



Barry Goldsmith speaks to nearly 100 broadcast meteorologists at the opening session of the 44<sup>th</sup> AMS Broadcasters Conference in Austin, Texas.

## NWS Brownsville/Rio Grande Valley Opens 44<sup>th</sup> AMS Broadcasters Conference

**AUSTIN, TX**, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – Warning Coordination Meteorologist **Barry Goldsmith**, speaking on behalf of forecaster and Spanish Language Liaison **Maria Torres**, continued to promote Spanish Language innovations and communications for the Rio Grande Valley and beyond, to nearly 100 broadcast meteorologists from around the U.S. and beyond. The presentation, “Improving Spanish Language Weather Hazard Communication through Media Partnerships in the Rio Grande Valley” led off the Conference as part of the “Welcome to Texas!” first session. The presentation expanded on the one provided by Ms. Torres at the AMS 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA in January, which focused on the Spanish Language Severe Weather Early Warning Notification System (NOAA Weather Radio in Spanish) and the Spanish Hurricane Local Statement.

At the conference, media partnerships were highlighted. These included the relationship with Entravision Communications of the Rio Grande Valley for seven years of the bi-lingual Texas Hurricane Guide, and bi-lingual media workshops held in the region prior to each Atlantic Hurricane Season. The presentation closed with a discussion on the May 2016 Faith-Based Integrated Weather Team initiative and invited Spanish and English language broadcast partners to play a key role with faith-based leaders to promote unified, trusted messages of weather preparedness and awareness to some of the most vulnerable communities in the nation.

Following the presentation, several in attendance remarked on the importance of the need to reach out to these communities in order for the weather enterprise to meet the shared mission of protecting life and property for these residents, many who live in substandard housing across the nation. By presenting to a national audience on this critical topic, NWS Brownsville/Rio Grande Valley hopes to plant more seeds to build Weather Readiness where it's needed most.

During the meeting, Goldsmith met with Bruce Thomas of Midland Radio Corporation to follow-up on conversations held prior to the [May 18<sup>th</sup> Faith Based Integrated Weather Team workshop](#), to begin important steps to bring several thousand NOAA Weather Radio receivers to churches, community resource centers, and *colonia* residents. Rough plans were hashed out to start the process later in summer 2016, with the hope of increasing the visibility of Spanish-language hazard messages to these communities prior to the peak of the 2016 Atlantic Hurricane Season.

“The May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting planted the seeds among faith-based leaders, Emergency Management, and media partners in the Rio Grande Valley, to reach to the core of neighborhoods to build trust in the weather information so life-protecting action can be taken prior to a dangerous weather event”, said Goldsmith. “Promoting the process on a national stage, and framing plans to make the most of the Spanish Language Severe Weather Early Warning Notification System across the Valley through the increased visibility and distribution of NOAA Weather Radio receivers are necessary first steps to allow the planted seeds to grow.”

Additional meetings were scheduled in mid-summer 2016 to move the process forward.