

**Michelle Lockett**  
**Founder, Deyton Institute**

**Speaker Bio:**

As the climate continues to bring more and more unpredictability, communities must have a means of increasing their readiness, response, and recovery processes, to keep innovation at the forefront while never losing sight of its traditions, values, resources, and economic realities. Ms. Lockett believes it is imperative to address the “gaps” in disaster readiness and recovery within the often forgotten rural and low attention areas, as well as in communities amid early recovery from a recent event, sadly having fallen off the media and funders’ radars.

It is for these reasons the Deyton Institute was formed. While it is widely known that disasters are self-initiating for volunteers, the goal for Deyton Institute is to harness that energy when there is not a traumatic event.

With over 15 years in domestic and international education, Ms. Lockett is known as a disaster resiliency, thought leader and a subject-matter expert on disaster preparedness and readiness, whole community engagement as well as youth leadership development and outreach. Prior to founding the Institute, Ms. Lockett served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Be Ready Alliance Coordinating for Emergencies (BRACE), a nonprofit based in Pensacola Florida known for its commitment to partnerships by fostering communication, cooperation, collaboration, and coordination among community members. Before relocating to Pensacola, she served at the Executive Director for the Monroe County Long Term Recovery Group, leading the Hurricane Irma recovery in the Florida Keys.

Through her involvement as a five-year Board Member of the Florida VOAD and the Region 1 Board Representative for the Florida Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Association, Ms. Lockett’s application of rural sociology, regional identify coupled with her experiences in small towns across the country, positions Deyton Institute at the tip of the spear for identifying rural and low-attention communities’ needs before and after disasters. Lockett also currently serves as the Member Outreach and Logistics Adviser for the Disaster Recovery Coalition Association (DRCA) where she is responsible for assisting and overseeing member

outreach, committee and awards development, as well as meetings and logistics operations of DRCA.

## **Presentation:**

### **Project Home Grown: A Replicable and Scalable Disaster-Recovery Apparatus for Low Attention and Rural Communities**

In disaster recovery, there is an unspoken disparity in the rural-urban divide. Especially when one considers that one-third of rural counties in the United States are also places of concentrated, persistent poverty with rates of 20 percent or higher, roughly double the proportion of high-poverty urban counties. In addition, low-attention disasters are often localized events that do not garner regional or national attention, affecting mostly rural, isolated communities. According to the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, low-attention disasters are most often identified by all or some of the following indicators:

- (1) Disproportionately affected marginalized or chronically under-resourced populations;
- (2) High percentage of damage to housing;
- (3) Insufficient community infrastructure or ability to develop or sustain recovery operations; and
- (4) No FEMA Individual Assistance declaration.

Time and again in rural disaster areas, it is the human infrastructure of connectors and troubleshooters that requires a boost for a robust and inclusive recovery.

This session will discuss the factors associated with “the missing middle” needed for a successful entry into these community and discuss BRACE’s development of capacity-building readiness and recovery facilitators to assist low attention and rural disaster-prone areas.