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Katrina Thank You Letters

Here are letters from Hurricane Katrina survivors who received contributions from the NASW Foundation Social Work Disaster Assistance Fund.

Dr. Clark:

Thank you for the Disaster Relief Fund. It is a blessing to know my organization cares about us as social workers. I will never forget this organization's kindness.

Unidentified social worker

Dear Dr. Clark:

I am writing to express my profound gratitude for the \$500 donation given to me through the Social Work Disaster Relief Fund. The money is a godsend to me, and I am using it to help with the expensive Cobra payments to keep up my health insurance active until I find a new job.

Soon after becoming "homeless" I lost my job. The whole experience has been humbling, but slowly recover each day, I learn another lesson about the life that my fellow citizens live in this country. We are all too perilously close to the margin, whether the "disaster" of our lives is a hurricane, a flood, an earthquake, spousal abuse, a major illness, a divorce, or any life-changing event.

I will never forget the generosity of the NASW Foundation and hope someday to be able to return the gift.

Jean, LCSW

Dear Dr. Clark:

I am profoundly grateful that I belong to such a supportive organization. I cannot begin to tell how much I appreciate the \$500 Disaster Relief. Rest assured it was used to help my family towards a measure of stability.

The national media has inundated the world with the horrors of what happened in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, but paid little attention to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Please let me tell you even those of us who live here are still reeling from the sights we see each time a new area, formerly off limits to the public, is opened up.

Thank God for Robin Roberts of Good Morning America, and a former Pass Christian resident

Without her willingness to publicize our plight on GMA, that area would be completely neglected. It is going to take years to get back to some semblance of normal and some citizens, unfortunately, will never return to pre-Katrina normal. Many of us will be out of work for many more months.

I was in the process of building a new office. That has been put on hold. It is almost impossible to find builders, because some people lost everything. I was blessed. While I did suffer some loss, I did not lose everything. Again I do appreciate the donation received from my association.

Adrenne

Dear Ms. Waugh:

I am glad the Foundation was able to help so many of the social workers in this area. I will forever remember that of all the organizations I belong to, that it was NASW that stepped up on the plate FIRST. Thanks again.

Virginia, LCSW

To all of you at NASW and the NASW Foundation,

I can't begin to express in words how touched I was when I heard about the post-hurricane situation through which social workers were helping social workers. After 18 years as a social worker, it was quite an experience to be "on the other side," in need of assistance with housing and almost all other basic human needs, while in the midst of such personal confusion and emotional turmoil.

I sat in a motel in Memphis, watching terrible life-changing things unfold on TV. It was so surreal I could not believe what was happening in the city that I call home. I sat there, grateful for having been evacuated, while at the same time completely without any of the security inherent in knowing whether I had a home or a job to return to.

I had no means of finding out critical information regarding so many of my friends, my co-workers, and my clients. Who had evacuated? Who was dead or alive? Who might be stranded on their rooftop or in their attic?

The disaster assistance provided to me by my fellow social workers through the NASW Foundation was of immense help in stabilizing my basic needs. It helped restore my faith in the goodness of human nature, at a time when it was so desperately needed.

Our local chapter here in Louisiana was also quick to respond, setting up their Web site to provide information on so many crucial issues for evacuees. They also set up a page where affected social workers could "check-in" posting temporary locations, but most of all it was a wonderful way to know who among us was somewhere safe.

Know that you have truly made a difference. I feel proud to be a social worker. Thank you so much.

Mary-Ellen

Dear Dr. Clark:

I applied for and received assistance from the Social Work Disaster Relief Fund. My family a certainly appreciate the generosity of NASW in our time of distress. This has been a most humbling experience and I considered myself as blessed to be affiliated with such a caring organization. Thanks again, and God Bless!

Linda

To the Staff and Members of NASW Everywhere:

Thank you for your gift of \$500.00 at a time in my life that has been depressing, challenging & when I have felt homeless. You have all stood up for me in my time of need! Never in my life think I would be homeless, jobless, applying for Food Stamps, applying for unemployment, standing in a Red Cross line, etc. As a social worker, it has given me a new appreciation for 'hoops' many of my clients have to endure. It is truly amazing how the kindness and generous people really does make the difference. Many thanks to all of the NASW angels out there! God bless you all!

Angela

Dear Dr. Clark:

I wanted to take the time to personally thank the NASW Foundation for the timely assistance provided to me in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Life continues to be difficult here in New Orleans and the entire Gulf Region. As with so many disasters 'the people problems' emerge slowly and painfully following such a devastating event. Mary Richmond might observe correctly that we must take the "long view" on how this tragedy will unfold. I hope that NASW will continue to stay closely involved with us in the rebuilding and recovery efforts. Thank you again for your generous assistance.

Paul, LCSW, DCSW

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