Currently, we are continuing to work on identifying representatives from faith-based communities to attend a roundtable discussion; however, there have been obstacles in getting individuals to the table as a result of scheduling and lack of interest. In the meantime, the Aware & Prepare Team will facilitate the outcomes of the previous roundtable discussions by being present at follow-up meetings and strategically investing in innovative, cost-effective solutions to these critical emergency management issues.

It is important to note that this specific manner of outreach is what makes the initiative so unique and successful. The Santa Barbara County Operational Area has not backed down from the most challenging discussions, and participation in these roundtable discussions has increased over time. The Aware & Prepare Team has also received incredibly honest feedback on its level of impact and the gaps that remain in enhancing capabilities to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters.

Grantmaking

Before the start of the 2010 fiscal year, the Orfalea Foundations made the strategic decision to adopt a rolling grant process. This has enabled the Aware & Prepare Initiative greater flexibility in working to address the remaining gaps in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities within the Santa Barbara County Operational Area. It has also created a more proactive granting process which has in turn limited the total number of applications received by Aware & Prepare. In general, the only grants received by the initiative are government agencies and non-profit organizations that we have specifically recruited to assist in addressing a strategic planning priority or gap in capability. Although this has not limited the amount of time dedicated to grantmaking by the Aware & Prepare Team, it has greatly reduced the number of applications to be processed and reviewed.

The Aware & Prepare Initiative is now supporting a total of twenty-two (22) organizations in developing and/or implementing a total of thirty-one (31) projects and programs within our seven priority theme areas.



The following grants have been approved and/or are currently being implemented within the last year to enhance capabilities to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters within the Santa Barbara County Operational Area.

Fall 2009 Grant Cycle

- **Santa Barbara County Public Health Department, Medical Reserve Corps Program.** In May 2007, Santa Barbara Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA), as part of the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department, formally began the process of creating a Santa Barbara Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). They now have established multi-disciplinary teams that are able to be deployed to support existing medical resources or to be linked with Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) throughout the County. MRC volunteers include doctors and nurses, veterinarians, dentists, social workers, pharmacists, chaplains, paramedics, and Emergency Medical Technicians. The MRC is called upon when regular emergency medical response systems are overwhelmed, such as during natural disasters or other major emergencies. This grant request is a “renewal” of their existing Grant Agreement to continue to expand the role of the MRC by supporting a full-time MRC Coordinator for another year. The MRC Coordinator will continue to develop and refine specific protocols and procedures, facilitate training opportunities and exercises for MRC volunteers, as well as expand outreach for the purposes of increasing membership.
- **Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Department, Reverse 911 Enhancement.** The intent of the project is to enhance an existing countywide, all jurisdictions Emergency Notification System. The Sheriff’s Department will expand the current program by replacing the old server and adding a new more robust server that will nearly double the current calling capacity and add other valuable features such as redundancy, speed of deliverability, and room for future capacity growth. Additionally, the Sheriff’s Department will be in a position to add a new “self-registration protocol” that will enable residents to register on-line and identify how they would like to be notified including Short Message Service (SMS) texting, email, cell phone, and/or landline. The system will then be able to show the resident a map indicating the location in which the number is geographically registered. This will assist in maintaining the calling accuracy that was achieved during the Jesusita Fire.
- **Santa Barbara County Fire Department, Fire Command and Control System Project.** This project involves the purchase and installation of repeater radios on at least seven mountain-top communications sites located throughout the county. Voice radio repeaters with simulcast capability are required for use as command channels to effectively communicate over large geographic areas and to the Public Safety Dispatch Center in Santa Barbara during large-scale emergencies. This project will facilitate the orderly transition to a completely narrowband radio system as mandated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The improved radio system will allow an interoperable command channel to be dedicated for inter-agency incidents (such as the Tea Fire) and provide the opportunity to assign a

dedicated command channel at large-scale, long-term incidents (such as the Gap and Zaca Fires).

