

## Partner Profile – Sonny Beauchamp

*Mr. Sonny F. Beauchamp is an Emergency Management Program Specialist for FEMA Region II. He joined FEMA in September 1989 as a local hire in the Human Services Branch. In September 1995, he became a Hazard Mitigation Counselor and Grants Specialist at FEMA Region II Caribbean Area Division (CAD). In addition to his previous Hazard Mitigation duties, Beauchamp is presently in Preparedness and also participates in Response (Operations Branch), and Recovery activities, providing support to the PREMB and the U.S. Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA).*

**Q:** What is the background/history of your organization?

**A:** FEMA's mission is to help people prepare, respond to and recover from natural disasters. We believe hazard mitigation is a crucial part of this process to promote safer communities by reducing loss of life and property damage.

**Q:** How did you get interested in disaster safety/response and recovery/resilience?

**A:** Following nine years of service with the U.S. Armed Forces, I returned home immediately looking for positions where I could continue to help my country. That is how I ended up working in emergency management.

**Q:** What do you see to be the future of earthquake science/engineering/research/response and recovery to increase resiliency? What do you think is moving the cause of resilience forward?

**A:** As we move into a more technologically advanced world, with continued risk assessments and training and exercise operations, I'm confident we will be looking at a community better prepared and more resilient to earthquakes. The cause driving resilience forward is simply the occurrence of earthquakes and the devastation, loss of property, and loss of lives that result from this natural disaster.

**Q:** Can you tell us about a specific project your organization is working on in earthquake safety/science/engineering/research/resilience/outreach field?

**A:** Our organization works closely with the Puerto Rico Seismic Network, specifically on earthquake mitigation. We share several projects with them, including installation of dam motion sensors and other critical infrastructure across the island; training and exercise; risk assessments at government buildings, local mitigation plans and; community education among others.

**Q:** Do you have any other comments or words of wisdom for our readers?

**A:** As the world continues to experience catastrophic disaster events, we all have the responsibility to properly educate ourselves to be well prepared for the unknown, and then spread that knowledge everywhere we go because it is through **education** that we create communities with

more resilient environments.