

Workers were exposed to mold and numerous safety hazards for which they received little advanced training or adequate personal protective equipment. MassCOSH is coordinating the efforts of five Massachusetts and Rhode Island worker centers to train and prepare day laborers to better understand their job rights and the employers' responsibilities to keep them safe and healthy. These worker centers are often the eyes and ears of low income communities, but have little connection to the emergency response community.

On April 20, 2016, The New England Consortium-CSEA held its semi-annual Advisory Board meeting. The meeting was designed as a special forum bringing together first responders, emergency planners, relief workers and volunteers with worker centers serving day laborers to promote coordination and collaboration to strengthen emergency and disaster response capability in New England and New York. "The meeting builds on the exciting work that TNEC-CSEA has recently launched under its NIEHS-supported HAZMAT Disaster Preparedness Training Program (HDPTP)," said Paul Morse, TNEC Project Director. "The HDPTP provides education and training for public sector workers and is developing a community based network to train and prepare day laborers about employer responsibilities to keep them safe and healthy when they are working in response to extreme weather events." A panel of key emergency response and management agency representatives joined worker center leaders to provide the context for facilitated small group discussions regarding disaster response and community resiliency activities.

Panelists included Mary E. Clark, JD, MPH, Massachusetts Department of Public Health – Emergency Management; Mark Libby, US Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR); Susan M. Cibulsky, Ph.D. US Dept. of HHS Medical Countermeasure Strategy and Requirements - Division Office of Policy and Planning, and Natalicia Tracy, Executive Director of the Brazilian Workers Center. Marcy Goldstein-Gelb, the Executive Director of Mass COSH facilitated.



**Dr. Craig Slatin, UML Professor**

Dr. Craig Slatin, TNEC-CSEA Principal Investigator and UML Professor of Community Health acknowledged the many participants from the TNEC-CSEA partnering organizations, invited guests, advisory board members and cited the work of the different TNEC-UML based staff members in coordinating the arrangements and planning for this

meeting. "It is gratifying to be holding the meeting in the ETIC building and to reflect upon how our work as a long-established program within the College Of Health Sciences fits in with so much of the cutting edge work happening at the campus and serving the region," Slatin stated. Sharon Beard, who oversees TNEC-CSEA's work within the National Institute of Health Sciences Worker Training Program (NIEHS WTP) traveled up from Research Triangle Park, North Carolina to participate in the meeting. Ms. Beard is an industrial hygienist in the WTP in the Division of Extramural Research and Training (DERT) at NIEHS. She is primarily responsible for coordinating, evaluating, and improving the nation-wide worker education efforts. She uses her background in industrial hygiene to provide expert review, guidance, and leadership in managing a multi-million dollar portfolio of worker training grants in the areas of hazardous waste, emergency response, and nuclear weapons / radiation serving communities throughout the United States. "Today's advisory board meeting is timely and important for the NIEHS program. Many of the people attending today's meeting are participating in the planning for NIEHS's July 19, 2016 Disaster Research Response (DR2) Workshop scheduled at

the Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building in Boston," she reported. The DR2 Program is a collaborative effort by NIEHS and the National Library of Medicine that aims to improve our nation's capabilities for performing timely environmental health research in response to emerging threats and disasters.

Matthew Kozak, Senior Project Manager and Janet Womachka, OSH Trainer Coordinator of the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA), NY AFSCME Local 1000 provided an overview of key CSEA initiatives related to its work in the HAZMAT Disaster Preparedness Training Program and the Hazardous Waste Worker Training Program.

Natalicia Tracy from the Brazilian Workers Center went over the Workers Center disaster-related training project with MassCOSH. The project's goals are to promote coordination and collaboration to strengthen emergency and disaster response capability especially in the event of weather-related catastrophes. Mr. Libby pointed out that his work at ASPR is the federal equivalent of Mary Clark's efforts at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Mark is a nurse and paramedic and served as Connecticut's emergency medical services director. ASPR representatives function as public health advisors to emergency managers in all-hazards events.

Marcy Goldstein-Gelb, Director of MassCOSH facilitated a brief questions and answer session. Discussion items added to the richness of the presentation and looked at other forms of interagency and community cooperation.