- **Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, Generator Project.** The Foodbank has purchased and installed two emergency generators at the Santa Barbara and Santa Maria warehouses. The funding covered all of the costs for the permitting, construction, project management and sourcing of the generators for both of the facilities. As the primary emergency food provider in the County in times of community crisis, the Foodbank requires emergency power to remain fully functional in the event of natural disasters, power outages, or major displacements countywide. The diesel generators will provide critical back-up power in the event of a power loss for the entire spectrum of operations at both north and south county sites for warehouse and office facilities, coolers/freezers that store thousands of pounds of perishable food, forklifts and equipment to transport food, and computer systems to maintain communication and track food inventory.
- **Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services, Emergency Operations Center Capital Project.** The primary purpose of the Emergency Operations Center is to serve as a single focal point for the management of information, decision making and resource support/allocation during all phases of a local emergency. An EOC provides a location of authority and information, and allows for face-to-face coordination among personnel who must make emergency management decisions. The development of a permanent EOC building is critical to meeting these objectives. The funding has ensured that an appropriate facility is built to protect the citizens of the Santa Barbara County Operational Area.
- **Community Health Centers of the Central Coast, Emergency Preparedness Program.** CHCCC will purchase satellite phones for six medical centers in Santa Barbara County that do not currently have this equipment, as well as facilitate two emergency preparedness trainings for approximately 120 employees of Community Health Centers of the Central Coast in Santa Maria, Orcutt, Guadalupe, and Lompoc. Funding will also support the increase in hours from eight to sixteen hours total per week of the Safety Officer that has been designated to oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Emergency Preparedness Program.
- **American Red Cross Santa Barbara County Chapter, Capacity Building Northern Santa Barbara County.** Red Cross received support for the position of Safety and Preparedness Coordinator serving northern Santa Barbara County through the Santa Maria District Office. This key staff person is in charge of promoting and implementing First Aid/CPR and other education courses and programs to the community and local businesses. In addition, they coordinate all workplace and community classes including Instructor recruitment for all classes in both English and Spanish. The overall goal of the Safety and Preparedness Coordinator is to help the general public become better prepared for a disaster or a life-threatening emergency.

- **City of Solvang/City of Buellton, Community Emergency Preparedness Program.** The primary goal of the CEPP is to build the community capacity needed in the Solvang, Buellton, and Santa Ynez Valley areas to enhance the public's readiness to respond to any and all emergency situations. The CEPP will work in collaboration with a variety of local government offices and agencies, school districts, businesses and organizations to educate the public about the importance of disaster preparedness. Grant funding will cover the costs of a Community Emergency Preparedness Coordinator responsible for the development and implementation of an emergency preparedness program covering Solvang, Buellton and the Santa Ynez Valley. Funds will also cover the costs of promotional and educational materials used to create awareness, and the purchase of training materials and supplies for CERT and Red Cross training courses. In the second year of the program, funding will also be used to partially cover the costs of purchasing first aid and other emergency supplies, as well as the structures in which to house them for four local schools.
- **Central Coast Water Authority, CCWA Redundant Data Center and Connectivity.** CCWA will build a second data center at its remote location in the Polonio Pass Water Treatment Plant in order to have a back-up copy of all data and a server environment in a real-time practice to maintain business continuity in the case of a disaster. Current operations are housed in Buellton at the main CCWA building and having a second data center with replicated data 150 miles away will ensure that water flow, treatment, monitoring and control can continue, and will allow for an uninterrupted supply of water for the water districts in Santa Barbara County.

Spring 2010 Grant Cycle

- **Direct Relief International, Business/Continuity of Operations Plan.** DRI will assess and plan for an organization-wide business continuity plan (BCP) that will ensure the organization's ability to remain operational in the event of a disaster or other emergency. Funding includes labor costs to create, train on and test the BCP, as well as supporting equipment, media and materials, and back-up services. In addition, DRI will share its business continuity planning process with other non-profit organizations as part of their involvement in the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.
- **University of California Santa Barbara, Community Training & Resources.** The purpose of this grant is to provide members of the UCSB and Isla Vista (IV) communities with disaster awareness and emergency preparedness training, as well as response tools and resources based on the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) curriculum as developed and implemented by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). UCSB will implement several different training programs, from basic disaster preparedness to more advanced CERT, in addition to shelter and disaster communications training.

