

Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness

SUCCESS STORY

COLUMBUS, OHIO

Meta-Leadership Inspired One Woman to Make Big Changes

Contributor: Latasha Dewitz

"...The Meta-Leadership Summit opened doors for me."

Inspired by the "Gives" portion of the "Gaps, Gives, and Gets" community-action planning section of the Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness held in Columbus, Ohio, in May 2010, Latasha Dewitz has worked to provide Franklin County emergency managers with up-to-date information about which buildings in Columbus, OH, may be put to immediate use to respond to a local disaster. Dewitz is an active member of the Buildings Owners and Managers Association of Columbus (BOMA, BOMA Ohio, and BOMA Intl) and works for Siemens Industry, which specializes in building technologies.

Fellow Summit attendees were contacted soon after the Summit

The Summit highlighted a gap: "building owners/managers were not actively included in the emergency preparedness planning process," explains Dewitz. Following her participation in the Summit, Dewitz began what has turned into more than a year-long campaign to fill this gap. Dewitz contacted local officials to try to understand why building owners/managers were not already involved in preparedness planning and how they could get more involved. She reached out to many community leaders including police, FEMA, and the Mayor. All, upon hearing she was following up on the Meta-Leadership Summit, were quick to respond. "The Meta-Leadership Summit opened doors for me," explains Dewitz.

Bridging the "Gap" with multiple partners

Dewitz's efforts have led to the identification of space that may be ideal for emergency response, management, or sheltering operations. This led to productive information sharing among BOMA Columbus, Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security (FCEM&HS), and the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus (ARC). FCEM&HS is now working to catalog and map up-to-date building space information using Geographic Information System computer software. BOMA and the valuable information it is offering will become part of the Franklin County Disaster Assistance Resource Database of pre-identified resources to assist first responders and community agencies in responding to and recovering from emergencies and disasters. This database, maintained by FCEM&HS, enables the agency to contact resources quickly, via pre-established channels for expedited deployment.

Ms. Dewitz is currently working to influence other BOMA chapters in other cities and states to engage in Meta-Leadership events and take action in their communities.

The Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness empowered business, government and nonprofit leaders to act together in times of crisis. The five-year initiative connected 5,000 business, government and nonprofit leaders in 36 communities. For resources and more information about Meta-Leadership visit the [CDC Foundation Meta-Leadership Website](#).



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