



## Connecticut's Response to Hurricane Maria: A Story of Unity

### THE CRISIS

On September 20, 2017, Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, destroying homes, wiping out electrical grids, and leaving people without clean water. Connecticut has one of the largest Puerto Rican communities of any state, with thousands of families coming to seek shelter with family and kin. In the first six months of the disaster alone families in Connecticut welcomed 10% of the 135,000 who came to the U.S. mainland in search of shelter.

### THE NUMBERS\*

**13,292**

People estimated to have self-evacuated to Connecticut

**\$938,376**

Emergency housing assistance funds administered

**1,205**

People who received emergency housing assistance

**530**

Children in families who received emergency housing assistance

### THE RESPONSE

Recognizing the need for action, Connecticut built on the disaster response management protocols developed after Hurricane Sandy to spring into action as quickly as possible with a wide range of government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and members of the philanthropic community coming together to provide support. The **Connecticut Department of Public Protection's Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS)** led Connecticut's Statewide Response Framework after the Governor activated the Unified Command process for the Hurricane Maria response; convening cross sector partners for collaboration. **United Way of Connecticut's 2-1-1** served as a centralized resource for the public to access information about available community resources, in partnership with the **CT Department of Social Services** and the **CT Department of Housing**. Under this partnership, 2-1-1 Connecticut contact specialists were able to connect families in need of assistance with disaster case management services provided by **Catholic Charities, Community Action Agencies and Salvation Army**.

The **United Way** and the **Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH)** worked with members of the **Connecticut Council on Philanthropy** and the **Connecticut General Assembly** to secure nearly a million dollars in resources. CCEH administered the funds to disaster case managers who were able to access them to provide housing assistance to families in need. **FEMA regional staff** provided disaster specific enhanced communication, coordination, collaboration and support. Members of the Puerto Rican community were the ultimate champions, with leaders like **Lydia Vélez-Herrera** and **Maria Lino** joining forces with state and local government to help self-evacuees connect with available resources.

\*Estimated Evacuees Source: [https://centropr.hunter.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/data\\_sheets/PostMaria-NewEstimates-3-15-18.pdf](https://centropr.hunter.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/data_sheets/PostMaria-NewEstimates-3-15-18.pdf)

Costs and Beneficiaries Source: *The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness*

Figures are specific to the Hurricane Maria Emergency Assistance Fund and represent a portion of the total number served



## Thank you to those who made this relief effort possible.

Below are only some of those who stepped up to join forces to help families in need.

Access Agency  
Action for Bridgeport Community Development Inc.  
Alpha Community Services YMCA  
American Red Cross  
American Savings Foundation  
Archdiocese of Hartford  
Capitol Region Education Council  
Hartford Relief Center  
Catholic Charities, Inc. – Archdiocese of Hartford  
Catholic Charities USA  
CICD Hartford Puerto Rican Parade Connecticut  
Airport Authority  
Connecticut Association for Community Action  
Connecticut Commission on Human Rights  
and Opportunities  
Connecticut Council for Philanthropy  
Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness  
Connecticut Community Foundation  
Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut  
Community Foundation of Middlesex County  
Community Action Agency of New Haven  
Community Action Agency of Western Connecticut  
Community Health Resources  
Connecticut Department of Agriculture  
Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and  
Public Protection  
Connecticut State Police  
Division of Emergency Management and  
Homeland Security  
Connecticut Department of Housing  
Connecticut Department of Mental Health and  
Addiction Services  
Connecticut Department of Social Services  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
Community Foundation of Greater New Britain  
Community Health Resources  
Connecticut REALTORS® Foundation  
Community Renewal Team  
Dime Bank  
Fairfield County's Community Foundation  
Family and Children's Agency  
Farmington Bank Community Foundation  
Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry  
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving  
Hartford Public Schools – Adult Education Center  
Hartford Yard Goats  
Hispanic Coalition of Greater Waterbury  
Human Resources Agency of New Britain  
James H. Napier Foundation  
Jewish Community Relations Council of the Greater  
Hartford Jewish Federation  
Junta for Progressive Action  
Liberty Bank Foundation  
Lilly sin Barreras LLC  
Los Amigos Softball League  
Melville Charitable Trust  
Mercy Housing  
New London Homeless Hospitality Center  
New Opportunities  
New Reach, Inc.  
Puerto Rican Parade of Fairfield County  
Puerto Ricans United, Inc.  
The Salvation Army  
San Juan Center  
Savings Bank of Danbury  
St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church  
TEAM, Inc.  
Thames Valley Council for Community Action  
Trinity College  
The Latino Way, Marketing and Media  
United States Department of Emergency Management and  
Homeland Security  
United States Department of Housing and Urban  
Development, Connecticut Field Office  
United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut  
United Way of Coastal Fairfield County  
United Way of Connecticut  
United Way of Greater Waterbury  
United Way of Southeastern Connecticut  
University of Connecticut, Santiago El Instituto  
University of Connecticut, School of Social Work,  
Puerto Rican and Latina Studies Project  
Webster Bank