

Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness

SUCCESS STORY

BOSTON

Using Meta-Leadership to prepare the Arts

Contributor: Veronique Le Melle

"...the Summit broke down leadership in such a way that anyone, even those who had never been trained before, could learn, understand, and apply concepts to their work ..."

What my staff thought of as 'being prepared' then, and what 'being prepared' is now, are two very different things," recalls Veronique Le Melle, Executive Director for the Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) after her participation in the Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness and Post Summit Meeting held in Boston in 2009. Although her staff may have been novices in the world of emergency preparedness and response, Le Melle was no stranger to the field. Prior to coming to Boston and the BCA in 2009, Le Melle served as the head of the Division for the Arts for the State of Louisiana during Hurricane Katrina and prior to that, the Director of Cultural Affairs in Queens, NY in the aftermath of 9/11. She had a first-hand experience of the impact disaster could have on the arts community. Upon her arrival in Boston, motivated by her prior experiences and her participation in the Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness events, she embarked on a mission to ensure the BCA was well equipped in both leadership and emergency preparedness capacity.

The Summit brings leadership development and preparedness to the Arts

Le Melle describes the impact the Summit made on her organization as twofold: the Summit helped increase the emergency preparedness capacity of the BCA and helped to develop up-and-coming leaders within the organization. The Post-Summit activity, which was held at the BCA, was valuable. It raised the awareness of internal BCA staff of how disaster could impact "non-traditional" community partners such as the arts community. Dedicated to this effort, Le Melle has spent the last three years working to create a more prepared BCA. She has established a dedicated emergency preparedness team which has led efforts in the development of evacuation plans, trained staff in first aid and CPR, and is currently working to ensure the entire BCA campus, which hosts over 200,000 visitors a year, has the proper safety equipment in place.

Additionally, Le Melle credits the Summit for providing a training platform that was easily adaptable to train over 30 past and present staff on team management and leadership. The training has incorporated many key aspects of the Meta-Leadership curriculum including the team building exercises. She credits the Summit for breaking down leadership in such a way that anyone could learn, understand, and apply concepts to their work.

Meta-leadership continues to expand from the Arts to the Boston community

Going forward, Le Melle hopes to continue training her workforce to be leaders in the arts field and also in emergency preparedness. She hopes to start exercising the BCA preparedness plans to ensure the campus is as prepared as possible, and to begin collaborating with other arts organizations to share plans across organizations. Additionally, the BCA's large atrium space, the Cyclorama, is listed as a shelter-in-place resource for both the city of Boston as well as the American Red Cross.

The Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness empowered business, government and nonprofit leaders to act together in times of crisis. The five-year initiative connected 5,000 business, government and nonprofit leaders in 36 communities. For resources and more information about Meta-Leadership visit the [CDC Foundation Meta-Leadership Website](#).



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