



Friday, June 21, 2019

J. Mitchell Graham/Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Awards

This application is for:

J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award

Project Title

Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room

County/Counties

Barnwell County

Staff Contact

Roger Riley

Job Title

Emergency Manager

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Barnwell, SC , 29812

Please provide a summary of your entry (no more than 100 words) to be used in a handout for the awards competition and included in press releases/publications. You may either type the summary in the text box or upload it as an attachment below.

The need for a new high school gymnasium lead Barnwell County School District 45 down a unique path when Superintendent Jay Grissom came across an article referencing a dual purpose, gymnasium-Safe Room built in the Midwest. The idea of monolithic dome facility capable of withstanding hurricane conditions and funded by a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program was the perfect solution to meet the needs of Barnwell School District 45 and Barnwell County residents. After five years of research, planning, and persistence by key partners, the vision for Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room has come to fruition.

Presentations may include more than one speaker; however, each speaker should be aware that the 10-minute time limit is strictly enforced. Please list the name, title, and e-mail address of each speaker:

Roger Riley, Barnwell County Emergency Manager: rriley@barnwellsc.com
Crissie Stapleton, Barnwell District 45 Superintendent: cstapleton@bsd45.net

Will any of the speakers need accommodations (wheelchair accessibility, etc.) during the competition?

No

Please check boxes for attachments you will submit as part of your application

A concise Project Description to explain the purpose and significance of the entry (up to eight pages). Please follow the prescribed naming convention for your Project Description file.

Any additional materials needed to support your application (up to five pages).

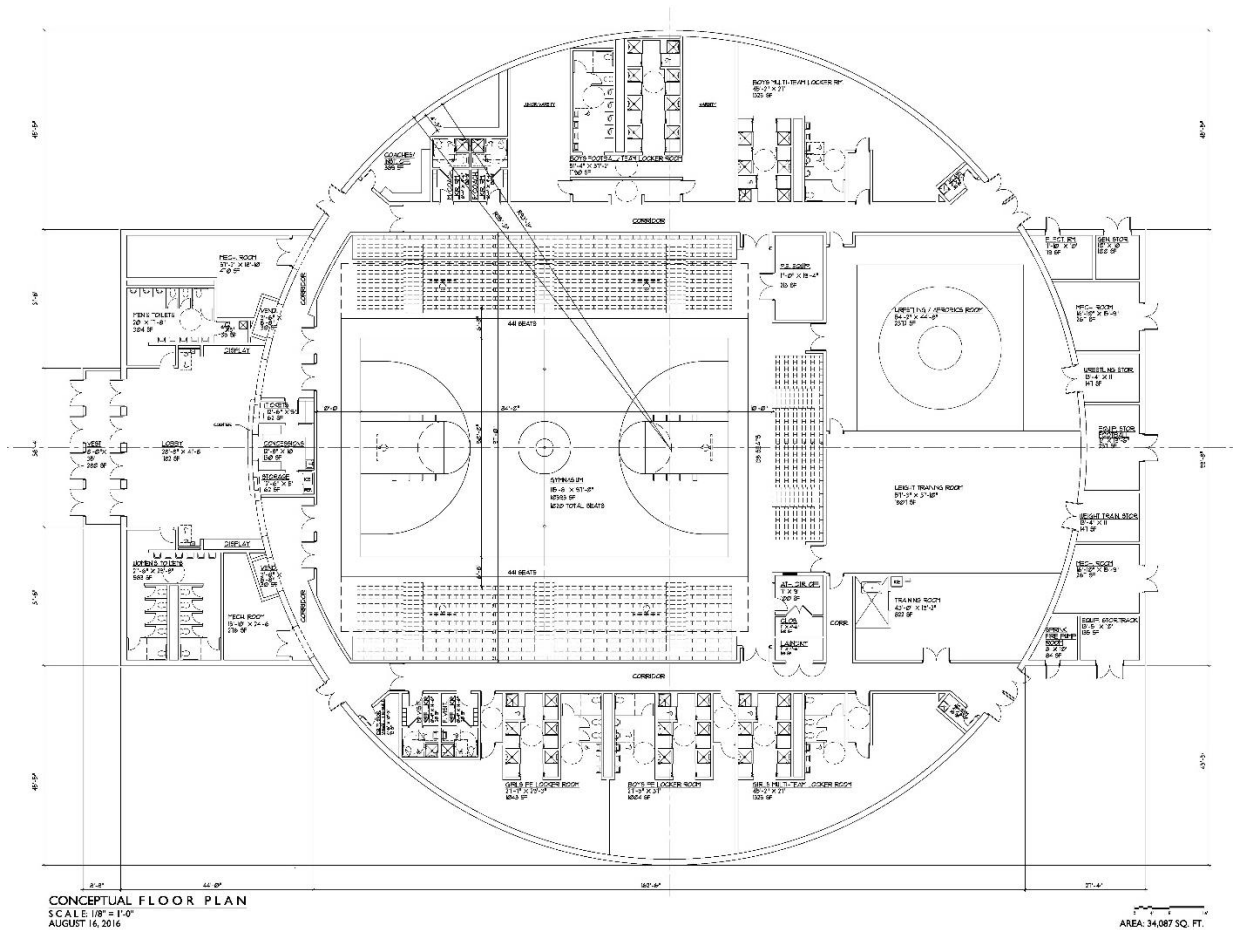
To submit these attachments online, please upload Microsoft Word or PDF documents below.

[Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room.JMG2019.pdf](#)

The need for a new high school gymnasium lead Barnwell County School District 45 down a unique path when Superintendent Jay Grissom came across an article referencing a dual purpose, gymnasium-Safe Room built in the Midwest. The idea of monolithic dome facility capable of withstanding hurricane conditions and funded by a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program was the perfect solution to meet the needs of Barnwell School District 45 and Barnwell County residents. After five years of research, planning, and persistence by key partners, the vision for Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room has come to fruition.

THE BARNWELL HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM & COMMUNITY SAFE ROOM

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY



**BARNWELL SCHOOL DISTRICT 45 -
 PROPOSED GYMNASIUM/FEMA SAFE ROOM**

The need for a new high school gymnasium lead Barnwell County School District 45 down a unique path when Superintendent Jay Grissom came across an article referencing a dual purpose, gymnasium-Safe Room built in the Midwest. The idea of monolithic dome facility capable of withstanding hurricane conditions and funded by a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program was the perfect solution to meet the needs of Barnwell School District 45 and Barnwell County residents. After five years of research, planning, and persistence by key partners, the vision for Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room has come to fruition.

The Gymnasium & Community Safe Room Project is a prime example of FEMA's "Safer, Stronger, Protected Homes & Communities" - multi-hazard mitigation guidance that focuses on creating disaster-resilient communities to reduce loss of life and property. Located at 9.149 acres on the southeastern corner of the intersection of Jackson Street and Owens Street in Barnwell, this facility will positively impact all of Barnwell County as well as surrounding counties.

Benefit/Importance of Project

1. Why was this project undertaken?

The vision for the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room was sparked more than five years ago. While pondering options for a new high school gymnasium in early 2014, former Barnwell School District 45 Superintendent, Jay Grissom, ran across an article referencing an Oklahoma school district that was awarded a FEMA hazard mitigation grant to construct a high school gymnasium that would also serve as a **Safe Room**. Due to its monolithic dome design, the facility is capable of withstanding winds in excess of 200 mph and will shelter and protect the community during tornado season.

Superintendent Grissom immediately approached his Assistant Superintendent Crissie Stapleton (current Superintendent) and Barnwell County Emergency Manager Roger Riley about the possibility of pursuing a similar project in Barnwell County – a multi-purpose gymnasium that would also function as a **Safe Room** to provide students and residents shelter and power during severe weather incidents such as hurricanes, tornados, heat waves, ice storms, etc.

*A **Safe Room** is defined as a hardened structure specifically designed to meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) criteria and provide near-absolute protection in extreme weather events, including tornadoes and hurricanes. Near-absolute protection means that, based on current knowledge of tornadoes and hurricanes, the occupants of a Safe Room built in accordance with FEMA guidance will have a very high probability of being protected from injury or death.*

This project benefits the Barnwell School District by providing a gymnasium for the local high school which can also be utilized as a community event venue. Equipped with industrial generators, the **Safe Room** is capable of serving the entire County as a cooling shelter during heat waves or a warm shelter during extreme cold. Additionally, having the Safe Room will benefit surrounding counties on the southern conglomerate evacuation zone during disasters including hurricanes.

2. What is the significance of this project to your community as a whole? How does it relate in importance to the other problems in your community?

During any severe weather incident, residents can come to the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room to find safe shelter. The monolithic dome is a proven design that can withstand winds in excess of 200 mph. Since Barnwell County is on the southern conglomerate evacuation zone and one of the more inland stops for coastal counties such as Beaufort County, the facility will also impact those South Carolinians who are seeking refuge during hurricanes and other disasters.

Occasionally, severe weather on the coast may necessitate the evacuation of coastal counties while more inland counties such as Barnwell are not as affected. In the past, Barnwell County school district were required to close in order to host evacuees regardless of weather conditions in Barnwell. The new Gymnasium & Safe Room will allow local school to continue normal operation even during coastal evacuations.

Small rural counties such as Barnwell are always competing to become more attractive for potential economic development. The Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room lays the foundation for future economic growth and quality of life enhancement in Barnwell County.

According to the 2004 report, "Schools for Successful Communities: An Element in Smart Growth" states, "Schools and their locations have a tremendous effect on how our communities grow. The resurgence of urban neighborhoods is impacted by school location and their educational quality and condition. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Council of Educational Facility Planner International cooperatively developed the publication to explain why and how communities should employ smart growth planning principles to build schools that either serve and support students, staff, parents and the entire community. Over the next few decades, thousands of school facilities around the country will be built and renovated. Where and how schools are built or rebuilt will profoundly affect the communities they serve. In making the decisions these projects demand, school boards, educational facility planners, and communities will have to meet many goals – educational, environmental, economic, social and fiscal."

Considering the above criteria, the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room is a good holistic example of a *community "investing in its schools to give their children the best possible education, use taxpayer dollars wisely and improve the quality of life for all citizens"* as well as those residing in surrounding counties.

As evidence of potential impact on future economic development, once FEMA announced the grant award, companies immediately began to approach Barnwell County and School District officials. A few companies have made known their desire to locate in close proximity to the Gymnasium & Community Safe Room. The importance of this facility as an asset to Barnwell County and the entire region is vital since prospective industry is dependent upon the ability to attract talented employees - employees who want their children to have the best academics and educational facilities possible. Having a venue that is available for trainings and presentations as well as community activities such as concerts, athletic events and graduations is a bonus and will go a long way toward selling Barnwell County to prospective industry and growing the existing economic base.

3. How much of the county's population is benefited by the project? In what specific ways are different groups of citizens within the county better off than before?

