

# What's Happening Now...

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EMDR Humanitarian Assistance Programs

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## IT'S BEEN A BUSY YEAR! *Message from Carol Forgash, President of EMDR HAP*

The year since August, 2005 has been eventful, to say the least. As I prepared back then to assume the presidency of EMDR Humanitarian Assistance Programs, we were still in the midst of three major projects: responding to the tsunami of December, 2005 in India, Thailand and Sri Lanka. None of us could have foreseen that it was going to get busier.

I'm proud to say that HAP, with the help of so many of you, has been able to function at top speed.

When Katrina and her sister Rita, slammed into the US Gulf Coast in August and September, HAP volunteers were soon on their way, bolstered by hundreds of HAP donors. All told 40 clinicians spent a week or more in Louisiana, providing direct service to over 600 first responders; another 25 facilitators and trainers have guided 200 Louisiana

and Mississippi clinicians through EMDR Part I and 110 through Part II.

Meanwhile our work in India and Sri Lanka continued and we added a very successful project near Bethlehem in the West Bank of Palestine. International enrollments in EMDR training numbered 175, and several clinicians in the host countries emerged as new facilitators and prospective trainers.

Back in the US, HAP volunteers staffed 49 separate training events, enrolling over 1000 participants, from domestic agencies, military mental health services, the VA and the Gulf Coast.

Heading into our annual Board meeting, HAP is not stopping to rest. Record numbers of US non-profit agencies have already requested training in the coming year. Our work in Palestine is not done and we are hop

ing to start new projects this year in Lebanon, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Add to that the challenge of continuously improving our training services and building a Trauma Recovery Network of clinician volunteers who are ready to respond to future emergencies in their own communities or beyond.

Are we trying to do too much? We aim to pace ourselves, and we have been blessed with volunteers and donors who won't quit. If you are one of them, thank you for all you have accomplished. If you want to join them, you can donate or register as a volunteer on our website:

[www.emdrhap.org](http://www.emdrhap.org)

Welcome aboard. It's going to be another busy year!

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### Quick Notes:

- HAP recently completed a study for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to assess the feasibility of a year long EMDR training project in Aceh, Indonesia, site of the worst damage from the 2004 tsunami. Local agencies are eager to have the training. Participants from an earlier HAP project in Aceh reported good results from their use of EMDR.
- Francine Shapiro has trained two groups of new EMDR trainers-in-training for HAP this year, and plans to train two more groups before the end of 2006. They will

then participate in several training events under senior trainers to complete their preparation. New trainers are already seasoned facilitators in EMDR training. Their addition will enable HAP to respond to more requests for training.

- HAP will train additional facilitators, who help staff EMDR training events, this fall. The participants are



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## HAP Wants YOU! Register as a Volunteer

In our last issue, we announced our new online registration process for HAP volunteers. We are hoping to have 500 clinicians and others signed up by the end of September. As we go to press we are at 250 and climbing. Here are some questions we are often asked, and some answers:



*Q: What do HAP volunteers do?*

A: Our major focus, since HAP began in 1995 at the Oklahoma City disaster, has been training clinicians in non-profit agencies and underserved communities, and providing direct service to survivors of disasters. For clinical direct service, we seek EMDRIA certified clinicians. For training, we need consultant level clinicians whom we can train as facilitators and trainers.

*Q: Are those the only roles for volunteers?*

A: Not at all. We are building a Trauma Recovery Network of EMDR clinicians to function as a reserve force of direct service providers ready to be available quickly after a local or national disaster. (See the TRN article elsewhere in this issue.) To be fully effective TRN will need hundreds of certified clinician volunteers across the US.

*Q: What else can volunteers do?*

A: As a growing charitable project, HAP has many organizational needs that are not directly clinical: public relations, fundraising, helping with the HAP store, grantwriting, supporting research on treatment and training efficacy, helping to build and coordinate local TRN chapters.

*Q: What happens when I register?*

A: First you fill out an online form, telling us your contact information, professional background and other skills, and your interests within HAP. There are more than a dozen roles to choose among. You also pick a user name and password for your volunteer account so you can return and edit it at any time. It's a secure site, and we will not share your information outside the HAP staff that supports volunteer activity.

*Q: What does HAP do with the information?*

A: First we thank you for registering! As particular projects develop, we can search the volunteer database to find people with relevant expertise and interests. Then, with your permission, we can assign you to a project.

