



Regional Conference by the Mid-Atlantic Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) March 30 -April 1, 2025

The Mid-Atlantic Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (DC VOAD, DE VOAD, MD VOAD, PA VOAD, and WV VOAD), invite you to join us for our 2nd Annual Conference. The theme of this year's conference is:

***Beyond Band-Aids:
Dismantling Systemic Inequities that Fuel Disaster Vulnerability***

As disaster response agencies, we often respond to the most vulnerable, marginalized, and under-resourced communities affected by disasters. Systemic inequalities already exist for these populations well before a disaster strikes, and they are exacerbated by the disaster. We find ourselves simultaneously “within” and “outside” of these systems. The conference will explore how we strategize, work intentionally, and become aware of our biases in responding from within these positions to bring equitable recovery for everyone.

Conference Date and Location: March 30 to noon on April 1, 2025, Cacapon Resort State Park Lodge, Berkeley Springs, West Virginia.

Getting There: Approximate distances are Baltimore – 100 miles; Washington, DC – 100 miles; Pittsburgh – 150 miles; Philadelphia – 165 miles; Charleston – 280 miles.

Conference Fee: \$120, includes conference registration as well as lunch, break, and dinner on Monday and breakfast and break on Tuesday. Spouses/significant others are welcome to participate in meals. Purchase a meals-only ticket for \$90 online during registration.

Registration: To register, please click on the [Conference Registration link](#).

Questions: Should you have any questions, please contact *Bruce Morgenstern*, Conference Registration Committee, at treasurer@marylandvoad.org

Conference Schedule

Sunday, March 30

1:00—2:00 Registration

Sunday Afternoon Roundtable

2:00—3:00 **Session 1:** VOAD exchange and interaction around best practices

3:00—4:00 **Session 2:** Student Attendees: Sharing their envisioned future in disaster response.

4:00—5:00 **Session 3:** Emergency Managers' Expectations of State VOADs

Monday, March 31

9:30-10:30 Registration

10:30—11:15 Welcome

Introduction of Special Guests and Sponsors

11:15—12:00 **Opening Plenary:** "Beginning Together: Introducing the Conference Theme."

Noon Lunch

1:00—2:15 **Session One:** Dr. Cassandra Davis, Assistant Professor, Department of Public Policy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

***History Matters:** Placing our response in the context of survivors helps unearth past inequities and provides cues for mitigating vulnerabilities.*

2:15—2:45 Networking & Break

2:45—4:00 **Session Two:** Dr. Davis

***Trust is Vital:** Building trust is a process. Building trust is about relationships. Trust is about demonstrated integrity. The process establishes a framework for an equitable recovery.*

4:00—5:00 **Emergency Management Software Demonstration by Sponsors**

5:00—6:00 Networking/Free Time

6:00 Supper

7:00 Reception and Social

Tuesday, April 1

7:30

Breakfast

8:30—9:45

Session Three: Dr. Simona Goldin, Research Professor at EPIC and the Department of Public Policy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

In the Pursuit of Justice: Interrupting White

Saviorism: *In this interactive session we will learn and practice identifying and interrupting white saviorism so that the recoveries we support are just.*

9:45—10:15

Break:

10:15—11:30

Session Four: Dr. Davis

Power of Words: *Words matter. Words form the response culture we bring. Words define the survivor community's reality. The usage of words can't be assumed. The meaning of words can't be assumed.*

11:30—Noon

Conference Take-aways & Evaluation

Noon

On our way home

Conference Lodging Information



Cacapon Resort State Park Lodge

The newest lodge in the West Virginia State Parks system, Cacapon Resort's 120-room luxury lodge sits at the foot of Cacapon Mountain. With indoor and outdoor dining, a spa, indoor swimming pool and a view of the park's golf course, it is the perfect place for adventurers to wind down.

Positioned in the shadow of a folded mountain ridge in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle, Cacapon Resort State Park is a 6,000 plus-acre, year-round destination. The park is frequented by both nature lovers and adventure seekers from around the state, as well as nearby cities such as Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Cacapon Resort is also a draw for history buffs due to its proximity to the historic town of Berkeley Springs and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

To receive the conference lodging rate, you must call the hotel at (304) 258-1022 to make a reservation. Ask to speak with the front desk or group services. The room block code is VOAD.

- ❖ **The conference rate is NOT available if you book your room online.**
- ❖ **Registration closes and reservations MUST be complete by March 17th. This is a hard deadline.**

The rates below include the conference discount, but do not include the retail tax of 6% and hotel/motel tax of 6%.