- **Sansum Clinic, Generator Project.** The Sansum Clinic will acquire and install a 150kw emergency generator to keep critical information technology/phone systems and outpatient surgery operating and cooling for the Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine in the event of an emergency or disaster in Santa Barbara County. This funding will be part of Sansum Clinic's three-year \$600,000 project to add a total of three generators (two Santa Barbara locations and one in Lompoc) by 2012.

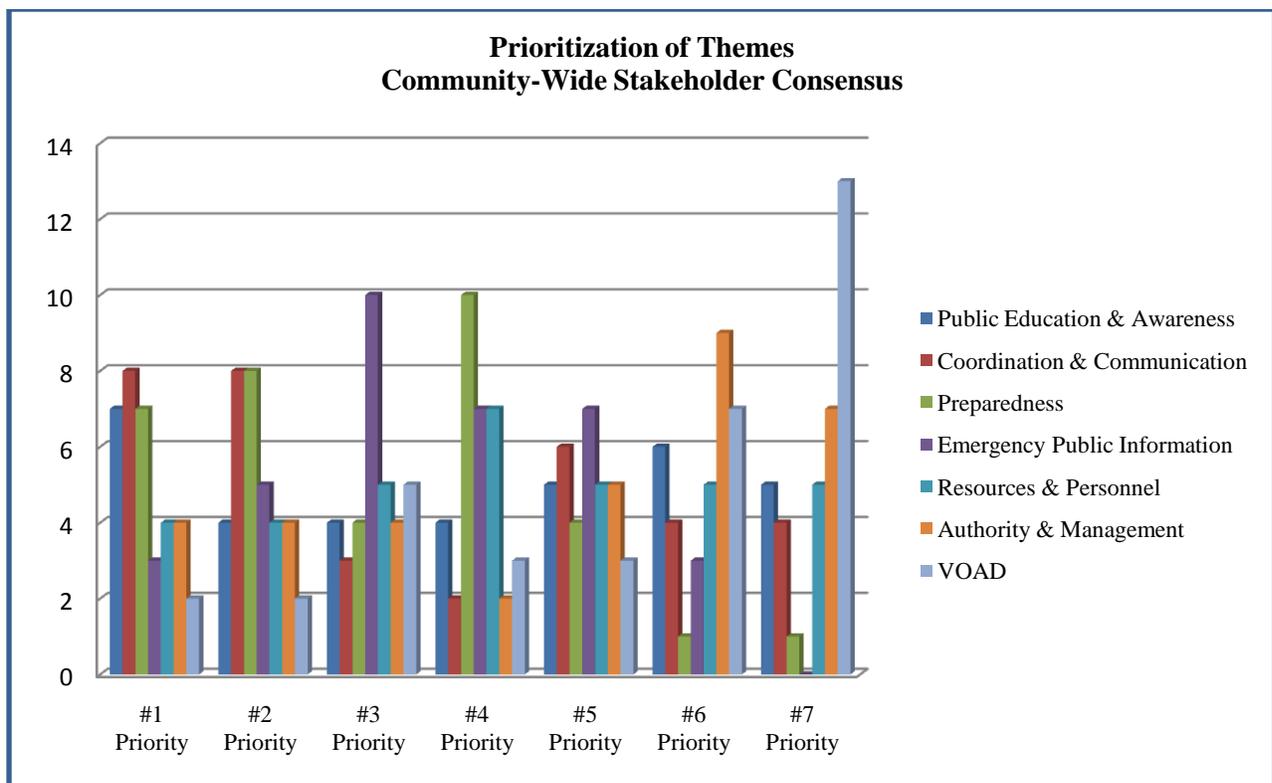
Fall 2010 Grant Cycle

- **City of Santa Maria, Regional Emergency Preparedness and Readiness Program.** This program will facilitate the development of the Multi-Hazard Response Plan, Debris Removal Plan, and Continuity of Government/Continuity of Operations Plan for the City of Santa Maria, Allan Hancock College, and the City of Guadalupe using a regional, integrated perspective. Key staff and volunteers from each jurisdiction will be identified and provided training to support their non-traditional role in emergency response and recovery. An existing Aware & Prepare Initiative in Santa Maria will be expanded to include education and outreach to the City of Guadalupe and Allan Hancock College, and will support the planning and partial implementation of a regional/virtual Emergency Operations Center concept using (as much as practicable) modified existing infrastructure.

Evaluation

As part of our efforts to assess the impact of the Aware & Prepare Initiative in enhancing the capabilities of the Santa Barbara County Operational Area, we distributed another brief on-line survey to our initial set of stakeholders as well as representatives of each jurisdiction and other non-profit organizations that have been incorporated into the initiative since its inception. This survey followed a similar format to the one distributed last year so that we can collect data for a comparative study. However, we did include additional questions regarding the overall impact of the Aware & Prepare Initiative on the organization/agency as well as the community; the incorporation of new ideas and practices as a result of the initiative's efforts; and how to confront the economic challenges in sustaining key projects and programs.

Each year, the Aware & Prepare Team has inquired as to the ranking order of the priority themes identified in the Initial Needs Assessment. This feedback provides us the opportunity to re-evaluate the gaps identified under each priority theme area and ensure that we continue to address needs as emphasized by our key stakeholders.



The consensus from the survey is that Coordination & Communication continues to be the top priority followed closely by Preparedness which includes planning, training and exercises. It is important to note that there were some glaring discrepancies between surveys which would indicate that progress has been made over the one year time span separating the 2009 Survey from the 2010 Survey. Below, describes the shifts in data over

the course of one year and compares the percentages by adding 1 through 3 (which indicates some degree of importance, 1 being the highest priority, 2 being the second priority, and so on) and comparing it to the added percentages of 5 through 7:

