

# Emergency Management Disability Awareness Training

## COURSE CONTENT:

- Disabilities defined specific to emergency management needs
- Emergency preparedness and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Service provision and supports and how to develop collaborative relationships
- Accessibility/Universal Design
- Lawsuits/litigation specific to emergency management
- Municipality role and responsibility
- Inclusive Planning/Active Participation
- Core Advisory Groups
- Emergency Plan content specific to Individuals with Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs
- Shelters, disaster recovery centers
- Durable Medical Equipment , Adaptive Equipment, and Assistive Technology
- Transportation

## COLLABORATIONS:

- NYS Emergency Management Association
- New York State Independent Living Council, Inc. (NYSILC)
- FEMA Region II



**PURPOSE:** Disability Awareness Training has tailored a presentation for emergency responders designed for emergency management, Red Cross, firefighters, CERT and all others with responsibilities in emergency management. It brings together education on disabilities while enhancing sensitivity. The presentation includes definitions, etiquette and interaction skills, the ADA as it pertains to emergency management, supports and services relevant to emergency responders, work plan content, organizations and associations to partner with, and direction on how to connect and collaborate with disability advocates and their organizations.

**TEACHING STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES:** Proper response starts with a collaboration with the disability community. The development of a core advisory group that is disability-diverse initiates the process of inclusive planning and active participation. Videos, extensive materials and resources, federal guidelines, and current best practices will highlight the content .

## **RELATION & IMPACT TO EMERGENCY**

**MANAGEMENT:** The ability to respond appropriately to emergency situations that involve individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs has challenged the field for years. High profile events, disasters, and lawsuits have exposed the lack of training and preparedness in responding to this demographic. The training addresses every area of response to individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs including, but not limited to, federal guidelines and supports provided, definitions specific to emergency management, registry and community proactive approaches, emergency preparedness defined and how to implement, municipality emergency services role, identifying and working with service providers, and the latest initiatives and programs. Attendees will also be provided with an in-depth explanation of how and why society discriminates against individuals with disabilities and the injustices that occur. This will be translated as it pertains to emergency preparedness and planning.

### LEARNER OUTCOMES:

- Understanding of disabilities specific to emergency planning and preparedness.
- Inclusive planning and active participation and the concept of a core advisory group, utilizing individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs as assets in all facets of emergency management.
- What to do, how to do it, and where to get supports in every aspect of access and functional needs.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

- A working manual to include three power point presentations that explain how to implement all aspects of the program, providing emergency managers with the complete package on how to properly and proactively respond

For more information,  
please visit us on the  
Website at  
[frdat.niagara.edu](http://frdat.niagara.edu)

## Project Director Biography



**David Whalen founded Disability Awareness Training in 2004. he specializes in training law enforcement, emergency responders, human service providers, public/private/ school transportation, corporations and businesses, and emergency management.**

Mr. Whalen worked for 17 years serving adults with developmental disabilities before working with low-income, medically frail seniors in a Managed Long Term Care program. He served as President of the NYS Association of Day Service Providers. He also sat on the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day committee for 18 years.

Dave is past Chair of the Town of Amherst's Committee on Disabilities, past-President of Williamsville CSD Special Education Parent Teacher Students Association (SEPTSA). He is past Chair of the Board of Directors of the Parent Network of WNY and co-founder of the Diocese of Buffalo's Disability Action Team. In 2010, he was appointed by the Board of Regents to serve on the NYS Independent Living Council (NYSILC) and recently co-founded Access Buffalo. In September 2010, he received, in collaboration with Niagara University, a NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council grant to develop disability awareness training for First Responders. The program has since been funded by the states of Missouri, Virginia, and South Dakota. He was appointed to the Erie County Disability Advisory Board and has served on the Core Advisory Group. FEMA invited him to attend their only training on Access and Functional Needs. He was a presenter at the FEMA Get Real conference and was invited to the White House for the historic signing between FEMA and the National Disability Rights Network. He has been awarded Deaf Advocate of the Year (WNY Deaf Access Services), the Vincentian Medal of Honor (Niagara University) and the Gaudete Medal (St. Bonaventure University).

He has a BA in Psychology and a MS in Education in Community Counseling from St. Bonaventure University, where he serves as the Buffalo Alumni Chapter President and was awarded Alumni of the Year (2009).

Dave and his wife Sandy live in Williamsville and are proud parents of their twins David and Rachel. David and Rachel were born 11 weeks premature, from that David has multiple disabilities with a primary diagnosis of cerebral palsy. He is an employee of NU FRDAT, serving in the role of Office Assistant

## Program Background

Beginning in September 2010, the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council funded a five-year grant to Niagara University to develop curriculum for the training of police officers, firefighters, emergency medical services, 911 telecommunicators, in the state of New York.

In October 2016 NU FR DAT, was awarded a three-year grant from the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) to implement regional disability awareness training for emergency management personnel with the intent to stem the inadequacies exposed by lawsuits and ADA complaints and ensure proper planning, preparedness, response and recovery.



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