*Q: How often will I be called upon?*

A: That depends on the size and location of our projects, and on the number of available qualified volunteers.

Some of our volunteers have participated in many projects, but we need to spread the work more widely – and the demand for our services consistently exceeds our capacity to respond. That is why we are recruiting new volunteers and planning to train them for critical roles. We will never ask you to do more than you want to do. But just having your information in the database enables HAP to respond quickly and effectively to meet pressing human needs in emergencies.

*Q: Who pays expenses for volunteers?*

A: We ask volunteers to contribute their time and skill, but HAP pays documented travel and other expenses on official HAP projects. (That's the primary use of donations to HAP: making sure our volunteers can go where they are needed and work effectively.) We also provide casualty and liability insurance covering HAP volunteers in the course of their HAP work.

*Q: In the past I have sent information to HAP about my wish to volunteer. Why do I need to register online now?*

A: We got over 300 offers of assistance after Katrina. We called upon as many volunteers as we could support, but many others who were not called are welcome to become part of our volunteer corps. We did not have the new information system built last year. Our tiny staff can slowly enter the information we have, while we try to focus on current projects; or we can ask those who offered help in the past to make registration the first thing they do for HAP. We'll get better information and free more of our resources to help people in need.

*Q: How will HAP keep in touch with registered volunteers?*

A: We will soon start sending a periodic email bulletin for volunteers to keep you apprised of HAP projects, solicit your ideas and advice, and share information on best practices in training and disaster response.

*Q: Sounds reasonable. What do I do next?*

A: Go to [www.emdrhap.org/volunteers](http://www.emdrhap.org/volunteers) and create a volunteer account. (Be sure to "save" your entries before you leave the online interview.) Then recruit a colleague!



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Have questions about the HAP Volunteer  
online registration process?

Email [volunteers@emdrhap.org](mailto:volunteers@emdrhap.org) with questions  
and we'll help you.

## **Getting Volunteers Where They Are Needed**

*Bob Gelbach, Executive Director*

In the busy — and productive — year just finished, HAP projects have grown in quantity and also in quality. It is very gratifying to hear from local training directors at the agencies where we serve. They repeatedly compliment our volunteers for their skill and their dedication. The compliments are even more gratifying when we hear from agencies asking us to come back and do another round of basic training for a new group of clinicians.

In our international work as well, we often encounter former participants who have become leaders in their community or national mental health systems and are assisting in the spread of EMDR practice. We also meet up with new national EMDR associations in the making and with new HAP organizations in other countries modeled on this one. Often these sister organizations have valuable lessons to teach us.

Unfortunately, traumatization is not exactly receding in the world today. For all of our real success, we must run very fast to avoid falling further behind the need for humanitarian assistance, at home and abroad. We are fortunate to have such dedicated volunteers — men and women who make HAP happen, and who thank *us* for the opportunity to serve. But just as vital to our success is the sturdy and growing band of HAP donors. We added 500 new financial donors last year and we know that was not “just because of Katrina” or other particular needs. The truth is that we do something very important with every donated dollar: we use it to send a volunteer where he or she will multiply the impact of EMDR.

Think about it: every time a HAP volunteer goes to train a group of clinicians in another community or another country, nine more EMDR clinicians are coming online. That is what your donations do. They don't pay the rent or salaries of our tiny staff, or even the insurance premiums that cover the volunteers; we raise that money in other ways. The donations get the volunteers where they are needed. You can be part of that work. Use the envelope provided with this newsletter, or donate at our secure site online: [www.emdrhap.org](http://www.emdrhap.org).

And thank you for making good things happen.

### **Roy Kiessling Wins HAP Volunteer Award**

Roy Kiessling, an early volunteer in the work of EMDR HAP and our Senior Trainer for the past three years, was the unanimous choice of the HAP Board of Directors to receive the 2006 Elizabeth Snyder Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service.

By now, literally thousands of clinicians have been trained in Part I and Part II workshops led by this Cincinnati based therapist, who also maintains a private practice and his own independent specialty training program in EMDR. In his busy career, he has also found time to serve on the board of EMDRIA and manage the discussion lists maintained by EMDR Institute.