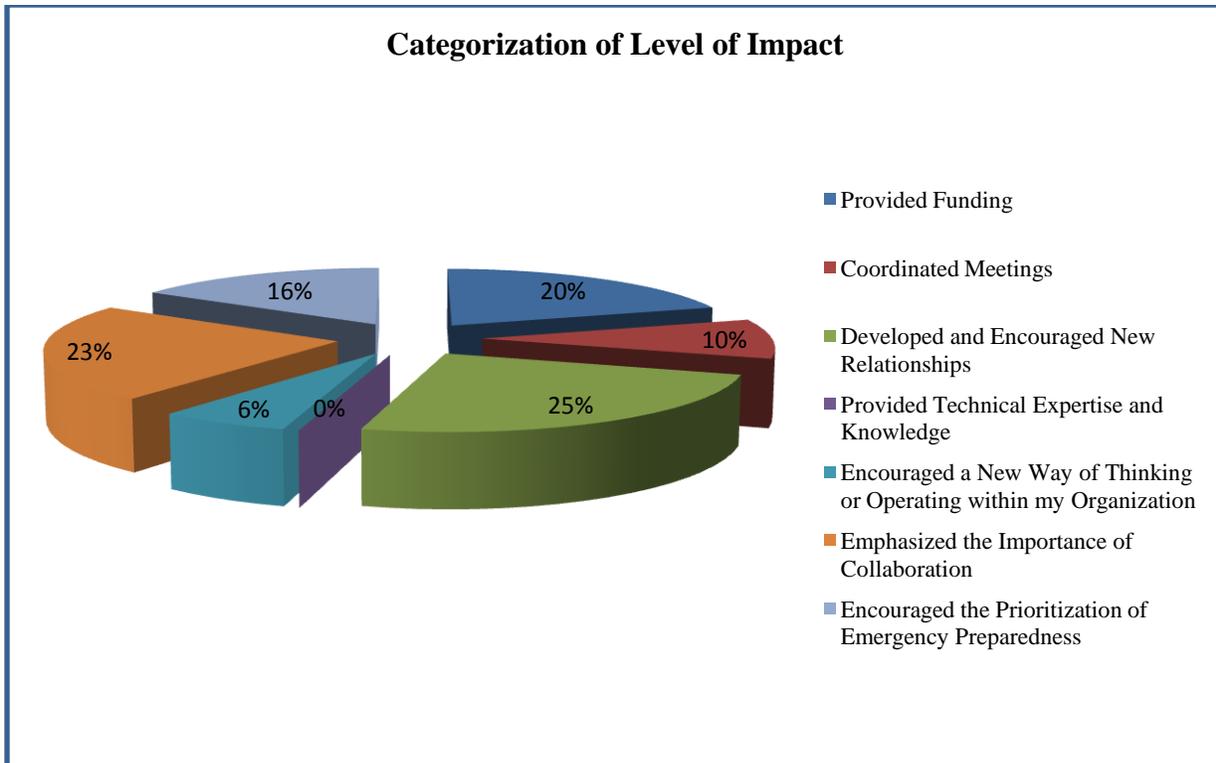
- **Public Education and Awareness.** There was little discrepancy between the two stakeholder surveys with 43% indicating that this theme area was very important. It remains in close proximity to Coordination & Communication as well as Preparedness.
- **Coordination and Communication.** The percentages in this theme area show great disparities between the surveys. This theme area was considered the most important on the 2009 Survey with a combined percentage of 83% of the respondents indicating as such. As per the 2010 Survey, 54% still felt it warranted some degree of importance. Only 3% felt it had little to no importance in the 2009 survey. Compare this to the results on the 2010 survey and there is considerable difference in perception with 40% seeing this particular theme area having little to no importance. Such data would indicate that stakeholders are now working more with one another or, at the least, communicating more freely and sharing more information.
- **Preparedness: Planning, Training, and Exercises.** Combining the categories indicating an importance in this theme area shows a slight disparity: 47% for the 2009 Survey and 54% for the 2010 Survey. The most compelling part of this statistic is that 20% on the 2010 survey, as opposed to 13% percent on the 2009 Survey, find this to be the most important area (that is, rated “one.”)
- **Emergency Public Information.** Based on the 2009 Survey data, this was considered an important theme area with 66% indicating as such. It saw a drop in importance on the 2010 Survey at 52%. Conversely, no respondent considered it the least important, another possible indicator that attempts to bolster emergency public information outreach captured appeal.
