



## APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2018.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Arlington  
Program Title: HERricane Arlington  
Program Category: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Mark J. Schwartz  
Title: COUNTY MANAGER, ARLINGTON VIRGINIA  
Signature: Mark J. Schwartz

## **HERricane Arlington: A Powerful Force for Change**

HERricane Arlington is a cutting-edge summer camp program designed to give high school-aged girls the knowledge, skills, and abilities to survive disasters and consider careers in emergency management and allied fields. The program focuses on experiential, hands-on learning related to personal preparedness, natural hazards, crisis communications, and public health. Participants are trained in life saving skills such as CPR, fire extinguisher utilization, hand washing, and storm spotting. They also develop leadership skills such as professional conduct, teamwork, stress management, and networking to prepare them for careers as emergency managers, public health nurses, first responders, and journalists.

The program is designed to address two problems faced by Arlington County and the emergency management community at large. Both Arlington County and the field of emergency management struggle to find high-quality, unique ways to engage young women in emergency preparedness activities. Women and children are of specific interest because they are disproportionately affected by disaster, particularly in regards to loss of life, sexual violence, and loss of income. Therefore, it is incredibly important that we give young women the knowledge, skills, and abilities to avert these tragedies. Additionally, women often become the preparedness engines of their homes. Women often take on the responsibility for developing their family's emergency plan, gathering emergency supplies, and responding to evacuation orders. Our program ensures that the young women in our community will be able to conduct these activities with confidence and excellence.

The additional purpose of our program is to encourage young women to consider careers in emergency management and allied fields. Women are under-represented in emergency management across the profession, even though it is a growing field. Our program aims to provide exposure to the field as well as leadership training to ensure those who pursue it will be successful.

HERricane Arlington is particularly innovative in several ways. First, it is ground breaking. There is no similar program in existence, across the nation. It's emphasis on experiential learning sets it apart from other public education and outreach initiatives. Secondly, it places a strong emphasis on partnerships. Arlington County Government engaged the American Red Cross, Fairfax County, Arlington Public Schools, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, the International Association of Emergency Managers, the American Association of University Women, and several private businesses to design and execute the camp. Partner agencies provided speakers, camp counselors, activities, and equipment to ensure the camp was professional and successful. HERricane Arlington has already been recognized as having value as a model for other localities. Both Washington D.C. and Leon County, FL are launching their own "HERricane" programs based on the Arlington County model. HERricane Arlington staff provided support to these jurisdictions to ensure that they can achieve the same success.

The HERricane Program is built on the foundation of vision, mission, and values statements. The guiding principles were assembled by the HERricane Arlington Advisory Board, a cross-cutting group of individuals dedicated to the purpose and principles behind the camp. The members of the Board were representatives of partner agencies as well as the profession as whole. They established the following framework for the program:

- **Program Vision:** HERricane Arlington will be a "key to success" for women exploring and pursuing careers in emergency management.
- **Program Mission:** Develop and elevate women as leaders in their communities while improving the image of the emergency management profession as a positive force in public safety and government.

**-Program Values:**

- **Synergy:** We recognize the value and importance of uniting a group of diverse individuals into a single, powerful force. We seek to provide pro-social professional connections and an environment of collegiality.
- **Grit:** We believe that a distinct combination of passion, resilience, determination, and focus allows a person to maintain discipline and optimism in any career.
- **Adventure, Creativity, and Open-mindedness:** We utilize and promote ingenuity in our programming as a means to foster this quality in our membership and organization. Emergency management as a discipline, as well as a career, is notoriously complicated, atypical, and non-traditional- requiring resourcefulness, positivity, and inventiveness.
- **Professional Excellence:** Excellence is not perfection; rather, the confident pursuit of the high quality and persistent integrity. We seek this for our members as well for HERricane Arlington as a whole.

The Advisory Board also outlined discreet objectives for the program:

- Provide skill based disaster education, including CPR, Damage Assessment, Fire Extinguisher Training, Storm Spotting, and Incident Management training.
- Encourage leadership development, especially in the realms of persistence, teamwork, interpersonal communications, ethics, and poise.
- Provide examples of successful women and role-models in the field and encourage mentorship.
- Explore emergency management and other allied fields, including public safety, meteorology, public health, journalism, and government.
- Communicate and demonstrate the importance of professionalism during disasters and daily life.

These objectives would later help guide important programmatic decisions and assist in measuring the success of the initiative as a whole.