Roy's presentations have been praised by participants for their clarity and accessibility. For a while, he was single-handedly providing the bulk of HAP's domestic training, but he soon put a stop to that in the most constructive way — by becoming the primary mentor to a growing cohort of HAP trainers-in-training. As Francine Shapiro has trained facilitators to become trainers for HAP, Roy has guided them through their “internship” period, which enables HAP to spread its work more widely and meet growing demand.

From the beginning of his work with HAP, Roy has also

been a part of many teams responding to disaster and international projects. Among them were early training programs in Gaza and St. Petersburg, as well as continuing work with military clinicians and the first HAP training in New Orleans after Katrina.

The Elizabeth Snyder Award is named in memory of one of the earliest EMDR trainers for the EMDR Institute, who also served with dedication and enthusiasm on early HAP projects in the US and abroad.

Roy Kiessling is the third recipient of the award, which will be presented with great fanfare during the awards dinner at the EMDRIA Conference in Philadelphia, September 8. We thank EMDRIA for again inviting us to give this award at their special event.

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## Who Needs A Trauma Recovery Network?

“Who Needs A Trauma Recovery Network?”

That’s an easy question. We all need a Trauma Recovery Network. Getting one in place is a bit more challenging, but we can do it. The idea behind TRN is simple: If a community has an already-trained group of volunteer clinicians able to treat post-disaster psychological trauma we can help more people return to normal functioning and avoid long-term dysfunction.

In New York after 9/11 a large group of EMDR clinicians offered pro bono brief treatment through HAP. But we had to create the network of referrals and client/clinician “contracts” on the fly. It was costly, but we learned a lot.

TRN is an attempt to apply those lessons. It would have been better if the volunteers had already been part of a disaster response network, if they had already had the refresher course we gave on recent incident trauma, if their network included volunteer consultants and experts across the country, and if they were already networked with local emergency planners.

When Katrina struck, we were just starting to form TRN. Large numbers of evacuees were relocated to over 800 US communities before the number finally coalesced down to a half dozen major cities. Over 300 EMDR clinicians offered to help

evacuees in their community through HAP. But we did not have procedures in place; volunteers often lacked experience with recent incident trauma.

We referred many volunteers to Red Cross and other local agencies, but EMDR as a resource was underutilized because we lacked a plan and a “reserve force” of prepared volunteers in place. We want to do better than that.

In communities like Oklahoma City after the bombing in 1995, or in New Orleans, Lake Charles, and coastal Mississippi after last year’s hurricanes, there were few EMDR clinicians. Our priority was therefore to train local therapists so that they could apply this effective treatment in their home community. And that is what we did.

But in so many cities and towns today, there are already substantial communities of EMDR practice, and many individuals would like to be responsive in emergencies. It is in those communities that we offer the opportunity to work with us and develop a local Trauma Recovery Network, linked to all the TRN chapters we aim to help form.

The primary purpose of each local unit is to serve the local community. HAP will work with the local units to:

- stay up to date on best practices for treating recent incident trauma;

- use client information forms and policies that ensure ethical practice when offering pro bono brief treatment;
- develop effective liaison with local emergency planning agencies so that EMDR becomes a part of the planned response.


It is easy to join TRN when you register as a HAP volunteer. We are looking for consultants, certified clinicians and clinicians who are actively pursuing certification.

Joining does not obligate you to any specific amount of pro bono service; that is up to you at all times. And we rely on local group members to determine if an emergency warrants the offer of pro bono service.

If an emergency requires more response than the local group can provide, TRN is a means of recruiting volunteers from other cities and regions, just as we sent 65 volunteers into the Gulf Coast this year on HAP projects. You can also be part of TRN even if there are no other participants in your community.

TRN is just beginning; the early participants will be able to help shape it as it grows. The next time a major disaster strikes in the US, we want to be ready.

Join us at [www.emdrhap.org/volunteers](http://www.emdrhap.org/volunteers).



**Quick Notes:** (Continued from page 1)

limited in number, but we intend to repeat the training periodically.

- EMDRIA announced new standards for basic EMDR training this Spring. Beginning in June 2007, the number of required hours of instruction will increase from 34 to 40 and participants will also be expected to complete 10 hours

of small group consultation. HAP will adjust its training programs to accommodate the changes.

- Recent training activity in India has benefited from consultations provided by Indian colleagues trained several years earlier in other parts of the country. Likewise, previous participants in Palestine have now become effective facilitators in HAP’s project near Bethlehem. Several of these veterans may soon begin training to become EMDR trainers.