Direct Relief International Equips Medical Reserve Corps for Emergency Medical Response

Santa Barbara County’s Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) unit is now equipped for rapid emergency medical response, thanks to the donation of customized backpacks stocked with medical supplies and equipment from humanitarian medical aid organization Direct Relief International.

The 90 donated packs, available in variations for emergency medical technicians, nurses, and physicians, contain infection control supplies, diagnostic equipment, trauma care items, and non-medical items like flashlights, multi-tools, and duct tape. With clear pouches and full zip-down capability, these ruggedized backpacks allow volunteers to deploy quickly with easy-to-access starter supplies.

“With these packs distributed among our medical volunteers, we will have a very well prepared MRC unit, ready to respond, all thanks to Direct Relief,” said Nancy Lapolla, Director of Emergency Medical Services for Santa Barbara County.

The backpack design, construction, and contents are the result of a collaboration of local, national and international physicians, emergency responders and austere medicine clinicians.

Formed in 2006, the MRC is made up of local volunteer medical and health professionals including: physicians, nurses, veterinarians, dentists, social workers, pharmacists, chaplains, paramedics, EMT’s, health educators, and other non-medical personnel who are willing to serve the community during medical emergencies.

Membership in the county-wide unit is growing and stands at 110 volunteers. The Santa Barbara County Emergency Medical Services Agency is responsible for administration of the Santa Barbara County MRC unit.

Licensed clinical members of the Santa Barbara County MRC will stuff their new bags with the donated supplies on October 20 and 24 at Direct Relief’s warehouse in Goleta. The backpacks will be distributed on October 28 in Santa Maria at the American Red Cross on Skyway Drive.

Qualified individuals are asked to consider volunteering as a way to help your community in times of emergency. For information membership in the Medical Reserve Corps please go to www.sbcphd.org/ems/mrc or contact Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator Jennifer Eskridge at 805-681-4759.
INFO FOR MRC BACKPACK ASSEMBLY – MEDIA AVAILABILITY

WHO: 40 volunteer physicians, nurses, and EMTs
Santa Barbara County Public Health officials
Representatives of Direct Relief International

WHEN: Tuesday, October 20, 2009 from 4 – 7 pm
Saturday, October 24, 2009 from 10 am – 2 pm

WHERE: Direct Relief International, 27 South La Patera Lane, Goleta

MORE INFO: Please check in at the main lobby to be directed to the packing staging area.

INFO FOR MRC BACKPACK DISTRIBUTION – MEDIA AVAILABILITY

WHEN: Wednesday, October 28, 4 – 7 PM

WHERE: American Red Cross – Santa Maria
3030 Skyway Drive
Santa Maria, CA 93455

MORE INFO: Jennifer Eskridge – 805/681-4759

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