Carrying out the program began with careful planning. The Advisory Board, led by Arlington County staff, met three times in advance of the program to ensure programmatic milestones were being met. They created several subcommittees to address major program areas including: curriculum, marketing, admissions and enrollment, logistics, and donor relations. The subcommittees met for several months to devise various strategies to ensure the camp was successful on all fronts:

- **The Curriculum Subcommittee:** This subcommittee designed a unique curriculum that ensures disaster material was both age-appropriate and engaging. They “game-ified” several emergency preparedness activities to ensure active participation by the campers. This included: an “Iron Chef”-style cook-off with emergency kit materials, a damage assessment scavenger hunt, and several Jeopardy-style quizzes. Participants competed for points, which would also translate into emergency preparedness prizes. The committee ensured balance in the curriculum and secured several motivational and leadership-development speakers. The curriculum included an emergency management objective and leadership core skill for each day:
  - o **Day 1: Personal Preparedness and Grit**
  - o **Day 2: Crisis Communications and Confidence**
  - o **Day 3: Incident Management and Teamwork**
  - o **Day 4: Public Health and Stress Management**
  - o **Day 5: Natural Hazards and Networking**
- **The Marketing Subcommittee:** This subcommittee ensured that the camp was visible among the many summer camp opportunities in the region. They contacted local media to ensure notices about the camp were published in hyper-local blogs, as well as in school newsletters, summer camp catalogs, Girl Scout troop flyers, neighborhood Facebook pages and NextDoor listservs, and more.

- **The Admissions and Enrollment Subcommittee:** This subcommittee designed the camp application. They ensured the application was age-appropriate, and would lead to participants who were interested and motivated in the camp as a whole. They reviewed applications and made admissions decisions. They also determined scholarship criteria and made scholarship awards to those with financial needs. Eight scholarships were awarded to applicants, representing 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of camp participants. This subcommittee ensured that every participant who was interested in the program could attend regardless of financial circumstances.
- **The Logistics Subcommittee:** This subcommittee identified and met all logistical needs for the program from space to food to staff and equipment. They secured three volunteer counselors as well as three paid staff to provide for a low student-to-instructor ratio. They secured three classrooms in a local high school as a facility for the camp at no cost. They identified several local businesses that were willing to donate food to offset program costs. They identified the needed waivers, permission slips, and other legal documents to ensure the program was insured and professionally run.
- **The Donor Relations Subcommittee:** This committee worked to secure donations and public-private partnerships for the program to lower expenses. They identified more than twelve individuals, associations, and businesses who were willing to make donations to the program. Their contributions accounted for more than 80% of the programs costs and ensured that tuition could be offered at the lowest possible rate. They assisted in securing scholarships for those with financial needs, thereby ensuring a diverse population could attend the program.

Financing a program of this magnitude required special attention. Early in the process, the Advisory Board and Department of Parks and Recreation experts agreed that a tuition fee should be charged. This nominal fee would ensure attendance and prevent a high “no-show” rate. It was important to keep the tuition reasonable so that participants from all financial backgrounds would be

able to attend. After careful thought, tuition was set at \$225 for the week, which was significantly less than other week-long programs in the region. This would generate \$3000 in revenue for the program. With program expenses running at \$18,000, the remaining \$15,000 would need to be raised from donations, grants, and other in-kind resources. The Donor Relations Subcommittee was able to meet this need.

Staffing proved to be another challenge. As mentioned above, several counselors were secured by the Logistics Subcommittee; however, the program would require the participation of over 40 adult professionals. The Arlington County Department of Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management provided much of the leadership and administrative staff; however, additional assistance was necessary. Through partnership with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, the S. Murphy Company, C.N.A., the Awesome Women Entrepreneurs, Intermedix, and other organizations, all staffing needs were met. Professional and community volunteers were also used for several staff-intensive activities, including our Capstone Networking Event.