- **Resources and Personnel.** This theme area saw a modest increase in importance from the 2009 Survey to the 2010 Survey. Specifically, 33% deemed it as an important area while 37% believed this to be the same for the 2010 survey. It is possible that due to the injection of equipment and funding for new positions among the sectors, stakeholders could have been motivated to continue focusing on resources and personnel.
- **Authority and Management.** Establishing infrastructure for all sectors who command, control, and coordinate responsibilities was considered important, especially when factoring in sustainability after the Aware & Prepare Initiative transitions into 2011 and 2012. The 2009 survey put this at 53% noting some degree of importance. Only 3% felt it was the least important. On the 2010 Survey, those indicating it had an importance dropped to 34%. The most significant statistic is that 20% found this to be the least important theme area. The disparity is

noteworthy and could be due to several reasons including new positions and forms of leadership being created throughout Aware & Prepare, particularly when considering funding in support of jurisdictional programs, as well as construction of a new Operational Area Emergency Operations Center.

- **VOAD.** Taken together, 90% of respondents deemed VOAD to not have a high degree of importance in comparison to other priority theme areas. Sixty-three percent (63%) of respondents saw VOAD being the least important theme area in the 2009 Survey. Compared to the percentage marked on the 2010 Survey, this drops considerably to 37% for those thinking it was the least important theme area. Building upon the resiliency of the non-profit sector through partnerships and the VOAD organization was and continues to be an important goal for the Aware & Prepare Initiative.

