



B'NAI B'RITH 2017 DISASTER RELIEF REPORT

B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief – Impacting Lives and Making a Difference Since 1865

Helping those in need after a disaster is a core principle that has guided B'nai B'rith since 1865. When floods, wildfires, earthquakes, tornadoes or hurricanes devastate a community or attacks on civilians impacted by war requires a humanitarian response, B'nai B'rith volunteers, members and supporters are ready to help. Over three separate centuries, B'nai B'rith has responded with millions of dollars of needed assistance to help victims of these natural and man-made disasters around the world.

The B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund is always open, because there is always a need to assist victims of disasters when they happen. When we assess the impact, we open a fund for specific events or provide funds that are held in the general Disaster Relief Fund. The only way we can accomplish the mission of the Disaster Relief Fund to meet the unmet needs of victims of disaster is to have the funds on hand or raise them to help.

Thank you for helping us help others by giving to the Disaster Relief Fund today, and sharing this newsletter with family and friends.

What's New in 2017

The B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund provided \$12,000 to support the needs of Syrian refugees seeking medical attention in Israel. The ZIV Medical Center in Zefat, Israel received funds to purchase medical equipment that is not already paid for by the Israeli government. The B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund also supplied money to the B'nai B'rith World Center-Jerusalem to purchase and deliver infant formula to vulnerable Syrian children as part of the Israeli military's humanitarian aid project called Operation Good Neighbor. This purchase provided 9,000 feedings. The project was carried out by the B'nai B'rith World-Jerusalem Director Alan Schneider.

In the United States, devastating floods in Missouri triggered a response from the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief fund via a social media campaign, raising \$5000 to distribute. The campaign provided an opportunity to have every dollar matched from the B'nai B'rith Disaster Fund.

One of the organizations that received these funds was the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas. The executive director of the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, Mary Beasley, provided information about the flooding and the impact it made on the counties served by the food bank.



Beasley said: "Thousands of acres of crops were destroyed by the floods. Now that the waters have receded, recovery has begun. The economic impact of the flooding will be felt for months to come. Many of the families in the area are farmers or are employed on local farms. Many crops were destroyed and will not be able to be replanted. This loss will impact families' incomes in the next months. The Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas has a network of food pantries in these communities so that families don't have to worry about the basic need of food."

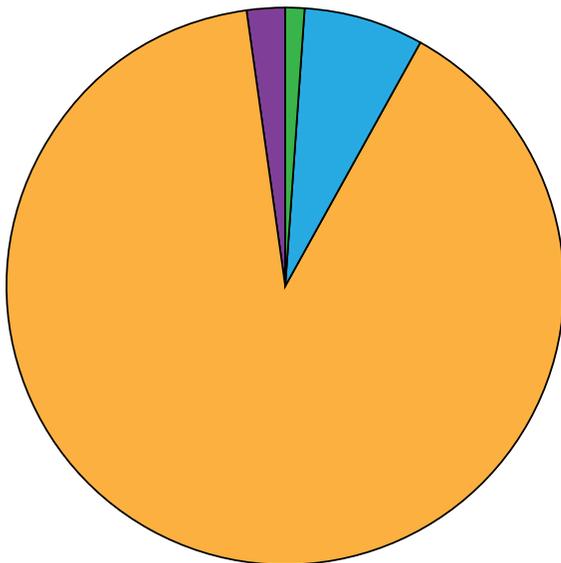
The B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund has also provided a grant to NECHAMA that will match funds for NECHAMA's fundraising campaign. NECHAMA has been a longtime recipient of our support providing assistance for victims of domestic disasters and volunteer opportunities.

B'nai B'rith is proud to support NECHAMA's work that brought volunteers together from across the country to muck and gut homes in both Seneca and Greater Newton County. They shared that these volunteers assisted in cleaning up 33 homes in these areas. They posted a large banner headline on its website thanking B'nai B'rith for helping them hit their June fundraising goal.

A History of Disaster Relief

During its long history, the funds raised by the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund provide assistance to rebuild and the people-power to do so. B'nai B'rith utilizes its contacts in the impacted area, in concert with other agencies, to provide emergency support relief efforts and long-term rebuilding plans. The ultimate goal is to provide for unmet needs of those who are victims of a natural or man-made disaster.

In the first decade of the 21st century (2000-2010), the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund provided a response to several major disasters by raising and distributing \$2.3 million for emergency relief and rebuilding efforts.



