



DISASTER RECOVERY CORNER

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MARCH 28, 2019



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CEO UPDATES

ELIZABETH DISCO-SHEARER

During this past month we have seen and heard reports of devastating flooding in the Midwest. As we often state at Disaster Services Corporation, it's important to have an emergency preparedness plan. As you prepare your 2018 taxes, please take a few hours to list out all your important documents, from life insurance and homeowner's/ renter's insurance to wills to your medical history. Make a list and then make copies and save this documents on a flash drive or email them to a close family member or friend. It will be critical in an emergency situation to have ready access to your financial and legal documents. It's also a good time to check up on the various coverages on your insurance policies. Financial preparedness is a key to resiliency in Disaster Recovery.

To learn more about the mission of Disaster Services Corporation SVDP-USA, please go to www.svdpcdisaster.org.



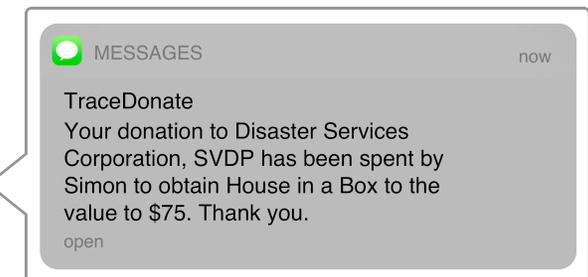
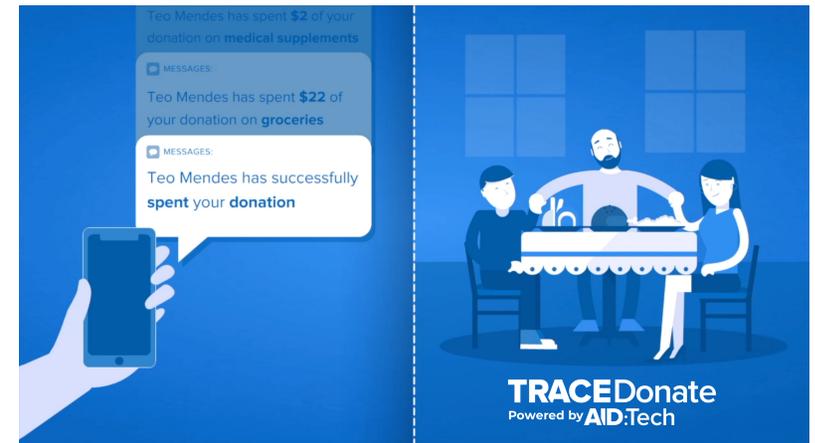
APRIL MONTHLY BLOG

TRACEDONATE - AN END-TO-END SOLUTION THAT LEVERAGES INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES TO ADDRESS SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES IN DISASTER RESPONSE

Challenges

Ranking Atlantic hurricanes by cost in damages since records began shows that three hurricanes in 2017 (Harvey, Maria and Irma) make it to the top 5 ever. In one year, the cost of damages from natural disasters amounted to over \$300 billion. 2017 was a record setting year for natural disasters, but it was not an isolated incident. In 2018, Ellicott City, Maryland was heavily flooded, with parts submerged, buildings collapsed and cars swept away after just two hours to rain. Hurricane Florence caused severe flooding in North and South Carolina and led to the death of 40+ people. And last but not least, the California wildfires that occupied our attention for months near the end of 2018, have amounted costs of over \$3 billion, more than doubling of that after the 2017 fire season.

United States, the world's most developed country, does benefit from effective preparedness and responsiveness; there is good awareness, infrastructure are largely capable to withstand high categories storms and cyclones and there is funding support from the state. On the ground, this is translated to invaluable front line support by organizations such as the Disaster Services Corporation. However, there are limits to what these supports can offer, especially when we look into the future. Studies show worrying long-term trends, where the number of recurring natural disasters are looking likely to rise year on year, and its impact to worsen at every turn. This means that the resources we have available to us are at risk of falling behind; levels of preparedness and responsiveness may face crisis, critically affecting those who are least equipped to respond. **[Click HERE to continue reading the blog....](#)**



MRS TAMALA SPEARS
DISASTER CASE MANAGER
BATON ROUGE, LA



My name is Tamala, I earned my Bachelor's degree in Rehabilitation & Disability services from Southern University A&M.