Impact of Aware & Prepare

As the Orfalea Foundations initiates the summative evaluation process for the Aware & Prepare Initiative and its impact over the course of a three-year period, the Team decided to include a question in this year's survey that would allow us to gain some insight into what our stakeholders deemed to be our level of influence. When asked, "How have the efforts of Aware & Prepare allowed for your organization/agency to connect and/or collaborate with other organizations to strengthen emergency preparedness and planning efforts?" **ninety-four percent (94%) of stakeholders responded that they had observed and/or experienced an increased level of collaboration with more agencies and organizations and have developed a more coordinated approach for Operational Area-wide efforts.** The survey then asked stakeholders to "categorize the level of impact that the Aware & Prepare Initiative has had on the organization and/or the community since its inception in early 2008." The result was that Aware & Prepare had primarily developed and encouraged new relationships which correlates directly with our mission to create a community partnership to enhance capabilities to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters.



Most notably, a survey participant stated that, “The Aware & Prepare program has elevated the importance of local actors knowing each other and understanding roles and responsibilities. When these relationships are established before emergencies, you have a much more effective response.”

Constructive Criticism

Due to the fact that there was a minimal amount of comments that expressed some criticism, they are worth noting separately. One comment highlighted that meetings were so inclusive that it became a slight hindrance to getting action implemented “...by involving the community as intensely as we have, it can slow the process of moving from ideas to action down a bit.” In other words, the diversity of the meetings could have possibly worked against the ability of getting actions accomplished. Although, the majority of stakeholders believed that the meetings were useful and that the high level of inclusivity was beneficial.

In general, stakeholder feedback focused partly on the involvement of the public sector – most of it being praiseworthy, but at times, critical. Specifically, one survey participant noted sustainability would be based on the public sector making strides to keep the message of Aware & Prepare a priority within the community. This was echoed in later feedback that “...there needs to be more follow-through and follow up on the County’s end” especially in areas that are solely reliant on funding. Moreover, the public sector was asked to step up and partner with the largest employers to help develop response plans. It was also intimated that the lack of changes in outreach from the public sector was the most

significant aspect of Aware & Prepare by stating, “What has not changed is what is so significant.” This begs the question as to what, from the perspective of the stakeholders, could have been done better? Non-governmental organizations were also singled out as needing a continued relationship with the public sector in calling to “improve standards and performance of public agencies in their relations with the NGOs.”

Establishing more concrete roles between the stakeholders was also seen as signaling a lasting impact and one that fell short according to some respondents. One comment indicated that this was still not clear as to what role each sector would play in the Operational Area with “many partners who might be more vocal on a one-to-one basis appear to still be unsure of their stature in a broader [Operational Area-wide] venue.” Another echoed this sentiment by stating they “still felt generally isolated from County emergency services.”

Funding was a recurring issue of concern in some of the responses and many provided clear, descriptive, and insightful comments. Some sectors were singled out as being key to creating funding that had not existed before with one answer that read, “The private sector is the answer for continued funding through corporate donations...Some of the programs are going through the motions, but have no passion. This lack of passion will be a killer when the funding stops.”

Encouragement

Most of the qualitative feedback was positive and praised the efforts of the Aware & Prepare Team at providing direction and focus. Through the sharing of information comes the ability to gain a better understanding of the goals of the initiative. From a communication standpoint, the message of Aware & Prepare was a priority. It seemed to resonate among some stakeholders with one survey participant claiming “joint meetings have revealed how all agencies work together, share valuable information and are ready to help and share their knowledge.” The message of Aware & Prepare was also disseminated more in newsletters, community events, and other forms of outreach. Communication through information sharing was mentioned many times as having been improved when one survey participant plainly stated, “We could not have disseminated our message to the community without the assistance of Aware & Prepare.” Enhancing communication between the sectors and stakeholders will invariably heighten awareness. One stakeholder mentioned it was beneficial knowing that “other groups had similar goals” which allowed them to share strategic models. This may have also highlighted the intention of mitigating duplicated efforts.

