

Paterson Post

October 19, 2017

Special Disaster Relief Issue

It was a tough couple of months for the Caribbean, Latin America, and southern parts of the United States. It began mid-August with Hurricane Harvey, the first major hurricane of the 2017 season to make landfall in the United States. After bringing destruction across the Windward Islands of the Caribbean, on August 25th, Harvey struck powerfully at the Gulf Coast of Texas and Louisiana with 130 mile-per-hour winds, and a huge, flooding storm-surge. Much of the greater Houston area lay under water.



Then came a storm that grew to never-before-seen proportions -- Tropical Storm Irma made its debut on August 30 and by September 6 the storm had intensified to a Category 5 hurricane. There had been 8 other Category 5 storms in recent times, but this was the biggest and strongest of them all. Irma charted a path of destruction through the Caribbean that wreaked havoc indiscriminately on beautiful, tranquil vacation destinations and impoverished island nations. Upon reaching Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, over a million people were without electric power and communications. Eventually Irma delivered her knockout punch to southern Florida. The largest storm evacuation in history sent millions northward. Homes, businesses, infrastructure, and lives were all gravely impacted.

Hot-on-the-heels of Irma came Hurricane Maria bringing the worst disaster conditions ever seen to the Dominican Republic, Haiti, the Windward Islands, and Puerto Rico. In Puerto Rico alone, already struggling to recover from Irma, a humanitarian crisis resulted with much of the island destroyed and 48 people dead when Maria made landfall on September 20th.

District Relief Campaign Exceeds Expectations

Across the district, Paterson Public Schools rose to the occasion by launching fund-raisers, and food and sundries collection efforts. Immediately following hurricanes Harvey and Irma, Superintendent Eileen Shafer acted on suggestions from others and initiated a campaign across the district and Central Office – asking Chief of Staff, Pamela Powell to take the lead in these efforts. The campaign was set with a goal of \$10,000.

As each storm struck, the donation deadline was moved further along, eventually ending on October 4th with an official designation as a “Day of Giving” to the American Red Cross. The resulting outpouring of concern from our district family resulted in a total of \$12, 810.65 being raised for disaster relief! Students, teachers, administrators, support staff, all pitched-in not only to meet the goal, but exceed it. Ms. Shafer commented, “I am extremely proud of the response across the district; and I would like to thank all of the union leaders as well as our schools and district office staff who partnered with us so we can be united in our display of support in helping others in their efforts to rebuild.” Last night, at the October Board of Education meeting, an oversized check was proudly presented to the American Red Cross.

Here is a glimpse at our top contributors:

- Alexander Hamilton Academy - \$1,198.23
- School 27 - \$1,572.30 (\$634.65 was raised by the student through a bake sale)
- Paterson Custodial and Maintenance Association - \$2,000.00
- Roberto Clemente - \$516.00
- School 1 - \$475.00
- School 9 - \$419.00
- School 19 - \$440.00
- Central Office 2nd Floor - \$490.00

Great job, Paterson Public Schools!

School 3 Cares!

Seventh grade students at School 3 collected items school-wide for donation to disaster relief efforts in Puerto Rico and Mexico. Many of the students helped throughout the event by distributing flyers to their classmates, distributing and collect donation boxes at the homerooms. Other activities included: sorting, labeling and packing boxes during their recess time, and loading the teachers' cars for distribution of the items collected.



Eastside Clubs Roll Up their Sleeves for PR



On Sunday, October 8th, Eastside Campus' Student Government Association (SGA) and other clubs moved thousands of pounds of food and household supplies and packed them onto trucks to be delivered to the victims of Hurricane Maria to relieve suffering inflicted on Puerto Rico. As a state-wide initiative, this Passaic County effort was led by City Council Vice President Luis Velez and the organization, *Puerto Rico United*. At Eastside Campus, Toni Jackson, advisor for the School of Government and Public Administration SGA, enlisted the help of the Student Government Association, the National Honor Society, the ASPIRA Club and the JROTC. Students from the clubs volunteered for, and put in a full day's work! Materials were donated from many sources, including churches, businesses and individuals.

“You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have.”
Bob Marley – Jamaican singer, songwriter and poet

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