

# REGION 2 BI-WEEKLY

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## LYNN IS BACK AND R2's GOT HER

### *Lynn Canton Returns as Regional Administrator*

By Rob Ingraham

Region II staffers, along with many of our state and local partners, enthusiastically welcomed back Lynn Gilmore Canton as Regional Administrator at a swearing-in ceremony last Friday. Appointed by President Obama earlier this month, Lynn served as Region II RA from 1995 to 2000, and joins us after a distinguished nine-year stint as Deputy Comptroller for New York State.

Deputy FEMA Administrator Richard Serino (right) did the honors, noting, "We welcome a special person back to the FEMA family. Lynn has served with distinction at New York State's Office of the Comptroller and as we've been shifting more authority from HQ back to the regions we're thrilled to have her back leading Region II. As always, teamwork is our mission and in the last few weeks we've seen the difference that teamwork can make when it comes to saving lives in Haiti. We're happy that Lynn has accepted the opportunity to rejoin the region."

In her remarks, Lynn said, "This is a very special moment for me. In the years since I last served, it is truly a new FEMA and I'm committed to creating the strongest team the region can be. I'm looking forward to meeting with everyone and getting up to speed on the issues facing us in the months ahead." She stressed the importance of partnerships and "the importance of coordinating with our partners now, and making relationships now, before disaster strikes."



As New York's Deputy Comptroller, Lynn was responsible for the Division of State Government Accountability, tracking transparency and accountability through audits and financial services.

Shortly after her first tour as R2 Regional Administrator, Lynn she was appointed by then-FEMA Director James Lee Witt to serve as Executive Director of the agency where she won FEMA's Senior Executive Peer Award in 2000.

Prior to FEMA, Lynn was Executive Director of the New York State Division of Minority and Women's Business Development and was appointed by Governor Mario Cuomo as Commissioner of the New York State Board of Parole. She holds a BA in African American Studies and an MS in Education from the State University of New York at Albany.

### ***Region VII Also Welcomes Returning RA***

Last week also saw the return of Beth A. Freeman as the Regional Administrator of Region VII, a position she held in 2000. Freeman gained a deep understanding of the region in her 18 years working for U.S. Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa—during this time, she worked as the Senator's Regional Director and managed operations for six Iowa offices, including all relevant emergency and disaster response coordination statewide.

# TRAINING PAY-OFF: LIVES SAVED

## *NY Urban Search & Rescue Used Skills In Haiti Burnished By November Drills*



Rigorous training in Urban Search & Rescue techniques bore fruit in Haiti over the last few weeks as the New York Task Force #1 (NYTF1) deployed to Port-au-Prince, only two months after a major exercise in upstate New York.

FEMA Region II Tech Hazards Program Specialist Warren De Temple, who participated as a subject matter expert and observer, said that the New York State-sponsored Vigilant Guard Exercise, a multi-agency training event staged near Buffalo last November, could not have been better timed. (see R2 Bi-Weekly Newsletter of Dec. 29, 2009)

Echoing De Temple was Lt. Franco Barberio, a NYTF1 Task Force Leader and Agency Coordinator for the New York City Police Department. "I cannot say enough about the Vigilant Guard training we had in Buffalo last November," he said. The exercise was based on a simulated earthquake and "it was a very, very timely training." Barberio said. "What they learned at Vigilant Guard in upstate NY they used

everyday in Haiti. I can't stress enough the value of thus sort of multi-agency exercises."

Barberio explained that while the nation's task force teams were originally established for earthquake search and rescue, many of NYTF1's recent disaster assignments had been to hurricane disasters and other, smaller events. "But the Vigilant Guard exercise grounded us back to earthquake situations and reinforced the significance of training," he said.

The NYTF1 joined the Virginia Task Force 1 and Task Force 2, the California Task Force 2, and the Florida Task Force 2. (The task force numbers indicate the size and capabilities of the team, with number "1" being the largest, and deployed with the most equipment.)

As of January 22<sup>nd</sup>, the US team in Haiti had successfully rescued 47 people. See picture above. In addition, there were 27 Urban Search and Rescue teams from around the world operating in Haiti, rescuing 133 individuals as of January 28.

# OUR CARMEN?!!

## *The Afterlife of a DAE*



For the past four years, Carmen Rodriguez Diaz (above left) has been a stalwart of Region II's Community Relations cadre, distributing information, answering questions and providing guidance on Individual Assistance's program and procedures. Bilingual and flexible, Carmen worked disasters in New Jersey, Connecticut, Ohio, Missouri, California, Texas, Arkansas, New York and Puerto Rico.

But Carmen had a life before FEMA. She was a 30-year veteran of the Puerto Rico Fire Department. She began as a secretary to the chief of the Fire Prevention Division, and ultimately worked in the department's press office, retiring in 2006. Before her retirement, she graduated from the executive program at the National Fire Academy as a certified "Executive Fire Officer" in 2005.

In her time with FEMA, Carmen gained vast experience dealing with fire, flood, hurricane and tornado disasters, prompting Puerto Rico's Governor Luis Fortuno to nominate her last week as Puerto Rico's first woman fire chief. "This nomination is much more than simply breaking gender barriers... This is about a public servant who has the best qualifications and abilities ...and also has extensive experience working in the Federal Emergency Management Agency." the Governor noted in a written statement. "I am confident that under her leadership, the Fire Department will shine more than ever."

Region II agrees.

# TRAINERS TRAIN;

## *MORE 'COOP' TO FOLLOW*

This week, 34 participants from Federal and State agencies attended the L-548 COOP Manager's Train-the-Trainer Course, hosted by the CAD's two Training & Exercise Specialists Orlando Olivera and Antonio Vazquez. The instructors for this course, which took place at San Juan's HUD facilities, were Region II's Kevin Reed and Ken Hudson of Region VII.

The COOP Manager's course describes the requirements for developing a continuity program as prescribed in Federal Continuity Directive (FCD) 1. The course covers program requirements and elements and support requirements and describes the roles and responsibilities of the Continuity Program Manager and other key players in developing a viable continuity program. Instructors and students (see below) say the course accomplished its prime objectives:

- Defined continuity of operations.
- Explained the benefits of developing a viable continuity program.
- Identified the elements of a viable continuity program.
- Identified processes, resources, and tasks necessary to implement and manage a successful continuity program.



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### **DAE Pay Adjustment for 2010 Set at 1.5%**

The official 2010 pay scale for Disaster Assistance (Stafford Act) Employees, effective January 3, 2010, has been set at a 1.5% increase, down by nearly half of the 2009 increase of 2.9%.

# WE LIKE MIKE

*Staff - Past and Present—Gather with Best Wishes;  
Beeman To Head USACE Public Affairs for 22 Counties*