The students of Barnwell High School benefit from having a new, larger gymnasium. The Gymnasium & Safe Room provides a place for residents to gather for athletic events, concerts, plays, etc., encouraging and enhancing community vitality. This facility is also the first of its kind in South Carolina so it will be an asset as an event venue even outside Barnwell County.

Although this project was born out of the need for a new high school gymnasium, the safety of ALL the residents of Barnwell County is the number one priority. During a disaster, every resident of Barnwell County will benefit from the Safe Room, especially those residents who are elderly, persons with disabilities or residents with no transportation of their own.

The Barnwell County Emergency Management Division already works with residents, providing transportation to designated shelters across the county during disaster incidents. However, the new Safe Room provides a centralized location that can accommodate approximately 1,200, decreasing the footprint and allowing county personnel to cover the needs of more residents as well as evacuees from the coastal regions. Additionally, the Safe Room is equipped with its own state-of-the-art generator system so power is available in the event of outages. The Safe Room will allow Barnwell to cost-effectively partner with the Red Cross, opening one centralized shelter when the need arises.

Furthermore, residents in surrounding counties will benefit from the Gymnasium & Community Safe Room due to its accessibility along the southern conglomerate evacuation zone. Notably, Barnwell County Emergency Management has long provided shelter for Paris Island Marines, Beaufort County Emergency Management personnel and employees of Hilton Head.

4. *What degree of success did the project attain? What major objectives were achieved?*

Barnwell County new multi-purpose facility provides the community with a venue where residents can gather for events such as plays, concerts, trainings, seminars and recognition services. Also functioning as a brand, new gymnasium for the high school, students and their families can enjoy graduations and athletic events. (The current gym is not air conditioned and is too small for graduations). Having a facility that can accommodate more people will have a huge impact in the school district as well as throughout Barnwell County and surrounding areas. These amenities are also certain to have a positive impact on Barnwell County's economic development horizon.

The long process of obtaining funds from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program was tedious, but the success of the \$4.8 million grant award was well worth the time and effort expended. In preparation and "hopeful expectation" of the award, the school district immediately began saving every penny available in anticipation for the 25% match. Not only did the district manage to save the required \$1.2 million, but they surpassed that goal. Funds above and beyond the goal will pay for any additions that may be added to make the facility even more Barnwell-centric.

The evolution of this project has been another win for the partnerships forged between Barnwell County, Barnwell County Emergency Management and Barnwell School District 45. Since 2014, these County partners have stood together, weathering severe storms and flooding, as well as Hurricanes Matthew, Irma and Florence. (One example of this collaborative spirit is the Barnwell County Career Center's collaboration with the County Emergency Management to design and construct a J. Mitchell Graham, award-winning mobile communications trailer for use during disasters.) This entire endeavor solidified, substantiated and strengthened each entity's role as a force multiplier for the others which is highly valued among these partners. This project unlocked a new avenue of cooperation – grants – and it was proven to be a crowning success.

However, the ultimate success of this project as a Safe Room is predicated on saving lives rather than the brick and mortar structure. This all-important objective will be achieved if and when the next disaster strikes.

Project Effort/Difficulty

1. What did your county have to do to accomplish its objectives?

Spearheaded by Barnwell School District 45 former Superintendent Jay Grissom, alongside current Superintendent Crissie Stapleton and Barnwell County Emergency Manager Roger Riley, the Gymnasium & Community Safe Room project has been a worthwhile endeavor. According to Riley, “when you consider the past several years of set-backs from the hospital closure, 2014 ice storm, 2015 flooding, and Hurricanes, Matthew, Irma and Florence, this FEMA grant award is a shot of HOPE in the arm of the community.” Barnwell County School District 45 worked hand-in-hand with Barnwell County Administration and Barnwell Emergency Manager Roger Riley to see this project go from idea to fruition.

More than twenty people were at the original meeting. Many discussions took place including a few meetings with South Carolina Emergency Management Director Kim Stenson and the South Carolina State Board of Education. The school district took the lead but had never written a FEMA grant before and quickly realized that it was much more tedious and labor intensive than the grants for which they had routinely applied. At the recommendation of Roger Riley, the team hired **Tetra Tech** to assist with the grant writing and research.

It was a long and arduous, five-year process with many FEMA RFIs (Requests For Information) along the way. The RFI’s required the team to continuously go back and pull more information - research and inquiries included gathering information from surrounding counties that impacted the project as well as those counties that would be impacted by the Gymnasium & Safe Room project, The original grant application and completing the numerous and various RFI’s was the tough part of the process.

2. What challenges occurred during the project? Were there any community concerns?

As with most any project, funding was the biggest obstacle to overcome. Financing an approximately \$6 million multi-purpose Gymnasium & Community Safe Room is a challenge especially to a small rural county with limited resources.

One unique challenge that was inherent to the project was that FEMA has a set amount of annual funds for hazard mitigation grants. All forty-six counties across the State have the opportunity to compete for these limited FEMA funds, so it was important to investigate and initiate the FEMA grant application process quietly.

Most of Barnwell County’s population (21,483) were well-aware of the need for an updated high school gymnasium, equipped with air conditioning and large enough to accommodate the student body’s graduations.

In much the same way as county economic development works behind the scenes to keep prospective industry identities and locations under wraps, Barnwell School District 45, Barnwell County Administration & Emergency Management as well as a small group of community leaders approached the project cautiously, minimizing outside attention to their efforts so as not to give away their idea and potentially lose funding to another county.