It was important to our Advisory Board that the emergency management and leadership development that the participants were acquiring not stop when camp had concluded. To ensure continued learning, Arlington County also developed a program called "The Aftermath." While HERricane Arlington provided high school aged girls a one-week immersive experience in disaster education and leadership development; the Aftermath allowed them to continue this journey over a one-year period. It consisted of ten workshops that blended emergency response and recovery topics with teamwork, decision-making, and problem solving skills, thereby advancing the social equity of the young women in our community. The workshops were offered at no cost to participants of the HERricane Arlington program. The Aftermath used gamification to promote attendance and participation: for every activity a young woman completed, she earned points. Points could be redeemed for incentives, including gift certificates for professional clothing and mock interview

practice, providing further professional development. The participant with the most points earned a college stipend. The Aftermath workshops include:

- Aftermath Workshop 1- Innovation & Rescue Team Skills
- Aftermath Workshop 2- Personal Resilience & 9/11 Day of Service
- Aftermath Workshop 3- Critical Thinking & Law Enforcement
- Aftermath Workshop 4- Decision Making & Disaster Data Analytics
- Aftermath Workshop 5- Interpersonal Skills & Emergency Supplies
- Aftermath Workshop 6- Stress Management & Psychological First Aid
- Aftermath Workshop 7- Confidence & Crisis Communications
- Aftermath Workshop 8- Partnership & Pet Preparedness
- Aftermath Workshop 9- Professionalism & Disaster Recovery
- Aftermath Workshop 10- Team Building & Emergency Planning

Overall, HERricane Arlington has had several demonstrated successes. Over 85% percent of participants attended every day of camp, and more than 75% attended an Aftermath workshop. More than 50% of participants attended Aftermath workshops on a regular basis. Feedback from both the participants and their parents has been overwhelmingly positive. HERricane Arlington parents nominated the program and Northern Virginia Magazine recently awarded it the honor of being one of the region's "Best Summer Camps". Additionally, the program has been recognized by several professional organizations. The program leader has been asked to speak about the program at several local, state, and regional conferences, including the Virginia Emergency Management Symposium and the International Association of Emergency Managers Annual Conference. The Virginia Emergency Management Association also recognized C.N.A. , one of the sponsors, with a "Public Private Partnership Award" for their contributions to the HERricane Arlington program at the 2018 Symposium. Additionally, the program leader was inducted into the International Network of Women in Homeland Security and



**Emergency Management's Hall of Fame based on the success of this program.**

**In additional to the professional recognition the program has received, results have also been realized in the participants. More than 90% of the participants could pass a basic preparedness quiz with a score of 95% or higher a few months after the camp. Additional successes are listed below:**

- Based on her experience at HERricane Arlington, one student (now a high school senior) has decided to pursue public health and infectious disease as a college major.**
- Another student has become so engaged in preparedness, she is applying for FEMA's Youth Preparedness Council.**
- A third student attended both HERricane Arlington and Arlington County Fire Department's Camp Heat and is now a volunteer firefighter in her hometown in Loudoun County.**
- A fourth student used HERricane Arlington in her application to George Mason University. She is a first-generation American and was awarded a full-ride scholarship. She would not have been able to attend college without this financial support.**
- Three students from the 2017 program asked to return to the 2018 program as junior counselors. A fourth student, now a college freshman is returning as a full volunteer counselor.**

## **Executive Summary:**

HERricane Arlington is a cutting-edge summer camp program designed to give high school-aged girls the knowledge, skills, and abilities to survive disasters and consider careers in emergency management and allied fields. The program focuses on experiential, hands-on learning related to personal preparedness, natural hazards, crisis communications, and public health. Participants are trained in life saving skills such as CPR, fire extinguisher utilization, hand washing, and storm spotting. They also develop leadership skills such as professional conduct, teamwork, stress management, and networking to prepare them for careers as emergency managers, public health nurses, first responders, and journalists.

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Young women who participated in HERricane Arlington are already demonstrating the success of the program. They are becoming volunteer firefighters, changing their college majors, and leveraging their experience in the program into scholarships and financial aid. They are showing interest in disaster preparedness both locally and nationally. They are beginning to shape the future of emergency management.

**Brief Overview of the program (3-4 paragraphs for press release, brochures, etc.)**

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HERricane Arlington includes a one-week summer camp that focuses on core disaster preparedness skills, including CPR, storm spotting, damage assessment, and incident management. Additionally, it provides participants with leadership development on topics such as personal resilience, teamwork, communication, and stress management. Students can also attend a year-long program of workshops afterwards to further develop these skills. Through participation and completion of preparedness activities, participants earn incentives to advance their professionalism like résumé review, mock interview practice, and gift cards for professional clothing. This approach provides the participants comprehensive preparedness- not only for disasters, but for future career and life challenges.

The program has already produced many positive results. HERricane Arlington has been recognized at several professional levels for its innovative approach and importance to the field. Additionally, the young women who participated in HERricane are becoming volunteer firefighters, changing their college majors, and applying to national preparedness committees. They are beginning to shape the future of emergency management in a positive way.