Single Queen Bed	\$99.99	Two Bedroom Classic Cabin	\$144.99
Double Queen Bed	\$139.99	Four Bedroom Classic Cabin	\$179.99
King Bed	\$159.99		

The address of the conference hotel is 818 Cacapon Lodge Dr, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411

Questions: Should you have any questions, please contact *Bruce Morgenstern*, Conference Registration Chair at treasurer@marylandvoad.org



Keynote Presenters

Cassandra R. Davis, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Policy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research focuses on the environmental disruptions to schooling communities, specifically the impact of natural disasters on low-income communities of color. Dr. Davis' goal is to support educators, community leaders, and policymakers to improve mitigation strategies, preparedness, response, and recovery in areas the highest need.



with

Her most recent projects focus on addressing systemic racism and building trust and community between emergency management and socially marginalized populations disrupted by consecutive natural disasters.

From 2017-2020, Dr. Davis received funding from the National Science Foundation to explore the impacts of Hurricanes Florence (2018), Harvey (2017), and Matthew (2016) on schools, educators, and students.

Since 2020, Dr. Davis has received funding from the United States Department of Homeland Security to examine inequitable distributions of disaster aid to underrepresented communities.

Dr. Davis says: Overall, my work exposes the extent to which targeted groups (e.g., communities of color, low-income, etc.), who are already more susceptible to environmental disruptions, are made more vulnerable following an event. I define environmental disruptions as anything from hurricanes to viral pandemics. I intend to identify best-practices to support these groups, as well as educators, interested stakeholders, and policymakers.

My work has been supported by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Natural Hazard Center - CONVERGE, the UNC-CH Provost Office, and the Carolina Disaster Fund.

Dr. Simona Goldin, Ph.D., is a Research Professor in the Department of Public Policy at the University of North Carolina.



Her work addresses issues of justice and equity, and is guided by the belief that *brilliance is equally distributed while opportunity is not*. In her community-based work she considers issues of equity and justice and practices of transformation. Much of her scholarship examines these issues in the context of US public schools. In a deeply connected branch of work she examines issues of environmental racism, learning with and from communities about what comprises a *just recovery*.

She has studied ways to transform the preparation of beginning teachers to teach in more racially just and equitable ways and has elaborated the teaching practices that bridge children's work in schools on academic content with their home and community-based experiences. Her most recent work has looked at the ways that innovations are weaponized against the very communities they are meant to support. For example, she has elaborated a frame for systemically trauma-informed teaching practice that interrupts the deficit framing of children and their communities. With colleagues, she has designed and studied innovative instructional resources and unique opportunities—namely, home visits, performance assessments, and new pedagogies of teacher education. Across each of these has been the focus on supporting novice teachers' capabilities to develop instructionally rich, respectful relationships with families.

Goldin serves on the UNC Chancellor's Commission on History, Race, and a Way Forward, where she is co-chair of the Equity in Schools Committee. She is, as well, a SLATE Teaching Fellow, which is a part of the African American Research's initiative for Student Learning to Advance Truth and Equity (SLATE) at the University of North Carolina. Goldin holds a master's degree in management and urban policy analysis from the New School University and a PhD in educational studies from the University of Michigan.

Interested in Being a Conference Sponsor?

Corporate and other conference sponsors are being sought. Sponsorships allow the VOADs to reduce the cost of holding the conference, leaving more funds to direct towards their volunteer efforts and to reduce the out-of-pocket cost of volunteers attending the conference, many of whom will be paying all or part of the cost of attendance out of their own pockets.

There are many benefits to being a conference sponsor:

- ✓ The most important benefit of sponsorship is that your contribution offsets the costs of the conference. By reducing the cost to the VOADs to host the conference, the VOADs have more funds available to support response to unmet needs of disasters survivors in FEMA Region III.
- ✓ Your sponsorship will help voluntary disaster organizations better respond to the effects of climate change and global warming.
- ✓ Event sponsors will be recognized by a sponsorship sign conspicuously posted at the event.
- ✓ All sponsors will be recognized in the conference agenda.
- ✓ All sponsors can request their promotional materials be included in the conference attendee packet.
- ✓ Sponsorships will be announced and if the sponsor is present, they will be recognized at meals.
- ✓ The Mid-Atlantic VOADs are 501(c)(3) charities, and your sponsorship may be tax deductible (consult with a tax professional).

If you have any questions or wish to discuss potential sponsorship and your attendance, please contact Clifford Oliver, Ph.D., CEM, CBCP, the *Conference Sponsorship Chair* at your earliest convenience at coliver@naticokeglobal.com or 302 470-0535.