County and school district officials envisioned a multi-purpose gymnasium that could function as a “shelter” during emergency incidents as well a community-wide venue that would enhance Barnwell resident’s quality of life. The key was to begin the grant application process while not giving away the plan to seek the grant until the application was officially submitted. Originally, the team applied for FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program under the Presidential Disaster Declaration for flooding but were not approved. However, the team did not give up. They applied again under the Presidential Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Matthew. After many RFI’s, the application was submitted and accepted.

Once the grant was officially submitted and word spread around the County, the entire community came together enthusiastically to support the project.

This grant required a 75/25 match, so once the grant was submitted, the school district started immediately setting aside funds to meet the required match. For a small, rural school district, this was a tough task. However, every penny saved by coming in under budget on a project went into savings for the match. The district determined to be fiscally responsible – to be ready should they receive the grant.

Speakers from the core group shared their plans with community groups such as the Rotary Club to garner community support. The excitement around this project paved the way for all the matching funds to be set aside even before the grant was officially awarded. Plus, the district set aside extra funds to ensure any additions that would enhance the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room could be added.

3. *What were the nature and extent of the county government’s efforts to alleviate the problem(s)? How difficult was it to accomplish the project’s goals and/or objectives?*

Since 2014, the County has weathered ice storms, flooding, severe weather and Hurricanes Matthew, Irma and Florence. According to the National Weather Service, “41 tropical cyclones have made landfall in the [NWS Charleston, SC "County Warning Area"](#) (Charleston County, SC southward through McIntosh County, GA) since official records began in 1851. These storms include 25 hurricanes, 10 tropical storms, and 6 tropical depressions.

Barnwell County is located in the southern conglomerate evacuation zone and is on the evacuation route for coastal Carolina counties which means the weather isn’t the only issue affecting residents. Being on the evacuation route has been a large factor for normal school operation especially during Hurricane Season. Barnwell schools are designated evacuation sites during severe weather such as hurricanes or flooding. Beaufort County, a much larger county evacuates to Barnwell along with Paris Island Marines, employees from the Town of Hilton Head and Beaufort County Emergency Management staff. Even when Barnwell weather was calm, schools had to close in order to host those evacuating from the coast. The Safe Room will be able to host those evacuees while Barnwell County schools remain in operation on a normal schedule if there is no reason for closures in Barnwell.

Roger Riley’s relationship with surrounding counties and emergency responder agencies was vital to making this project a success. He recommended Tetra Tech to assist with the grant research and writing. His connections with officials from surrounding counties allowed for quicker and more accurate responses in dealing with FEMA RFI’s. (Request For Information).

4. Was financing the project an obstacle? Were there any unusual factors inherent in financing the project?

Since funding the project would be the linchpin to success, Riley began talks with South Carolina Emergency Management Division and Tetra Tech about the prospect of receiving a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant which assists with long-term hazard mitigation planning and projects following a Presidential major Disaster Declaration. According to current Barnwell County School District 45 Superintendent Crissie Stapleton, "School systems, especially those of us in rural areas are always looking for new and innovative funding opportunities. Although the school district had never applied for a FEMA grant, we were intrigued. With the blessing from the State Board of Education and support from Barnwell County, Barnwell County Emergency Management and the District 45 School Board, we decided to pursue FEMA grant funding."

Initially, Barnwell applied under the 2015 Presidential Disaster Declaration from the storms and flooding, but that application was unsuccessful. Unwilling to give up, the Barnwell team reapplied in 2016 for funding from the Presidential Declaration after Hurricane Matthew.

By far, the biggest obstacle was the financing, actually, the planning required to meet the 75/25 match was vital. Twenty-five percent of \$4.8 million is \$1.2 million. Starting immediately and being proactive was the only way that the small rural school district could even begin to tackle the funding.

The funds came a little at a time, from normal facility improvements that could be put off, every project that came in under budget, any and every penny that could be saved The School District worked diligently to save, raise, etc.

The team decided up front that NO was not an acceptable answer. Once the team agreed to pursue the project, they decided they would not give up until the answer was YES. Meetings, planning, etc. continued with no option for giving up. The application under FEMA funding for flooding was turned down. Crissie said, "when FEMA began returning Request For Information, we knew we had their attention and were close to the end zone." FEMA did pay attention to the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Safe House proposal and the team was elated when the application was accepted and then approved for funding.

5. Did any agencies, citizen groups, or other organizations assist your county with this project? Did their participation pose any particular challenges or offer any unique contributions or benefits?

Barnwell School District 45 former Superintendent Jay Grissom, current Superintendent Crissie Stapleton and the Barnwell County Emergency Manager Roger Riley put together a team to champion the project. The team consisted of School District 45 high school administrators, athletic director, all the coaches, and other key community leaders. Initial meetings were creative dialogs and brainstorm sessions that lead to a plan of action.

Every stakeholder brought unique strengths to the table as they worked together to craft the path forward for the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room. **Stakeholders** went above and beyond, providing the leadership to bring this project to fruition and to work out the details of the solution including the funding.

Barnwell County Emergency Manager Roger Riley's connections with county officials, state and local legislators and emergency response agencies (**SC Emergency Management Division's Kim Stenson**) cannot be overstated. Roger's persistence in seeing this project through and his ability to connect the right partners including **Tetra Tech** was and will continue to be invaluable.

Barnwell County School District 45 has been the key player in this entire endeavor. **Former Superintendent Jay Grissom** provided the vision and creativity to get the project started. His foresight and desire to see this project completed kept the team on task. He entrusted his brainchild to current **Superintendent Crissie Stapleton** at his retirement. Crissie assumed the assignment and immediately took the lead, working with the team while seeking advice from legislators including **Senator Joe Wilson** and the **State Board of Education** as well as the **local school board**. All the partners and stakeholder, including the residents of Barnwell County and officials and residents from surrounding counties have been very responsive and passionate about this project coming to fruition.

