



Gerard A. Jacobs, Ph.D., Professor and Director, Disaster Mental Health Institute, The University of South Dakota

Gerard A. (Jerry) Jacobs, Ph.D., is the Director of the Disaster Mental Health Institute (DMHI) and a Professor in the doctoral Clinical Psychology Training Program at The University of South Dakota. He received his Ph.D. in clinical/community psychology from the University of South Florida in 1982. He has worked with organizations nationally (e.g., American Red Cross, American Psychological Association [APA], U.S. Centers for Disease Control, U.S. Department of Defense) and internationally (e.g., World Health Organization, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Organizations, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, International Union for Psychological Science, Japan Red Cross Society). His disaster responses have ranged from minor events to the massive loss of life and chaos of the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center, the 2001 Gujarat, India earthquake, and the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. He was asked to return from working on the tsunami response in Sri Lanka to set up the disaster mental health program for New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Dr. Jacobs was an “invited expert” on the National Biodefense Science Board’s Subcommittee on Disaster Mental Health and served as a member of the National Academies of Science Institute of Medicine Committee on *Preparing for the Psychological Consequences of Terrorism* (Institute of Medicine, 2003).

Dr. Jacobs is the recipient of the 2007 International Humanitarian Award from the APA Board of Directors, the 2006 Distinguished International Psychologist Award from the APA Division of International Psychology, and a 2008 award “for contributions as a humanitarian worker” from Division 48 (Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, & Violence) and Psychologists for Social Responsibility. He has also received two APA Presidential Citation Awards. In 2008 he received an award from the International Union for Psychological Science for “outstanding worldwide critical mental health contributions to disaster relief and to training.” The American Red Cross in 1995 presented him with an award for his “pioneering efforts and leadership role in the development, implementation, and nurturing of the Disaster Mental Health Services function...” Dr. Jacobs was one of the first two American Red Cross National Consultants for Disaster Mental Health and held that post from 1992 to 2000. He also served on APA’s Advisory Committee for the national Disaster Response Network from its inception in 1991 until 2000.

His current research program is examining the effectiveness of community-based psychological first aid for EMT’s and paramedics, community advisors, and medical personnel. He is also studying some of the foundational aspects of traumatic stress in the Japanese cultural context.