The feedback also shows that Aware & Prepare spurred new ideas. New ideas were apparent in responses to the “old ways” of conducting emergency response and preparedness evolving into a new paradigm that welcomed new approaches. One detailed comment read, “It became apparent that ‘but we always have done it this way’ conversation was beginning to be replaced with ‘let’s explore a new approach’ and there was less resistance to trying something new, building new relationships and demonstrating more courage and less authority.”

Despite a few cases where stakeholders felt they were not effectively heard, the feedback provides clear indications that meetings were beneficial to most of the attendees. For instance, information suggests they ended up fostering relationships from attending the meetings. There is also evidence of increased attendance at meetings as Aware & Prepare progressed. Such a case was explicitly mentioned in the feedback where links were established leading to “continuing interaction” and “improved coordination” after attending meeting sessions. Some of the comments that support this conclusion include: “We have been included in all collaborative meetings and seminars and are always invited to participate” and “Although time is hard to carve out, we have felt it very worthwhile to engage fully in the process and also have had several follow-up meetings with other individual actors that have been productive.”

Aware & Prepare Program Evaluation

The Aware & Prepare Team has initiated the program evaluation process by collecting and organizing our quantitative and qualitative data by indicator. This has given us the opportunity to identify gaps in information that need to be addressed in our cumulative survey and one-on-one interview process that will begin towards the end of 2010 and continue through 2011. The Aware & Prepare Initiative will address the following components in our program evaluation:

- **Level of Capability.** The difference in level of capabilities in each of the designated priority theme areas from 2007 to 2010.
- **Public-Private Partnership.** The management of Aware & Prepare by a unique partnership between the Orfalea Foundations, Witt Associates, and Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services.
- **Value of Investment.** The significant financial contribution from the Orfalea Foundations and other local foundations.
- **Grantmaking.** The funding of over 22 non-profit organizations and government agencies to implement over 30 projects and programs.
- **Program Structure.** The structure of the program as it relates to strategic planning, external expertise and knowledge, third-party facilitation, staffing, resources, and events.

The outcomes of our evaluation will be directly targeted to assist the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services in sustaining the initiative after the initial investment of the Orfalea Foundations and other local foundations. Specific areas of emphasis will include the roles and responsibilities of the public-private partnership and maintenance of the increased level of capability within each priority theme area.

Programmatic Strategies

Over the past year, the Aware & Prepare Team has been working diligently with stakeholders to address significant challenges to sustaining projects and programs. The major hurdle is the on-going economic recession that has impacted government agencies and non-profit organizations. Not only have we confronted budget and personnel cuts, but there has also been a high-rate of turnover of staff. The changes at the following government agencies and non-profit organizations have directly impacted our funded programs:

- American Red Cross Santa Barbara County Chapter (VOAD)
- Santa Barbara County Department of Public Health (Medical Reserve Corps)
- Santa Barbara Street Medicine – Doctors without Walls (Medical Reserve Corps)

Although we feel the impact greater when we are financially supporting programs that depend on certain levels of staffing and resources to be successful, the budget decisions within organizations that we work closely with has also required us to shift decision-making or focus more attention on newly-created gaps in capabilities. The staff turnover at the following government agencies and non-profit organizations has indirectly impacted our funded programs:

- City of Santa Barbara Fire Department
- Carpinteria-Summerland Fire District
- City of Santa Maria Fire Department
- Direct Relief International
- Nonprofit Support Center
- Santa Barbara Foundation