6. *Are there any unresolved problems or other goals left to tackle?*

The difficult portion of the project - research, paperwork, multiple RFI's - is completed. The exciting, easy part is just beginning. The 9.149-acre plot of land awaits. The Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room will stand as a testament to the power of working together for a common goal. If trends hold steady, storms and hurricanes will arrive and put the monolithic dome structure to the test.

Bringing stakeholders together to provide a solution to local issues that also addressed state-wide concerns was a tremendous achievement as displayed in the Safe Room project, but it also lays even more groundwork for future collaboration.

However, in the calm, in-between times, the once empty 9.149-acre plot of land will be filled with the bustling sounds of activity...

the applause of residents and government officials at the announcement of a new industry bringing jobs and investment into Barnwell County,

the harmony of "Pomp and Circumstance" as the high school's graduating class marches across the gym floor to receive their diplomas,

the quiet awe just before the swoosh of the basketball flying through the hoop... and the thrilling roar of fans afterward, and...

The excitement in the community is that this facility will do even more than the Barnwell County team had hoped or imagined. As we move forward to the construction phase with the assistance of Barnwell County Emergency Management, Barnwell School District, Tetra Tech and new partnerships in the making, the future is bright and the possibilities are endless.

Project Originality/Innovation

1. *Justify the uniqueness of this project. What makes it different from other projects designed to achieve the same objective?*

The Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room is unique in several ways. Although

monolithic dome safe rooms are becoming more plentiful in the western region of the United States (Mississippi, Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas) to help citizens withstand tornados and severe wind conditions, the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room will be the first in the southeast and is capable of weathering hurricane force winds. Additionally, it will function as Barnwell High School's new gymnasium with the value-added flexibility to function as a state-of-the-art community center capable of hosting concerts, plays, athletic events and graduations as well as providing shelter on the southern conglomerate evacuation zone for the South Carolina coast.

2. Do you know of any other similar programs in South Carolina? If so, how is your program different?

The western region of the United States (Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas) has many school-owned **Safe Rooms** with multi-purpose functions. However, the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room is the only one of its kind in the southeast. It is the first, but hopefully will not be the last.

3. What innovations were required in accomplishing your objectives?

Barnwell High School needed a gymnasium that would meet the needs of the student body. The community needed an auditorium/facility to accommodate events such as athletic events, concerts, plays, etc. The issue of funding would have been insurmountable. FEMA's Safe Room concept which utilizes a monolithic structural design, is a recent and very innovative approach to providing emergency shelter during weather emergencies such as Hurricanes and Tornados. Utilizing this design made it possible to apply for funding through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The choice to incorporate these needs as well as providing a better solution to Barnwell County's needs as a major player in the State's southern conglomerate evacuation zone – functioning as a centralized emergency shelter with a state-of-the-art backup generator system made the Safe Room concept the BEST innovative and comprehensive answer to Barnwell County's needs.

4. Who provided the creativity and imagination in your project?

The groundwork for the Barnwell High School Gymnasium & Community Safe Room project began in early 2014 when Jay Grissom, former Barnwell County District Superintendent came across an article referencing a high school in Oklahoma that had received a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant to construct a monolithic dome-shaped building that would function as a gymnasium as well as a SAFE ROOM. Former Superintendent Grissom approached his Assistant Superintendent Crissie Stapleton and Barnwell County Emergency Manager Roger Riley to discuss the possibility of a similar project to provide Barnwell High School with a Gymnasium while alleviating Barnwell County's needs during hurricane season. Riley and Stapleton were enthusiastic and saw this as, yet another opportunity for Barnwell School District 45 and County Emergency Management to work together and solve several issues collaboratively. The State Department of Education also agreed with pursuing the project.

Once the decision was made to proceed, the school district spoke with the Appalachian Council of Governments for guidance before engaging the services of Tetra Tech, an Aiken-based global consulting company. Tetra Tech was a consistent partner in the process.



The Augusta Chronicle

Multi-million dollar Hazard Mitigation Grant awarded to District 45

Barnwell District 45 got the exciting news last week that they were awarded a Hazard Mitigation Grant to construct a new gymnasium which will double as a Safe Room and emergency shelter. Pictured left to right: D45 Board Chairman Dr. Rhett Richardson, Superintendent Crissie Stapleton, board member Becky Huggins, board member Felicia Devore, board member Rosey Anderson, board member Abraham Sexton, and Barnwell County Emergency Management Director Roger Riley. [Jonathan Vickery / Managing Editor]

The Barnwell District 45 School Board received exciting and long-awaited news last week regarding a multi-million dollar grant.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has approved a multi-million dollar Hazard Mitigation Grant Project (HMGP) to build a district Safe Room, which will host emergency personnel for life-safety purposes and provide protection for county residents during severe weather. The safe room may be able to accommodate an estimated 950 people during a weather-related emergency; however, it will also be used throughout the year as a gymnasium for Barnwell High School.

"So much work has gone into getting to this point, and we are thrilled that it is coming to fruition. This is a great success for not only our school district, but our community and the entire county," said District 45 Superintendent Crissie Stapleton.

The board unanimously approved a motion during a special Jan. 23 meeting to allow Superintendent Stapleton to act as the district's official representative for this Safe Room project. Stapleton will coordinate with state and federal agencies while making sure the project reaches the milestones set forth in the project's scope of work.