\$150,000 - 9/11/2001
Attack on America



\$850,000 - Tsunami in
Asia 2004



\$1.1 Million -
Hurricane Katrina 2005



\$250,000 - Earthquake
in Haiti 2010

Between 2011 and 2015, B'nai B'rith opened campaigns to support the following communities in need:



2011 - Japan Earthquake/Tsunami, Flood/Tornado/Hurricane Relief



2012 - Hurricane Sandy, Flood/Tornado/Hurricane Relief



2013 - Boston Marathon Bombing, East Africa Famine, Philippine Typhoon



2014 - Flood/Tornado/Hurricane Relief



2015 - Nepal Earthquake, School Massacre in Kenya, Flood/Tornado/Hurricane Relief

Campaigns during these years raised close to \$290,000.

Report on 2016

In 2016, the Disaster Relief Fund provided a total \$57,000 for domestic and international projects that supported relief and rebuilding efforts. This included responding to the earthquake in Ecuador, the flooding in Texas in April and for Louisiana flooding in August.

2016 Domestic Disaster Relief Projects Totaled \$33,000

After flooding in Houston, Texas, the Goldberg Montessori School destroyed by the floods, received \$5,000 from the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund. The funds supported the school's music program replacing instruments and supplies lost in flood.

Disaster preparedness has been an important part of the Disaster Relief Fund's support. B'nai B'rith has purchased and packed emergency kits with basic supplies to assist with preparation of "to go kits" for disasters with the specific needs of seniors in mind. This also includes guides and other checklists to assist with adding additional items to this kit.



Over 600 kits were packed by volunteers attending the B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Conference in November 2016 with the assistance of the B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Center and the senior housing boards and managers who attended the conference. The kits were sent to the B'nai B'rith Senior Housing Facilities in Houston and Pasadena, Texas.



For several years, these kits have been created and provided to residents to assist in educational programming at the senior facilities around the country to help support disaster preparedness for seniors.

After the August 2016 flooding in Louisiana, the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund supported a disaster response project coordinated by NECHAMA. Harold (Hesch) Steinberg and Marjorie Steinberg, volunteered for clean-up efforts in Baton Rouge. Two grants were made, to support general relief operations in Louisiana after devastating floods and \$12,500 to underwrite a major portion of an additional disaster relief supply vehicle. The truck will be outfitted with tools and equipment and positioned to be ready to move into a disaster area as quickly as possible.



A donation was made to the Associated Professional Educators of Louisiana (A+PEL) to assist teachers in replacing supplies and classroom materials that have been destroyed by flooding. Harold (Hesch) Steinberg, chair of the Disaster Relief Committee, presented a check to A+PEL Executive Director Keith Courville. In addition to financial support, we provided 263 books from our Diverse Minds Writing Challenge as a gift to the schools and children in the community. Shipping costs for the books were covered by the Disaster Relief Fund.



Jason Langsner, a young leader in Washington, D.C., created an online campaign in the aftermath of a flash flood in Ellicott City, Md. Funds were raised with donations for seats at a soccer game in October to celebrate his birthday.

The Jewish Children's Regional Services (JCRS) received a \$5,000 check at the JCRS Gala held in New Orleans, which was presented by Chair of the Disaster Relief Committee, Harold (Hesch) Steinberg and Milton Grishman, who is a member of the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Committee. JCRS Executive Director Ned Goldberg accepted the funds that were used for emergency response needs of families impacted by the flooding in Baton Rouge and to support camp scholarships. B'nai B'rith's relationship with JCRS goes back to the 1800s when the now defunct District Seven helped support a widows and orphans home.



2016 International Projects Totaled \$24,000 in Three Countries

The Disaster Relief Fund provided \$10,000 to IsraAID (the Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid, of which B'nai B'rith is a founding member), for emergency and trauma assistance response for survivors of a devastating earthquake in Japan. A trauma and recovery counseling project was held in Kumamoto City & Mifune-cho, Kumamoto Prefecture, Japan, which provided workshops at evacuation centers and schools. This included counseling sessions and psychological first aid sessions for children. This also had a component for children with special needs and their parents. It has also assisted with disaster preparedness for foreigners living in Kumamoto.

The Disaster Relief Fund gave \$6,000 for a project in cooperation with our longtime disaster and humanitarian assistance partner, the Brother's Brother Foundation to support the shipment of medicines to hospitals dealing with the fight against Ebola. The funds had been raised to assist with humanitarian needs in Africa.