Most importantly, the overall economic conditions have increased hesitancy to take on new projects and programs by overly-burdened, existing personnel. With this understanding, the Aware & Prepare Team has had to focus more attention on maintaining momentum by strategizing to reach mutually beneficial outcomes. The relationships that we have built with key stakeholders over the past two years have proven to be especially valuable to this end. The initial reaction to the economic conditions was to revert back to competing against other agencies and organizations for scarce resources, similar to the conditions that we experienced back in 2007. However, by increasing our outreach and engaging in open, honest dialogue with our grantees and other funders, we were able to re-ignite the high level of collaboration that we experienced during the start of the Aware & Prepare Initiative. As a result, we have a multitude of programs that were developed in the past year as “regional collaboratives” including, but not limited to: (1) City of Solvang, City of Buellton, and the Santa Ynez Valley; (2) University of California Santa Barbara and Isla Vista; and (3) City of Santa Maria, City of Guadalupe, and Allan Hancock College. These regional efforts dramatically increase sustainability of new programs because if one entity

experiences financial hard-ship, the other city or organization can step up to take the lead or they can equally contribute at whatever level possible to maintain a program at the level they deem appropriate. This unintended outcome of the poor economic climate has had a tremendously positive impact on the Aware & Prepare Initiative.

Long-Term Strategies

However, sustainability remains a significant challenge as it relates to the overall Aware & Prepare Initiative and its public-private partnership, as well as the projects and programs that have been implemented since early 2008. Although the considerable investment made by the Orfalea Foundations and other local foundations over the past three years has yielded immense outcomes and a noticeable increase in level of capability, we are just now reaching a peak in building momentum. Surpassing this peak by holding strong to our commitment to the public-private partnership and maintaining high-levels of trust and accountability will be crucial to sustaining key projects and programs.

The greatest obstacle is the reliance of agencies and organizations on the personnel that were retained to assist in building solid infrastructure for critical programs. Back in 2008, the proposal was to retain full-time Coordinator positions for both the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster and the Medical Reserve Corps. This approach was determined after witnessing the start-up and demise of these organizations in other counties throughout the state and the nation. Any organization that is based on volunteer leadership is only as good as the extra time and resources that those volunteers are willing to commit to it. Our recommendation was to retain the full-time support necessary to develop a strategic plan, recruit new members, and create a committee structure that would be utilized for future decision-making and oversight. Understandably, this strategy accelerated accomplishments in a very short period of time producing reliance that makes it difficult for these organizations to transition back to a solely volunteer-led structure. To overcome this hurdle, the Aware & Prepare Team is working closely with these organizations on creating transition and sustainability strategies. This experience, although at times arduous, has been a true learning opportunity for non-profit organizations and government agencies. To approach a program with the knowledge that its success cannot be based on an indefinite funding stream has resulted in innovative and cost-effective solutions.

Another challenge has and continues to be the relationship between the jurisdictions and the Operational Area. There is still a level of distrust in the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Services due to a lengthy past of ineffective leadership and decision-making. This is emphasized by several comments made as part of our annual survey, as well as during facilitated roundtable discussions where we have encouraged stakeholders to be completely honest. Not only do they feel a lack of support from the Operational Area, but they have a number of examples where the Office of Emergency Services has been an obstruction to the sustainability of their programs. The most recent example is access to external funding sources. The government funding that is allocated to emergency services through the Department of Homeland Security and the Emergency Management Program Grant, as well for volunteer programs through Citizen Corps and California Volunteers,

requires the coordination and approval of the Operational Area. If the program is not aligned with the strategic planning priorities of SBC OES, then there is no access to these funding streams. This is especially devastating to public education, community emergency response training through CERT, and medical volunteer recruitment and training through MRC. The Aware & Prepare Team is hoping that this disconnect can be resolved by facilitating the compromise between two very different and valid perspectives.

We have a lot of work ahead of us to ensure that the investment made by the philanthropic community to enhance capabilities to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters within the Santa Barbara County Operational Area is sustainable. However, there is great determination and commitment from all of our stakeholders that the Aware & Prepare Initiative will continue in some capacity. Many are amazed by the progress that we have made in just a few years, but none of this would have been possible without the participation of the most seasoned emergency managers throughout the county. Our ability to approach this initiative with a new perspective and address needs in a way that not only made solutions financially possible, but also empowered leaders and their constituents has built the trust and respect that is necessary for a long-lasting partnership.