In the first phase of the project, District 45 has been awarded \$216,000 - a federal share of \$162,000 and non-federal share of \$54,000 - to hire an engineer to assess all potential sites to determine feasibility, design and cost-efficiency.

The district can announce a construction date after FEMA approves the proposed plan. Construction is anticipated to cost \$4,626,750.

Based on the stipulations with the HMGP funds awarded to the state, the S.C. Emergency Management Division and FEMA will cover 75 percent of the \$4,842,750 anticipated cost of the total project, while the school district will cover the remaining 25 percent.

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"The district has been saving money for the matching portion of the grant since the district applied, and at this time, all matching funds are saved and available for moving forward," Stapleton said.

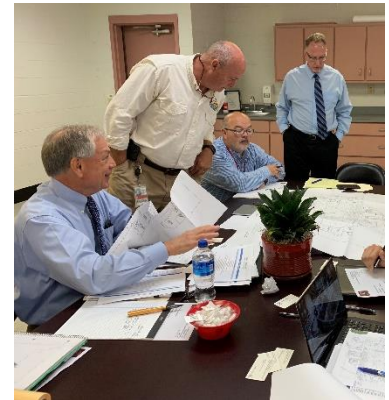
Stapleton thanked everyone who worked diligently to get the funding approved, including the TetraTech company for their contributions during the grant-writing process.

The idea for a Safe Room came about more than four years ago after former Superintendent Jay Grissom read an article about a similar project out west. said Stapleton, who continued working on bringing the project to fruition after Grissom left the district in 2017.

Board Chairman Dr. Rhett Richardson said he thanks Grissom for starting the groundwork on the project, but also thanks Stapleton and Barnwell County Emergency Management Director Roger Riley for their work to make sure the project was awarded.

"I am excited to have worked with Barnwell School District 45 during this multi-year process. Partnerships such as this not only benefit the school and emergency management, but our entire community. That's what emergency management is about," said Riley.

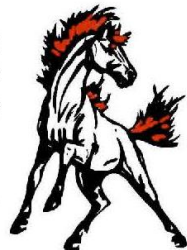
Barnwell School District 45 first applied for competitive grant funding through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program after the 2014 ice storm, but did not receive the grant. They reapplied after Hurricane Matthew, which is where these funds are being made available through.





Over 4.8 Million Dollar Hazard Mitigation Grant Awarded to Barnwell School District 45

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved a multi-million dollar grant project to build a district Safe Room in Barnwell School District 45. The School District Safe Room will host emergency personnel for life-safety purposes and provide protection for county residents during severe weather. The safe room may be able to accommodate an estimated 950 people during a weather-related emergency.



Officials from South Carolina Emergency Management Division and Barnwell County Emergency Management Agency met with the school district on Thursday, January 17, 2019 for the official kickoff meeting.

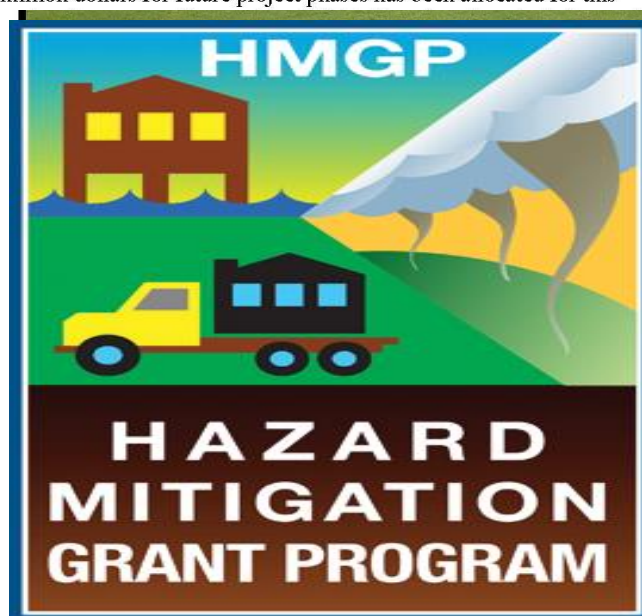
In the first phase of the project, District 45 will hire an engineer to assess all potential sites to determine feasibility, design and cost-efficiency. District 45 was awarded \$216,000 with a Federal share of \$162,000 and a non-federal share of \$54,000 to complete the initial steps of the project. A construction date will be announced after FEMA approves the proposed plan.

“So much work has gone into getting to this point, and we are thrilled that it is coming to fruition. This is a great success for not only our school district, but our community and the entire county,” said District Superintendent Crissie Stapleton.

The District’s Board of Trustees unanimously approved a motion in January to allow Superintendent Stapleton to act as the district’s official representative for this Safe Room project. Stapleton will coordinate with state and federal agencies while making sure the project reaches the milestones set forth in the project’s scope of work. At the close of the meeting, Superintendent Stapleton gave a special thank you to Roger Riley, Barnwell County Emergency Management Director, for his assistance during the application process. Riley acknowledged the impact this grant would have on the community, stating, “I am excited to have worked with Barnwell School District 45 during this multi-year process. Partnerships such as this not only benefit the school and emergency management, but our entire community.”

“The district is appreciative of everyone who has worked diligently to get this funding approved, including TetraTech for their contributions during the grant-writing process,” said Superintendent Stapleton. “The district has been saving money for the matching portion of the grant since the district applied, and at this time, all matching funds are saved and available for moving forward,” she said.

