

Disability Awareness Training Newsletter

Happy Holidays



First Responders Disability Awareness Training

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Dear Samantha,

During this holiday season, the Niagara University First Responder Disability Awareness Training office is grateful for its network of support, friends, family, and ambassadors across first/emergency response and the disability community. We are especially thankful to the University for sustaining the program beyond the initial grant.

We hope you and yours have a wonderful Christmas, New Year, & holiday.

Project Director Presents Customized Training to FBI Buffalo Field Office

Project Director Dave Whalen presented at the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Buffalo Division's** annual all-employee conference on December 5th at the Niagara Falls Air Base.

It is believed to be the first time any FBI field office has received disability awareness training.

"Your training was very well received by the entire staff, but in particular, it greatly assists with law enforcement officers to become more sensitive and aware of the people that we serve," said Adam Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of the Buffalo Division.

The audience consisted of 240 employees of the FBI, to include special agents, analysts, administrators, and support staff.

Niagara University worked with trainers from the Buffalo office to develop a customized training for the FBI.



Buffalo FBI Special Agent in Charge Adam Cohen & NU FRDAT Project Director Dave Whalen

Central Pennsylvania First Responder Train the Trainers Successful

[Santa uses sign language](#)

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New Resources

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[31 Books That Will Help You Better Understand Mental Illness & Disorders](#)

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Related Events

[FEMA Promising Practice: Communication Outreach & Toolkits - January 14, 2016](#)

[Assisting Individuals in Crisis - Jan 22-23](#)

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Eight counties from Central Pennsylvania participated in the Law Enforcement, Firefighter/EMS, and 911 Dispatch Train the Trainer programs to their region. While NU has received many inquiries, some close to fruition, this was the first training outside of New York State.

South Central Mountains Regional Task Force collaborated with the **Center for Independent Living**, based in Altoona, Pennsylvania, to bring the four day training together.

There was a total of 25 first responders across all three disciplines, representing 18 departments from the eight counties. The program was very well received, with 100% of the attendees recommending the training. [Click here to see a news clip.](#)

There is preliminary discussion to bring the Project Director to the state's National Emergency Number Association's conference and accreditation of the program for EMS providers.

Disability Education & Awareness for Municipalities training conducted at NU

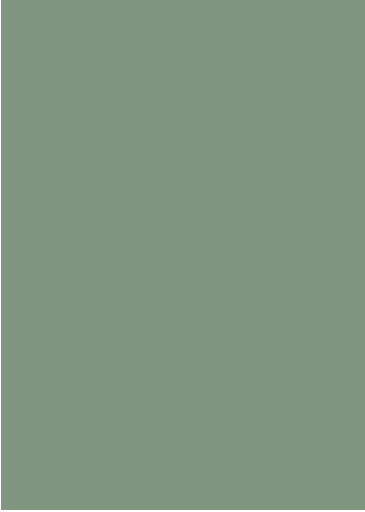
Through assistance from the **Peter & Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation**, NU DAT was able to provide the new and improved training for municipal employees and disability advocates.

Formerly "Town Hall Training," the program educates individuals on municipal responsibilities with an emphasis on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A total of 19 individuals from 11 municipalities and agencies attended the November 10th training.

It is noted that most municipalities are in violation of the ADA on a daily basis, but do little to address the issue(s). NU met with the **New York Conference of Mayors, New York State Association of Towns, and New York State Association of Counties** on December 8th to address the matter. Project Director Dave Whalen will also be meeting with **Disability Rights - NY** on January 8th to discuss his program and proactive ways of bringing awareness and supports to municipalities.

Niagara University hosts Emergency Management Disability Awareness Training

On December 15th, 40 individuals across all spectrums of emergency management and response, to include disability advocates, attended a one-day comprehensive training on how to properly and accurately respond to individuals with disabilities and access and functional needs. [Click here to read an article.](#)



Attendees included representatives from the Buffalo and Tonawanda police departments; Tonawanda, Orchard Park, and Amherst emergency managers; local CERT; National Federation of the Blind; and developmental disabilities service providers.

Content included, but was not limited to, accessibility/universal design, sheltering, general effective communication, disabilities defined, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, specific to emergency management and municipality responsibilities.

NU is in discussion with the New York State Office of Emergency Management to deliver this program across the state in 2016.