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Rose Pfefferbaum has been with the Maricopa County Community College District for 30 years, serving in a variety of positions and teaching in several disciplines. During that time, Rose has developed multiple education and service programs within and outside the Maricopa District, 14 occupational certificates, an associate in applied science degree, and more than 30 courses including instructional and student materials. Rose has experience working with interdisciplinary faculty teams and has helped build numerous partnerships involving schools, service providers, business and industry, and public organizations. Affiliated with the Terrorism and Disaster Center of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and co-investigator on the grant that funded the Center, Rose is the lead author of a survey instrument that is being used to ascertain perceptions, needs, and interests of teachers and other school personnel with respect to disaster preparedness. She has developed preparedness curriculum and instructional materials for education students, schools, and community-based organizations, and she is examining public education interests and preferred learning methods among the general population. Rose serves on the Arizona Central Region Citizen Corps Council and chairs the training committee of the City of Phoenix Citizen Corps Working Group. She is also FEMA certified to train Community Emergency Response Teams. Rose has articulated a vision for community college involvement in terrorism preparedness that recognizes the role of community colleges as community focal points; their contribution to community, occupational, and continuing education; and their potential as accessible, cost-effective settings for training school personnel.

BACKGROUND PAPER: THE ROLE OF COLLEGE LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO DISASTERS

INTRODUCTION

Recent terrorist attacks and continuing threats, coupled with frequent disasters of natural and accidental origin, have clearly commanded the attention of community colleges. As the focal point for education at the local level, community colleges are in a unique position to help individuals, neighborhoods, businesses, and local governments prepare for and respond to mass casualty events. Moreover, community colleges have the potential to contribute significantly to individual and community resilience to mass trauma.

This paper provides background information for examining the role of community college leadership in the development of community resilience to disasters. Terms and concepts are defined and described herein along with theoretically derived elements of community resilience.

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Traditionally viewed in terms of geographic proximity and as comprised of individuals sharing origin, history, culture, values, and laws, communities may nonetheless be characterized by considerable diversity. No longer necessarily defined by geographic boundaries, a community includes resources, organizations, and structures; a sense of relatedness; and common health risks and conditions. Members are affected by similar social, economic, and physical risk factors. They live, work, and are educated in a dynamic environment that reflects and shapes

attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and behavior. Interaction among members is essential for the sharing of values and norms. The social system within a community provides services and addresses problems including those of its own making (Institute of Medicine, 2003; Issel, 2004; Jerusalem et al., 1995; Kulig, 2000).

Disasters may result from endogenous or exogenous forces, of natural or human origin. Community disasters are overwhelming and may be of such severity as to warrant assistance from outside the community (Yahmed & Koob, 1996). These extreme events include, for example, tornados, hurricanes, and earthquakes; chemical spills, airplane crashes, and major power outages; and school shootings, violent rampages, and suicide bombings. Often of sudden, unexpected onset, disasters are characterized by mass destruction. They typically kill and maim along the way, damage property and deplete resources, create chaos and confusion, cause adverse physical and emotional reactions, and alter social networks and processes. Disasters threaten the functioning of a community by changing, at least temporarily, the way individuals relate and the roles they play, the rules governing behavior, the social organization, and the allocation and use of resources (Eränen & Liebkind, 1993; Sjöberg, 1962). The ensuing emotional, physical, and socioeconomic damage associated with catastrophic disasters interferes with productive interactions that could reestablish communal existence. Social support may deteriorate or be mobilized after a disaster depending, in part, on characteristics of the community, its members, and the disaster itself (Jerusalem et al., 1995).

Resilience is the ability to execute effective adjustment processes to alleviate stress and reestablish equilibrium when confronted with trauma, tragedy, and threat (Steinberg & Ritzmann, 1990). Resilience is an ongoing process that must be sustained over time and that supports growth. It involves attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and functioning. Resources associated with resilience can be acquired and developed, and skills can be cultivated, taught, and practiced (American Psychological Association, 2006; Reissman et al., 2004).

More than a collection of resilient individuals, community resilience is founded in the ability of community members to take deliberate, meaningful, collective action to remedy the detrimental effects of a problem, including the ability to analyze the environment and intervene. Consisting of both proactive and reactive elements, community resilience requires action as a collective unit. In addition to addressing behavioral and functional problems at the individual level, community resilience fortifies a community against a plethora of social concerns (for example, violence and poverty) as well as mass trauma. Recovery from adversity combined with efforts by individuals and groups to improve their environments to mitigate future events gives community resilience a transformational quality that creates the potential to grow from a crisis (Brown & Kulig, 1996/97; Kulig, 2000).

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FACTORS

Community resilience is increasingly recognized as a preparedness strategy for catastrophic events and a mechanism for preventing adverse psychosocial consequences associated with disasters (Friedman, 2005). Community resilience is related to other community development concepts such as community health, capacity, competence, cohesion, mobilization, and empowerment. Factors identified by the community capacity and competence literature (Cottrell, 1976; Gibbon et al., 2002; Goepfing & Baglioni, 1985; Goodman et al., 1998; Labonte & Laverack, 2001) formed a basis to identify seven factors associated with community resilience. Endorsed by a panel of experts convened by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Terrorism and Disaster Branch of the National Center for Child Traumatic

Stress, the seven interrelated factors are: connectedness, commitment, and shared values; participation; structure, roles, and responsibilities; resources; support and nurturance; critical reflection and skill building; and communication (Pfefferbaum B et al., 2007). Addition of an eighth factor – disaster prevention and mitigation, preparedness, and response – has recently been recommended to anchor the concept in disaster preparedness (Pfefferbaum RL et al., in review). These preliminary factors – described below – await empirical examination and validation with respect to disasters.

