



## **Disaster Preparedness for Vulnerable Populations (DPVP)**

DPVP is an innovative interdisciplinary pilot program developed and coordinated by the Institute for Civic and Community Engagement that involves multidisciplinary faculty and students from Asian American Studies, Engineering, Nursing, Psychology, Raza Studies, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Supported by funding from the Bay Area Super Urban Area Security Initiative (SUASI) and launched in September 2007, DPVP is designed to target three of San Francisco's most difficult-to-reach populations: 1) residents living in public housing developments operated by the San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA); 2) low-income homebound senior citizens and disabled individuals served by the San Francisco In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority (SFIHSSPA), a non-profit organization publicly funded to match home care workers with the needs of this community; and 3) learners of English as a Second Language.

### **1. DPVP-Public Housing**

DPVP-Public Housing is a community-campus partnership that engages public housing community members in a collaborative, multidisciplinary disaster preparedness process that enables them to participate in select Engineering, Nursing, and Psychology courses that have been tailored to incorporate disaster preparedness-related curriculum. As part of the campus-community partnership, public housing community members participate in these courses through SF State's College of Extended Learning Fee Reduction Program, and earn college credit upon completion. SF State students work with the community representatives to train them in how to determine structural damage following a major earthquake, conduct medical triage during a disaster, and provide crisis counseling after a disaster.

### **2. DPVP-IHSS**

DPVP-IHSS is a collaboration with SFIHSSPA in which SF State students in Nursing, Raza Studies, and Asian American Studies reach out to interested IHSS consumers and other at-risk individuals on a range of disaster preparedness activities, including enrolling them in the SF Department of Emergency Management's Vial of Life Program so that emergency responders will have vital information immediately available in the consumer's home. Students also work with consumers to complete the forms required to enroll in the SF Department of Public Health's Disaster Registry Program. The Disaster Registry is a list of people that emergency responders should check on following a disaster.

Students work with consumers on preparedness activities during one-on-one home visits or during Health-Disaster Preparedness Fairs, organized by SF State Nursing students and faculty. From September 2007 to May 2008, students conducted more than 450 home visits as well as group programs at 20 low-income housing sites throughout San Francisco, reaching consumers who speak English, Russian, Spanish, ASL, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Japanese, and other Asian languages. To date, close to 1,500 IHSS consumers and other at-risk individuals have been assisted through DPVP-IHSS.

### **3. DPVP-ESL**

Also underway is an ESL disaster preparedness project in which faculty and students in the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages program (TESOL) are developing and piloting curricula on disaster preparedness for ESL courses. The project is making use of Learners' Lives as Curriculum (LLC), an innovative approach to curriculum development in which ESL learners' narratives are used to jump-start discussions about themes that are relevant to learners and are sources for systematic language and literacy development.

In addition to the DPVP-IHSS project described above, ICCE also worked with SFIHSSPA on a research study on disaster preparedness among consumers and providers of IHSS:

#### **Disaster Preparedness among Consumers and Providers of In-Home Supportive Service in San Francisco**

In March 2007, the San Francisco In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority (SFIHSSPA), which provides and promotes a service delivery model of consumer-directed in-home support, contracted with ICCE to conduct a study on the preparedness level of IHSS consumers living in San Francisco and their care providers in the event of a large-scale disaster.

In the County of San Francisco, the more than 17,000 individuals receiving services each month through IHSS are among the most vulnerable to an earthquake and other natural or man-made disasters. Most consumers of IHSS in San Francisco are over 65 years of age. The rest are young adults and a small number of children with chronic and disabling conditions.

The study was commissioned, in part, to aid SFIHSSPA in evaluating what its role should be in addressing the preparedness needs of its consumers and home care providers and how it might best create awareness and understanding among consumers and providers so that they proactively will take steps to prepare for disasters and other unforeseen emergencies.

SF State faculty members who were part of the multi-disciplinary research team included Principal Investigator Gerald Eisman, ICCE; and Co-Investigators Anoshua Chaudhuri, Economics; Rashmi Gupta, Social Work; Russell Jeung, Asian American Studies; and Mai Nhung Le, Asian American Studies.

The study report was completed and released in April 2008. You may download a [pdf](#) copy of the report from the ICCE website, Publications & Resources section.