My main ministry is helping others. My career path began in case management where I assisted both the elderly population and children. I chose to become a disaster case manager, because I was affected by Hurricane Katrina and I know the importance of assisting families who are in need.

In my free time I love riding four wheelers, spending time with family, & traveling.

The thing that motivates me as a DCM is when I see my clients achieve their goals as "Recovery plan achieved." This means all their unmet needs have been met. I enjoy seeing the smiles on my client's faces after we have worked so diligently to get them back in their homes.

MS. JA'PONICA DUNBAR
DISASTER CASE MANAGER
BATON ROUGE, LA

I am a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana who once tried to move away to Tampa, Florida in search of employment during a time when the U.S. economy was weak years ago. What I discovered after that move was that the delicious crawfish that I'd known all of my life would literally pull me back home by their claws. I've since discovered that to try to leave Louisiana again would be pointless – the love of the culture is in my blood. Those closest to me refer to me as “SWANKY,” a nickname that I have over time learned to embrace – eventually choosing the term to grace my Louisiana vehicle license plate. While swanky describes me a bit, it barely scrapes the surface of the lady that I consider myself to be. I am a humanitarian by nature, many times owning the challenges of others and unpleased until I have given of myself to guide them through overcoming any obstacles in their way. My faith is secured in God, a power much higher and stronger than I. I owe that to my wonderful parents who set me on a path to discover the goodness of God while I was a small child. Grateful that they did so, I take my walk with Christ seriously and hope that my light is just bright enough to inspire others to seek what I have found in the Will of God... peace, joy and the calm assurance that everything works together for my good. I am the single parent of a 13 year old son who is my reason for doing life. I enjoy a bit of everything, have an open mind and am willing to try almost anything at least once, but my passions are gardening, great cuisine, travel, and entertaining - especially when shared with my small circle of old friends.



MS. JA'PONICA DUNBAR
DISASTER CASE MANAGER
BATON ROUGE, LA

My career path has taken many turns over the years. I spent 10 years learning and executing processes of debt collection with a major credit card issuer. That employment opportunity which I began in my late teens, provided experience in locating clients, educating individuals about credit worthiness, and assisting them in recovering from financial challenges. Later, I transitioned to assisting small business owners and state government agencies with their telecommunications needs and recovery from Hurricane Katrina. The high pressure demands associated with disaster recovery related to the need of telecommunications services (including internet networks) post-Katrina prepared me in so many ways for the journey ahead as I transitioned into a business owner. As the captain of my own ship I found that the importance of maintaining proper accounting records, marketing plans, budgeting, choosing the right team, and developing and executing company policies and procedures were all an essential part of my business' success. I enjoyed being my own boss and the freedoms that it brought me like being present full-time during the first 5 years of my son's life, being able to homeschool him, and take vacation whenever we wanted. More than anything that I enjoyed about being self-employed, I enjoyed what every other position in my career journey also provided me – the opportunity to serve others, but on my own terms.

I am currently a Disaster Recovery Case Manager, closely navigating the challenges of all of my client's recovery from the Great Flood of 2016 alongside each of them. I consider this opportunity to serve to be a God ordained one. You see, I lost my business inventory due to the very same flood and was recovering myself when a friend submitted my resume for this position without telling me. I would later get a call offering me the job that over a year later led me to Disaster Recovery Services of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Like my clients, I am still recovering from the Great Flood of 2016 and am most satisfied when I am able to find solutions to my client's disaster problems and ultimately see the smiles on their faces when they accomplish what they once thought was impossible – the return home!



A DESERVING COUPLE BY KATHERINE HIGHTOWER



Tammy and Tracy are the faces of Port Arthur, literally! When travelers stop by at the Port of Port Arthur, Tammy who is the Seaman Center's hostess and her husband, Tracy, a volunteer, are the first faces they see as they disembark vessels traveling from various destinations throughout the world. They are known to be 2 of the most congenial folks in town and make every visitor feel at home. They are also known around town to always help a neighbor in need and welcome new ones that have moved in to their quaint little city of Port Arthur.

