

## FEMA Announces the National Citizen Corps Achievement Awards Finalists

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has announced the finalists for *The National Citizen Corps Achievement Awards—Celebrating Resilient Communities for 2009*. TARC is pleased to announce that three Texas Citizen Corps Councils have been selected as finalists. These awards recognize innovative practices and achievements of Citizen Corps Councils across the nation that are making our communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to manage any emergency situation. The finalists exemplify excellence in community emergency planning, foster successful public-private partnerships, prioritize collaboration, demonstrate creative and innovative local problem solving, and implement sound programs that can be modeled for use by other communities.

The three Texas Citizen Corps Council Finalists and Award Category are as follows:



### Rowlett Citizen Corps: Volunteer Integration Award

RCCC has an active core membership of over 140 volunteers from three communities in three neighboring counties. CERT volunteers compete at the McKinney CERT Olympic competition each fall. In 2008, they were instrumental in gaining approval to include Explorer aged participants in the competition. The team won 10 medals and the “Most Outstanding Incident Commander” award.

Their CERT program also hit a milestone in 2008 by cumulatively training over 250 citizens in the program. On average, their CERT program retains 88% of those trained

### Harris County Citizen Corps: Volunteer Integration Award

The success of the Council’s innovative and collaborative approach was clearly evident during the highly active 2008 hurricane season, especially in the midst of Hurricane Ike. That volunteer integration proved to be a valuable asset to both the region’s emergency managers and its residents before, during and after one of the costliest natural disasters in our nation’s history.



### Denton County Citizen Corps: Outstanding Citizen Corps Council Award

In 2008, response efforts engaging the joint DCCC and VOAD council were put to the test not only helping local citizens, but those who became guests during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Instead of many fragmented groups looking for ways to help, they responded as a unit to address communications, health, sheltering, food, transportation and many other needs for hurricane evacuees arriving in Denton County. CERT and MRC were especially dynamic forces in addressing the constantly changing needs stemming from back-to-back coastal evacuations and shelter stand-ups.



A second recognized project was their MRC, part of the Denton County Public Health EOP, who did extensive public outreach, creating TV and radio health campaign material and bi-lingual public education formats. They also ensured deaf and Spanish-speaking interpreters were available in disaster response - to highlight just a fraction of their outreach. Their Health Emergency Alert Response Team (HEART) has been modeled by others.