

April 2015

## AWRA NCR 2015 Water Resources Symposium



Organizers Tolessa Deksissa (left) and Tamin Younous (right) with Daniel Zarilli

The UDC Water Resources Research Institute hosted the 2015 National Capital Region Water Resources Symposium on April 10, 2015, at the David A. Clarke School of Law. The symposium, *Urban Water Management and Resilience in Uncertain Times*, brought together experts from governmental agencies, academia, the private sector, and non-profits to discuss challenges and opportunities for sustainable management of water resources and infrastructure in the region, as well as nationally and internationally.

"Resilience is all about systems, and the particular systems in this region need to function well to be resilient," Dean O'Hara said before conference attendees.

In his keynote address, Daniel Zarrilli, director, Mayor's Office of Recovery and Resiliency for the City of New York, noted the similarities between Washington, D.C. and New York City--both being large, steadily growing east coast metropolises, vulnerable to extreme weather.

In addition to the 44 lives lost, Hurricane Sandy constituted a \$19 billion loss in economic damage. New York City faces increasing risks from climate change related extreme weather and therefore must plan accordingly to mitigate loss. By 2050, the average temperature is expected to increase from 4.1 - 5.7 degrees, is expected to experience a 4-11% increase in average annual precipitation as well as a 1-2.5 foot rise in sea levels.

After Hurricane Sandy devastated the New York/New Jersey area, New York established the Office of Recovery and Resiliency to address the challenges illuminated by the historical storm: population growth, the impact on the economy, climate change and infrastructure being the most prominent. In essence, "Plan NYC" details how the city will address: 1) Strengthening coastal defenses; 2) Upgrading buildings; 3) Protecting infrastructure and services; and 4) Making neighborhoods safer and more vibrant.



Panelists included Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh

"There is no way to be climate proof in this world, but we can be climate ready," Zarilli explained.

The symposium was co-hosted by the [AWRA- NCRS](#), Institute for Water Resources, and the University of the District of Columbia.

The National Capital Region (NCR), encompassing the District of Columbia, and parts of Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia, has unique and challenging opportunities for sustainable management of water resources and water infrastructures. Other speakers included: Carolyn Kousky (Resources for the Future), Vicki Arroyo (The Georgetown Climate Center), Mary M. Cheh (Ward 3 Council Member, District of Columbia), and Panel Moderator Roland C. Steiner.

WRRRI is part of the Center for Sustainable Development of the College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences of the University of the District of Columbia. For more information on CAUSES, visit [www.udc.edu/causes](http://www.udc.edu/causes). For questions, please contact Dr. Tolessa Deksissa at [tdeksissa@udc.edu](mailto:tdeksissa@udc.edu) or (202) 274-5273.



###

**About WRRRI**

Established in 1973, the mission of Water Resources Research Institute (WRRRI) is to provide the District of Columbia with interdisciplinary research support to identify DC water resources problems and contribute to their solution. Areas of focus include drinking water source protection, stormwater management and planning, water safety, and watershed stewardship. The Institute coordinates, facilitates, and disseminates water resources-related research projects through seed grants to faculty members from the consortium of universities in the greater Metropolitan Washington area. The Institute supports collaborative training and research that engages not only faculty members and students, but also a broad array of stakeholders to address regional water issues in a holistic way. The University of the District of Columbia is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education - 3624 Market Street - Philadelphia, PA 19104 - 267.284.5000.