Connectedness, Commitment, and Shared Values. Community membership suggests connection to a place or a group of people with shared history, laws, interests, and social mores. The sense of belonging may be strengthened if members perceive their personal well-being as derived from, and their needs fulfilled through, affiliation with the community. A strong commitment to the community, coupled with relationships found therein that are characterized by mutual concern and benefit, should contribute to consensus building and collaboration. Communities that embrace diversity among members may be better able to address the needs of members in the face of adversity.

Participation. Participation may strengthen the sense of belonging, personal contribution, and ownership. Communities that foster and facilitate member involvement in activities and organizations may be better able to identify and address issues through cooperation and civic engagement at the local level. Opportunities for involvement should be sensitive to the interests, ability, and diversity of members. When participation is deemed important, members are likely to take pride in their contributions and derive increased benefit from involvement, thus helping the community address needs and problems that arise in conjunction with disasters as well as those that occur more commonly.

Structure, Roles, and Responsibilities. Communities include individuals, groups, and organizations with reciprocal links that form overlapping networks. In resilient communities, interactions are frequent, supportive, and collaborative, with individuals and groups identifying and addressing common concerns. Structure, roles, and responsibilities create the capacity for mitigation of, as well as decisive and timely response to, crises thereby diminishing adverse secondary consequences. Solutions may emerge from new associations that occur either formally or informally to establish priorities and resolve issues. Communities with strong and responsive leadership; able teamwork; clear organizational structures; and well-defined roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority can support adaptation and recovery. In the current, highly uncertain, all-hazards environment, structural elements must also permit sufficient flexibility to address unforeseen threats and vulnerabilities. Community resilience is enhanced when community standards, rules, and procedures facilitate social interaction and governance. Communities must manage relations with the larger society, accepting, working with, and supporting other communities.

Resources. A community's resources include those belonging to its members as well as those attached to the community itself. In addition to land and raw materials, resources include physical capital which creates an infrastructure and tools for the community. Human resources include a workforce, expertise and leadership for personal and community development, and member qualities such as hope and the will to improve community well-being. The relationships and support systems within a community, as well as characteristics such as cohesion, constitute social resources. Resilient communities acquire, mobilize, allocate, and use resources effectively to meet community goals. Infrastructure and systems must be able to respond suitably to, and endure, a wide variety of potential disasters and secondary adversities. Further, sufficient resources must substitute for and complement each other so that essential community

operations can be maintained even in the event of major disasters. Resilience is likely to necessitate ongoing investment in physical, human, and social capital which may include, for example, improvements in schools and health facilities, job training, and neighborhood development.

Support and Nurturance. Support and nurturance are important in enhancing resilience at the community as well as the individual level. Supportive and nurturing communities attend to the needs of their members regardless of background or socioeconomic status. Such communities help members achieve goals and overcome problems. They promote member well-being, instill hope, and empower individuals and groups. Communities should become more resilient through the process of providing support and nurturance and through attention to basic human needs and the environment in which their members live and work. Support and nurturance may be enhanced when communities become more adept at identifying, acquiring, and equitably distributing resources within community boundaries and with the larger society. In resilient communities, support mechanisms provide early and ongoing assessment of and assistance to vulnerable sub-groups before, during, and in the aftermath of disasters. Support is sustained through crises and buffers the personal, social, and economic losses that accompany tragedy.

Critical Reflection and Skill Building. Resilient communities identify and address issues, needs, and problems; establish structures to identify, collect, analyze, and use information; and plan, manage, and evaluate activities and programs. Critical reflection about values, their own history, and the experiences of others, should permit formal and informal community leaders to reason, set goals, make decisions, and develop and implement strategies for the betterment of members. Resilient communities assess their performance, study their successes and failures, and learn from adversity. They support introspection and skill building at individual and systemic levels. Learning, accommodation, and growth may lead to enhanced capacity.

Communication. Community resilience is reinforced by effective, clear, timely, and accurate communication among members and across boundaries. Effective communication requires common meanings and understandings and the perception of openness and honesty. Members and groups should have opportunities to identify and articulate their needs, views, and attitudes, especially if diversity is to be addressed and supported. Open and productive communication can foster trust in leadership and increase the likelihood of participation and compliance with directives in the face of community disasters. It can also focus attention on and promote resolution of pre-existing and emerging unmet needs as well as those that accompany disaster. There must be sufficient redundancy in communication channels to ensure timely resource mobilization in response to threats.

Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Preparedness, and Response. Resilient communities take deliberate steps to prevent and mitigate, prepare for, and respond to disasters. Prevention and mitigation include activities to avoid or control an incident, to reduce risks to people and property, and to lessen actual or potential adverse effects of an incident. Implemented prior to, during, or after an incident, mitigation measures focus on decreasing the likelihood of hazardous incidents and reducing exposure to, or potential loss from, such events. Preparedness is a continuous process that assesses threats, identifies vulnerabilities, and determines resource requirements. It involves efforts to prevent adverse consequences and to assemble resources to respond. Disaster response addresses the direct, short-term effects of an incident. Along with emergency assistance, disaster response includes efforts to limit further damage during or immediately after a disaster, efforts to support basic human needs, and efforts to maintain the social, economic, and political structure of the affected community. The relatively short-term

response phase transitions to a longer period of recovery and reconstruction during which survivors begin to rebuild their lives and their community.

The operating assumption is that community resilience can reduce adverse consequences associated with disasters even when community resilience efforts are not related directly to disaster management. Community resilience strategies can complement and enhance other disaster management efforts. This is particularly important in an environment in which unexpected and unknown events and problems are likely.

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