



REGINA M. BENJAMIN MD, MBA
SURGEON GENERAL

December 20, 2011

Dear MRC Leaders, Volunteers and Partners:

During this Holiday Season, I would like to express my appreciation for the time, and skills you have devoted to volunteering with the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). Your service has had a direct impact on the health, preparedness, and resilience of communities across our country.

I'm continually impressed with the number of public health events supported by our MRC units, including blood pressure screenings, *Let's Move!* activities, fire fighter fitness exams, and Influenza vaccination clinics. This year marked the release of the first ever, *National Prevention Strategy*, which recognizes that health does not occur only in the doctor's office and hospitals, but also where we live, work, play and pray. This includes clean air and water, safe outdoor spaces for physical activity, safe worksites, healthy foods, violence-free environments and healthy homes. The MRC is playing a major role in making the National Prevention Strategy come to life.

2012 will mark the 10th anniversary of the inception of the MRC and we have a lot to be proud of. We have seen the program grow from a fledgling (but enthusiastic) 42 units in 2002, to a robust network of over 970 units across the country--with more **than 200,000 volunteers**. We look forward to continued growth and the opportunity to strengthen as a network of dedicated leaders, committed volunteers, supportive housing organizations, and resourceful partners.

I want you to know and understand how much of a difference you are making. With each public health activity, preparedness exercise, and response to crisis, you make America stronger and more resilient. I am inspired by each of you, and look forward to your continued dedication and commitment as we serve our communities and our nation in 2012.

Sincerely,

Regina, Benjamin MD, MBA
Surgeon General
Vice Admiral, US Public Health Service