



22 October 2014

To the Selection Committee for the Sasakawa Award:

I am extremely pleased, and honored, to recommend Dr. Mark Keim for the prestigious Sasakawa Award. Dr. Keim is a true pioneer for disaster risk reduction (DRR) in the United States, especially in the realm of health. He is a recognized leader in this field, as reflected by his many scholarly articles, training courses and presentations, as well as his facilitation of information sharing through a popular LinkedIn discussion group.

The theme for this year's award is "Shaping the Future," and that theme is clearly reflected in the efforts that Dr. Keim has made to support and advance the concepts of DRR with the program I lead - the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The MRC is a national "network of networks" with community-based groups of leaders, volunteers, housing organizations, partners, supporters and other stakeholders committed to improving the health, safety and resiliency of their communities. MRC volunteers include medical and public health professionals, as well as others interested in strengthening the public health infrastructure and improving the emergency capabilities of their local jurisdictions. My office supports the local efforts to establish, implement, and sustain MRC units. There are currently over 1,010 MRC units and more than 205,000 volunteers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and most U.S. territories covering ~91% of the U.S. population and ~75% of the U.S. land area.

Dr. Keim was instrumental in introducing the MRC network to the concepts of DRR. Over the past 6 years, he has presented to broad audiences at national and regional-level MRC meetings, led webinars for MRC members and community leaders, and conducted numerous hands-on workshops for MRC leaders. His communication style is superbly suited to imparting an clear understanding of the impacts of disasters and how to manage the risks. Recently, Dr. Keim has advocated for the development of a Surgeon General's Call to Action on Disaster Risk Reduction. A document of this nature would significantly elevate awareness and understanding of DRR.

For the past several years, Dr. Keim and I have shared in a strong and very productive partnership, and I look forward to working with him to further reduce vulnerability, build adaptive capacity and improve resilience. I am certain that his receipt of the Sasakawa Award would raise his ability to advocate for DRR and health in the United States and the world.

Sincerely,

CAPT Robert J. Tosatto

Director, Division of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps

