

Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness

SUCCESS STORY

NEW MEXICO

One Person's Meta-Leadership Steadfastness Benefits Entire State

Contributor: Heather L. Rister, CBCP

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Heather Rister, Business Continuity and Development Manager for bigbyte.cc*, has been involved in the Meta-Leadership Initiative in New Mexico since the April 2010 Summit. As part of the Post Summit Activity planning committee, she worked with cross-sector colleagues to implement the Post Summit Meeting designed to foster greater collaboration among business, government and non-profit leaders of New Mexico. Rister credits the Summit and Post Summit Meeting for bringing together people and organizations and for reinforcing that government is not equipped to comprehensively prepare for or respond to disasters alone.

Continuing the Meta-Leadership momentum in New Mexico

Since the Summit and Post-Summit Activity, Rister has continued her commitment to increasing New Mexico's preparedness and response capacity by continuing to convene Meta-Leadership participants as well as others interested in community preparedness in preparedness-related meetings. Of the meetings she has hosted, one featured a speaker from the State of New Mexico Department of Health. The goal of the meeting was to broaden the audiences' awareness of how pandemics are handled and the government's roles and responsibilities within a pandemic response. At another meeting, Cindy Adams of the American Red Cross in New Mexico spoke about the Las Conchas fire in Los Alamos and touched on the response, the impact of the fire on rural communities, and the lessons learned in coordinating with multiple agencies.

Encouraging Meta-Leadership "chapters" throughout the state

Although the turnout for the meetings is typically small (10-15 leaders), Rister is encouraged that this dedicated group can continue to reach beyond the geographic scope of Albuquerque and engage partners in outlying and more rural communities. For every meeting held, Rister invites the original Summit attendees to take part, and throughout her messages conveyed via email as well as through the Meta-Leadership Online Community, she encourages partners in other areas of New Mexico to begin or continue preparedness conversations at the local level. It is her hope that across New Mexico, many "chapters" of preparedness leaders will be established and will work toward creating a more prepared, overall network of leaders within New Mexico.

* bigbyte.cc is a Tier 3 compliant data center and co-location site located in Albuquerque, New Mexico that provides disaster recovery and business continuity planning services as well as full service colocation. They also can help create and implement a plan to keep businesses in working order during a disaster and offer services to assure business & industry compliance with state and federal regulations.

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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