

On May 13, 2009 The Alliance for Response, NYC chapter hosted a meeting at the American Museum of Natural History. Nearly 70 members from over 40 institutions citywide attended. The featured speaker was Lieutenant Christopher Matousek, who presented an introduction to the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Lieutenant Matousek gave the group an update on what the city has done and is planning to do to prepare itself for an emergency. He reviewed the mission of the OEM which includes planning and preparing for emergencies, coordinating emergency response and recovery efforts, educating the public about preparedness, collecting and disseminating critical information and to seek funding to support preparedness efforts. He discussed in detail OEM programs that could help support the cultural institutions' emergency planning efforts including the Corporate Emergency Access System, Corp Net and a Tabletop Exercise 101 training program. Details on these programs can be found at their website [www.nyc.gov/OEM](http://www.nyc.gov/OEM).

On June 25, 2009 The Alliance for Response, NYC chapter hosted the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Tabletop Exercise -- 101 Training Program. Participating institutions were asked to send two staff members who are integral to their emergency planning efforts; ten institutions participated in the training program. Paula Carlson, Amanda Hoyd and John Graham presented the program at the OEM's headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. The purpose of the training was to instruct the participants in how to run a tabletop exercise for emergency preparedness at their institution. The instructors described tabletop exercises as lending themselves to low stress discussion of coordination and policy providing a good environment for problem solving. They offer an opportunity for key agency and stakeholders to become acquainted with one another, their interrelated roles and their respective responsibilities. It provides good preparation for a functional exercise. The speakers also provided instruction on how to properly design the exercises so that they are clear, concise and focused. The exercise should allow for realistic outcomes that can be used to update an institution's emergency plan. The chapter plans to work with NYC OEM to provide this training again at a later date to accommodate additional interested institutions.