August 2017 had no mercy on this fun-loving couple as floodwaters entered their home and rose up to 4 foot, causing extensive damage in their quaint 1,506 square foot home and destroying all of their contents. Fortunately for the Domingue's they were able to recover using FEMA funds and the manpower of Christian Aid Ministries.

Tammy reached out to St. Vincent de Paul DSC to seek additional assistance with window replacements, trim, doors and furnishings. The Domingue's and I were able to receive approval of \$4,500.00 American Red Cross funds to assist with remaining repairs and approval for \$2,983.45 worth of furniture from Samaritan's Purse which will be delivered this week. The Domingue's were truly grateful for all that our agency has done to assist them. Tracy did remind how important it is to always give of yourself and somewhere, somehow, a lending hand will extend your way!

GALVESTON COUNTY RESIDENT RECOVERS WITH NEW HOME

Hurricane Harvey destroyed Nettie King's home. She had not recovered when Disaster Case Manager, Veronica Martin, outreached her for case management.

Once her DSC Disaster Case Manager (DCM) had assessed the damage, she knew she needed a total rebuild. Veronica made sure Ms. King had all her documents and the first day the Homeowner Assistance Program opened in Galveston County, they were there.

The client was approved for a new home and demolition started three weeks ago. The frame was up immediately, and the house is being finished in the inside. The dedication of the house with the Texas General Land Office is scheduled for April 8th. Nettie King will receive keys to her new house.

DSC Disaster Case Manager, Veronica Martin, also assisted the client with getting her a handicap ramp and advocacy for the client temporary housing. This is the first client in Galveston County to have a house built and we are all thrilled. The client stated she could not have been more blessed and appreciates everything her DCM did for her.



SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE FIELD

HURRICANE HARVEY

HOME FOR A HERO, AUTHORED BY LOUIS MEDINA

Client Sammie Jones is well known in his home town of Beaumont for his smooth moves and great smile. Yes, Sammie likes to cut the rug and he's good at it! Like so many of the folks in the Texas Gulf Coast Region, Sammie was also impacted by Hurricane Harvey. His home received up to 4' water and began to shift to a point where his floor began to cave in. Mr. Jones, a Vietnam War veteran was no stranger to resiliency and did not immediately seek assistance with his situation as felt there were other that needed more help than him.

Fortunately for Mr. Jones, he was referred to St Vincent de Paul Disaster Services and partnered with Disaster Case Managers, Bessie Coleman. With the assistance of her fellow colleague, Deborah Parker, they recognized that Mr. Jones was a US Veteran and that he could possibly qualify for Habitat for Humanity's Veteran's Rebuild Program. Immediately, Mr. Jones was referred and with grant funding from Habitat for Humanity, American Red Cross, Wells Fargo and Exxon Mobil, Habitat was able to demolish the existing residence and built a new home at a value of approximately \$40k for him that is elevated 4' high off the ground! Wheelers for the Wounded stepped in to assist with installations and painting and St Vincent de Paul assisted by providing \$3200 worth of household furnishings through their House-in-a Box program. A ceremony was held to bless Mr. Jones and his new home and folks from around the community attended. I hear that every so often when the neighbors walk by his home, they here feet tapping to the sound of joy!



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FOR MORE INFORMATION



Please stop by our newly updated website: www.svdpcdisaster.org

An online store and training resources will soon be available exclusively for Vincentians active in disaster recovery.

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Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/DisasterServicesCorp/

Follow us on LinkedIn: Disaster Services Corporation, SVDP-USA

Monique Brent, mbrent@svdpcdisaster.org
Manager, Volunteer Resources and Deployments

Please consider supporting our mission by donating your time, providing financial support, and/or becoming active in your local community on disaster preparedness and recovery as a Vincentian.

For those of you interested in volunteering, please stop by our website at www.svdpcdisaster.org and click on the volunteer button at the top right corner. It will take you to a webform to complete. This information will help us gain better insight on you and be able to better pair you with what we have open and available to volunteer with. We will set up a one on one phone call shortly after the form has been completed. As a reminder, we cannot continue all these great works without your help. Please consider donating to the general disaster fund at www.svdpcdisaster.org to keep our programs running so that we can in turn support those who have been impacted by disaster here in the United States.