Barnwell School District 45 applied for competitive grant funding through FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, which made available certain funds following Hurricane Matthew. More than 4.5 million dollars for future project phases has been allocated for this



project but yet not dispersed by FEMA. Based on the stipulations with the HMGP funds awarded to the state, SCEMD and FEMA will cover 75 percent of the \$4,842,750.00 anticipated cost of the project, while the school district will cover the remaining 25 percent. The Safe Room will also be used as a gymnasium for the local high school.



Project F52-S118: Application - Barnwell School District Safe Room

Routing Complete

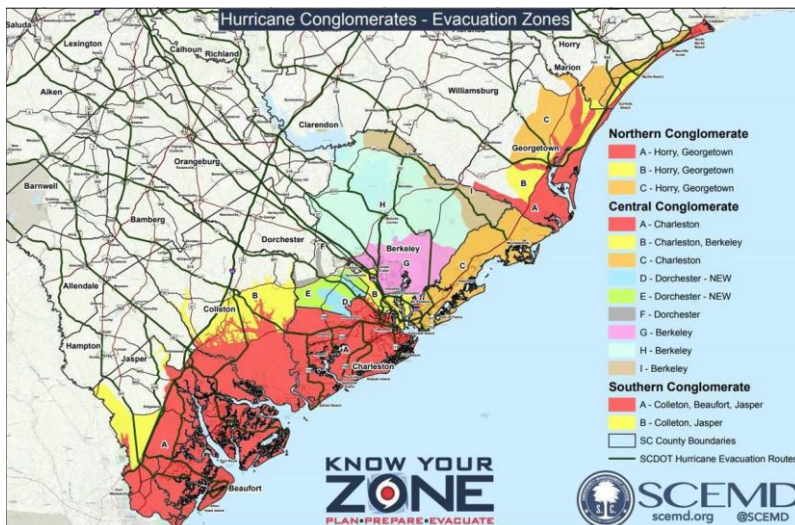
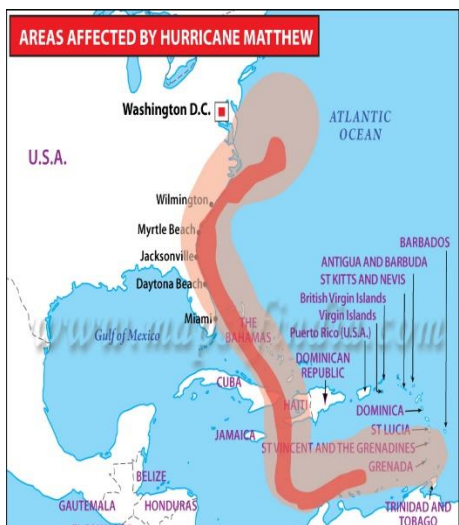
Application Summary	
This form outlines all project details, including Scope of Work, all costs, and location worksheets.	
Title:	Barnwell School District Safe Room
Eligible Amount:	\$4,842,750.00
Funding Sources:	Federal - \$162,000.00 State - \$0.00 Local - \$54,000.00
FEMA Obligation Data:	Federal Number - 52 Date of Obligation Letter - < no value > CATEX Comments - < no value > Project POP Date - < no value > Edit
Related Links:	View Pre-Application , View Project

Grant
4286 Hurricane Matthew Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Declared: October 11, 2016 Work Deadline: November 11, 2020

Applicant
Barnwell County School District 45 Barnwell County FIPS #: 011-US086-00 FEIN #: 57-6000087 Vendor #: DUNS #: 100071224 Type: Public Schools Physical/Mailing: 770 Hagood Avenue Barnwell, SC, 29812

Workflow Summary	
Current Step:	6) Awarded Description: Project Applications that have been approved.
Last Advanced:	Jan 9, 2019 at 3:16 PM by Allen Fountain
Submission:	Jul 28, 2017 at 11:39 AM by LAUREN DOZIER

Project
F #52 S #118 Barnwell School District Safe Room CSRC Community Safe Room Construction Project POP Deadline: November 11, 2020 Eligible: \$216,000.00 Federal: \$162,000.00 (75%) Un-Expended Eligible: \$216,000.00



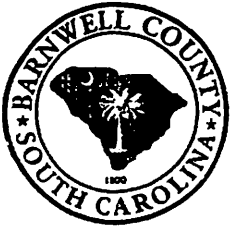


COMPARABLE GYMNASIUM | SAFE ROOMS IN THE MIDWEST



Construction Cost Estimate For BARNWELL SCHOOL DISTRICT 45
 FEMA SAFE ROOM/SHELTER

