

Disaster Relief Foundation assisting letter carriers hurt by natural disasters

A slew of natural disasters affected the nation last year, each one a reminder that disaster can strike at any time in any part of the country.

In January of 2018, heavy rain in fire-scarred areas caused mudslides in Montecito, CA, killing 21 people. In September, Hurricane Florence dumped 36 inches of rain on North Carolina; 43 people died in the affected area. The next month, Hurricane Michael—the strongest hurricane in history to make landfall on the Florida Panhandle—devastated Panama City, FL; 53 people lost their lives. In November, the deadliest wildfire ever to burn in California took 85 lives and destroyed nearly the entire city of Paradise.

And, as always, letter carriers from all across the country responded to help their fellow carriers affected by the disasters, providing cash donations, uniforms and other assistance.

The NALC Disaster Relief Foundation was created last year to make it easier for help to reach members in need. Many branches asked NALC to establish a mechanism for donations, supplies and other assistance so that members affected by disasters could receive help faster and more easily.

In response, NALC President Fredric Rolando announced the creation of the Foundation at the national convention in Detroit last July.

“The NALC Disaster Relief Foundation reflects the will of the members, who have asked for a way to help their fellow carriers quickly and efficiently,” Rolando said. All donations from letter carriers, branches and state associations go directly to members who need assistance—no administrative



Some of the destruction from Hurricane Michael in Florida

costs are deducted.

Since then, the Foundation has built on its capacity to accept donations, provide assistance and recruit a volunteer network.

Donations from individual letter carriers and branches are steadily arriving. Donations are not yet tax-deductible; the Foundation’s application for tax-exempt status is pending. Donations may be sent to NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Relief grants may be available, and an application is now available on the Foundation’s website (nalc.org/ndrf) for use by affected members. Applications for relief grants will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

NALC is in the process of creating response teams throughout the country. Volunteers serving on the teams will receive disaster relief training from charitable organizations and government agencies,



**NALC
Disaster
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including the American Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The volunteers will provide administrative assistance, offer emotional support if needed, and will bring basic supplies such as food and uniforms to disaster areas.

“The Disaster Relief Foundation is on track to fulfill the many requests by branches and individual carriers for a way that NALC members can help their sisters and brothers when disasters strike,” Rolando said. **PR**