
EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE
April 8, 2020

Contact: Danielle Augustin
Phone: 216-970-3981
Email: Prepared4all@aucd.org

**ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY CENTERS ON DISABILITIES (AUCD) LAUNCHES
PREPARED4ALL INITIATIVE**

SILVER SPRING, Md. – Together with its partners, the [Association of University Centers on Disabilities \(AUCD\)](http://www.aucd.org) is launching a new initiative, *Prepared4ALL*, mobilizes disability organizations and their local networks to get a seat at the emergency planning table.

“We are excited and proud to launch this initiative right now. *Prepared4ALL* offers an online training, *Whole Community Inclusive Emergency Planning*, in addition to a Town Hall series for partners to problem-solve with local Disability Inclusion Coach support. We must work with emergency and public health planners to foster connections, build trust, create sustainable relationships,” says John Tschida, AUCD’s Executive Director.

COVID-19 impacts all communities across the US – including the over 61 million Americans who have disabilities. Approximately 1 in 4 Americans have a disability, yet state and local preparedness planning, mitigation and recovery efforts do not consistently include them.

“Our work is to help partners identify opportunities for disability inclusion in local emergency planning and show how to take action.” says Dr. Adriane Griffen, AUCD’s Senior Director of Public Health and Leadership. “Our unique *Prepared4ALL* evidence-based approach helps build relationships between local disability organizations and public health planners and emergency managers.”

Prepared4All addresses gaps in emergency planning by sharing insights on how to make efforts accessible for people with disabilities through three related strategies:

- 1) *Prepared4ALL: Whole Community Inclusive Emergency Planning* - A new, free online training on the basics of the American Emergency Management System, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and whole community planning.
- 2) *Prepared4ALL Disability Inclusion Coach* program to help AUCD trainees form local networks between local disability organizations in the community, local emergency management, and public health professionals.
- 3) *Prepared4All Town Halls* which link local chapters of disability organizations and make introductions to local public health planners and emergency managers to trouble shoot and discuss solutions.

[AUCD](http://www.aucd.org) is a national, nonprofit network of university-based centers and programs in every state and territory working to advance policy and practice for people living with disabilities and their families. AUCD’s [National Center on Disability in Public Health](http://www.nationalcenterdph.org) works with partners to address health disparities like emergency preparedness. *Prepared4ALL* is made possible through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Learn more about *Prepared4ALL* at <https://nationalcenterdph.org/our-focus-areas/prepared4all/>