After an earthquake in Ecuador, a campaign was opened in April 2016 and raised \$8,000. This funded a project that involved B'nai B'rith leadership in Ecuador; B'nai B'rith was represented by Pedro Steiner. B'nai B'rith District 23 worked with the Sociedad Femenina Israelita de Quito and others to support the efforts of the Jewish community or the rebuilding and construction of school classrooms in the San Plácido School, located in the San Plácido Parish, Portoviejo County, province of Manabí, Ecuador which were damaged or destroyed during the earthquake of April 2016. The reconstruction of the school classrooms were financed exclusively by funds coming through the Jewish community.

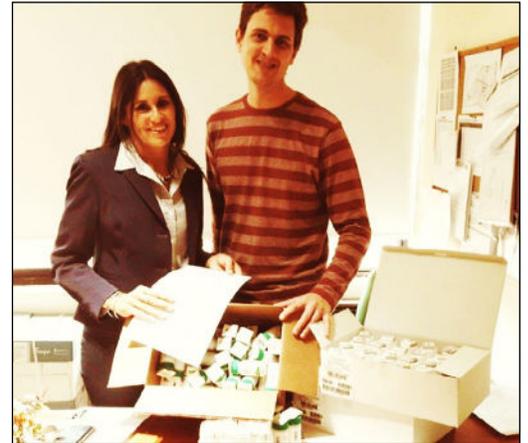


Link to the Steiner blog --

<http://www.bnaibrith.org/expert-analysis/report-from-the-ground-bnai-brith-disaster-relief-fund-helps-rebuild-ecuador-school>

Medicines to Argentina

B'nai B'rith created and has supported the Communities in Crisis Program since March 2002. This project provides medicines in communities in Latin America. The Communities in Crisis Program is made possible with donated medicines provided by the Brother's Brother Foundation located in Pittsburgh, Pa. The program began after double digit inflation impacted countries in the area and continues with the efforts of our B'nai B'rith brothers and sisters in Latin America. A shipment valued at over \$1 million was delivered to hospitals and clinics in Argentina. B'nai B'rith pays for the shipping and logistic costs of the delivery.



Recognizing Special Donors



We are honored that B'nai B'rith has been chosen to receive \$100,000 over a five year period to support the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief effort by the brothers of the Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity. In August 2016, \$20,000 was presented for the second installment of the \$100,000 commitment at the AEPi convention in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. B'nai B'rith International President Gary P. Saltzman and B'nai B'rith Leadership Chair Eric Book accepted the check from then Supreme Master Larry Leider during the philanthropy luncheon.

We have been proud to include the AEPi brothers in our community service efforts to support disaster relief projects.



We thank the kindergarten class of Congregation Beth Ahabah's Religious School in Richmond, Va. for choosing the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund as the recipient of its weekly tzedakah collections that are donated at the end of the year. The school administrator writes, "They chose the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund because they wanted to help people who were scared in need."

What Can You Do to Help Us Continue the Efforts of the Disaster Relief Fund?

We can not respond to every disaster, but, as we learn about a disaster event, we investigate the situation with local leadership to determine if there is a way we can assist. They tell us what the local government is doing, and if additional assistance may be helpful. In some international disasters, donations can only be received locally and are directed to organizations that are designated by the government to handle the disaster response.

We do not know when the next disaster will strike, but we do know when hurricane season begins or where there are areas that are vulnerable to tornadoes or floods. We know that there will be more need in the months to come. We need to know that the support of the Disaster Relief Fund is behind us when we make any outreach to a disaster area, before and after we open a campaign.

Please help us by supporting the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund so we are always ready to respond, before or without a campaign being opened for a specific disaster.

At a recent meeting of the leadership of B'nai B'rith, Chair of the Disaster Relief Committee Harold (Hesch) Steinberg shared the Judaic roots of helping others at times of disaster. "Jewish tradition teaches us to provide assistance to those in need. And for more than 150 years, B'nai B'rith International has extended a helping hand to the victims of disaster. We cannot stand idly by while our brethren suffer," Steinberg said.

These words are instructive:

"Divided as we may be by religion, we are united by charity." –Rashi (to a Christian monk)

"Always help the persecuted." –Nachman of Bratslav

"You shall not harden your heart, nor shut your hand from your needy brother, but...lend him sufficient for his need." – Deuteronomy (Devarim) 15:7

"Charity knows neither race nor creed." –Talmud, Gittin

Please share this newsletter or an active appeal with friends and family, so we are able to reach more people about the important work of the B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund.

We need your help to be ready to respond. Help us help others by making a donation to:

**The B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund at <http://www.bnaibrith.org/disaster-relief.html>
Or by mail to B'nai B'rith International, 1120 20th Street, NW, Suite 300N, Washington, D.C. 20036**

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