Total Project Estimate	QUANTITY NO.	UNIT	PED		60%		90% FINAL		OTHER	
			MATERIAL COST UNIT	EXTENDED	LABOR COST UNIT	EXTENDED	ENGINEER ESTIMATE UNIT	TOTAL		
ITEM DESCRIPTION										
Site Work				\$500,000					\$0	\$500,000
Architectural Work				\$1,254,915					\$547,588	\$1,802,504
Structural Work				\$2,003,600					\$122,463	\$2,126,063
Mechanical Work				\$545,600					\$545,600	\$1,091,200
Electrical Work				\$558,340					\$4,000	\$562,340
Plumbing Work				\$0					\$361,000	\$361,000
SUBTOTAL				\$4,982,455					\$1,580,651	\$6,563,106
MEANS LOCATION COST ADJUSTMENT		0.847%		(\$769,255.62)					(\$241,839.60)	(\$1,011,095)
SUBTOTAL				\$4,203,199					\$1,338,811	\$5,542,011
ESTIMATING CONTINGENCY		10.0%		\$420,320					\$133,881	\$554,201
SUBTOTAL				\$4,623,519					\$1,472,693	\$6,096,212
GENERAL CONDITIONS IMOBILIZATION		7.0%		\$323,646					\$103,088	\$426,735
SUBTOTAL				\$4,947,166					\$1,575,781	\$6,522,947
OVERHEAD		10.0%		\$494,717					\$157,578	\$652,295
SUBTOTAL				\$5,441,882					\$1,733,359	\$7,175,241
CONTRACTOR PROFIT		5.0%		\$272,094					\$86,688	\$358,782
CONSTRUCTION TOTAL :										\$7,534,003
SOFT COSTS (Grant Administration, A&E Fees & Testing)		12.5%								\$941,750
Pre Award Costs										\$20,000
Total Costs of Safe Room										\$8,495,754
INELIGIBLE ESTIMATED ITEMS FROM ARCHITECTURAL TAB										\$889,312.54
INELIGIBLE ESTIMATED ITEMS FROM ELECTRICAL TAB										\$57,970.00
TOTAL INELIGIBLE COSTS										\$947,282.54
ELIGIBLE COSTS TOTAL										\$7,548,471.37
FEDERAL SHARE (75%)										\$5,661,353.53
LOCAL SHARE (25%)										\$1,887,117.84
SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHARE FOR INELIGIBLE COSTS AND 25% COST SHARE										\$2,834,400.38
APPRAISED LAND CREDIT FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT (SAFE ROOM SITE LOCATION)										(\$568,400.00)
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (FOR BCA PURPOSES)										\$8,495,753.91
FINAL ELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS										\$7,548,471.37
FINAL FEDERAL COST SHARE (75%)*										\$5,661,353.53
FINAL LOCAL COST SHARE (25% LOCAL MATCH, INELIGIBLE COSTS AND SITE CREDIT)*										\$2,276,000.38



Barnwell County, South Carolina

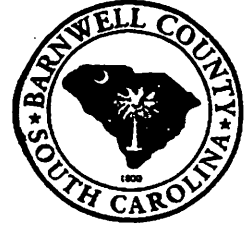
County Administration Building

57 Wall Street, Room 126

Barnwell, SC 29812

Phone (803) 541-1000

Fax (803) 541-1104



June 17, 2019

South Carolina Association of Counties
Post Office Box 8207
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-8207

To Whom It May Concern:

I support the submission of the Barnwell Safe Room/Gym for the 2019 J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award Competition.

This project has been in the works for quite some time. Barnwell County School District 45 and Barnwell County Emergency Management have worked together on this grant application since 2015. After numerous submissions, we were finally successful and were awarded a \$4.8 million hazard mitigation grant in late 2018. We are enthusiastic about having this project underway. It not only will provide a school gym for our students, but also a safe facility for our local citizens as well as for coastal evacuees who shelter here during a hurricane.

The cooperation and hard work exhibited in this project by our Emergency Management Department and by the local school system has been extraordinary. This facility has the potential to benefit our entire county, as well as neighboring counties, for many years to come.

Best regards,

Timothy R. Bennett
County Administrator



P.J. Tanner
Sheriff

OFFICE OF SHERIFF
BEAUFORT COUNTY
POST OFFICE BOX 1758
BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29901

AREA CODE (843)

SHERIFF	255-3200
CHIEF DEPUTY	255-3192
CRIMINAL RECORDS	255-3232
CRIMINAL WARRANTS	255-3228
CIVIL PROCESS	255-3188
JUDGMENTS	255-3189
FAX#	255-9405
WEB SITE	www.bcso.net
EMERGENCY MGMT DIV	255-4000

November 9, 2018

Allen Fountain
State Hazard Management Division
2779 Fish Hatchery Road
West Columbia, South Carolina 29172

Re: Critical and Essential Personnel that would utilize Barnwell County Safe Room

Dear Mr. Fountain,

It is the understanding of the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office that Barnwell County and Barnwell County School District 45 has applied for a Hurricane and Tornado Safe Room under DR-4286 for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funding.

In support of this project, we would like to offer this letter to provide additional documentation for the grant application. It is an integral part of the Beaufort County Relocation and Continuity of Government plan to go to Barnwell County in the event that we have to retreat from Beaufort County because of a pending catastrophic storm.

This temporary relocation would involve all of the emergency services personnel from Beaufort County, as well as a strong contingent of U.S. Marines, public works and other ancillary personnel. The total number of personnel in the Barnwell relocation plan now exceeds 2500.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 843.255.3223 or neilb@bcgov.net

Sincerely,

Lt. Colonel Neil Baxley
Emergency Management Division Commander
Beaufort County Sheriff's Office

**The State of South Carolina
Military Department**



OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

R. Van McCarty
MAJOR GENERAL
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

June 18, 2019

South Carolina Association of Counties
Attn: Anna Berger
1919 Thurmond Mall
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Ms. Berger:

We would like to provide this letter of recommendation in support of Barnwell County's nomination for the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award. Tornados as well as straight line and hurricane force winds are a real threat in South Carolina and reacting to those threats creates a significant challenge for local governments.

Through their innovative operational approach to solving challenges, Barnwell County has developed a safe room initiative that will undoubtedly provide safe haven during wind-related emergency situations. This project will save lives, enhance citizen quality of life, and is very unique. Further, this initiative represents an efficient use of tax dollars and will serve as an excellent example of an idea that other counties should consider. Accordingly, we strongly recommend Barnwell County for the prestigious J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Stenson'.

Kim Stenson
Director

Emergency Management Division
2779 Fish Hatchery Road
West Columbia, South Carolina 29172
(803) 737-8500 Fax (803) 737-8570