

Texans Helping Texans: Institutions' Assistance to College Students Impacted by Hurricane Harvey

From information submitted by higher education institutions in the Hurricane Harvey impact area and compiled by staff members of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

October 2017

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Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board



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The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is to provide leadership and coordination for the Texas higher education system and to promote access, affordability, quality, success, and cost efficiency through *60x30TX*, resulting in a globally competitive workforce that positions Texas as an international leader.

Agency Vision

The THECB will be recognized as an international leader in developing and implementing innovative higher education policy to accomplish our mission.

Agency Philosophy

The THECB will promote access to and success in quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access and success without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access and success is unacceptable.

The Coordinating Board's core values are:

Accountability: We hold ourselves responsible for our actions and welcome every opportunity to educate stakeholders about our policies, decisions, and aspirations.

Efficiency: We accomplish our work using resources in the most effective manner.

Collaboration: We develop partnerships that result in student success and a highly qualified, globally competent workforce.

Excellence: We strive for excellence in all our endeavors.

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Introduction

This report contains the efforts of 23 Texas colleges and universities in the Hurricane Harvey impact area that have donated time, money, and effort to the ongoing relief and rebuilding necessary in the aftermath of the hurricane. Many more colleges and universities across Texas provided support and continue to participate in efforts to help their fellow institutions. The pages here, submitted by institutions, represent but some of those thousands of volunteers and hours of effort.

Hurricane Harvey is a human story of both need and giving. The story involves many students, staff, faculty, and administrators and others who are passionate not only about higher education in Texas, but also about people. Clearly, when called upon to meet unexpected challenges, Texas institutions are up to the task.

Alvin Community College

Countless students and staff members at Alvin Community College (ACC) suffered significant damage to their homes and personal property during the storm and needed assistance to recover.

To aid in the recovery, the ACC Foundation began accepting monetary donations to benefit students and staff members. More than \$10,000 in donations have been made so far and the amount was matched by the Foundation. Students and staff received the assistance through the distribution of gift cards.

To provide further assistance, ACC also opened its Food Pantry to those affected by the storm. Food and toiletry items are also being accepted and then distributed to storm victims.

Students on a payment plan were given additional time to pay their tuition. The second payment deadline was moved to October 10 and the third payment was moved to November 7. No late fees will be assessed on payments plans. The college also extended its 100% tuition refund period.

Harvey also had an impact on the ACC campus where there was minor damage that included leaks in its facilities and some falling debris. Employees from several departments, including Physical Plant, the Police Department, Housekeeping, IT, Groundskeeping and administrators worked immediately after the storm to make sure the campus was operational when classes resumed on September 5.

For those affected in the community, students and staff also volunteered by helping residents clean out their homes. Baseball and softball players went to several homes to assist in cleaning. Student ambassadors also volunteered at an area shelter.

While community members continue in their recovery, college volunteers are still collecting donations to help those in need. For more information about the recovery efforts and how you can help, visit www.alvincollege.edu/emergency.



Alvin College baseball players make repairs.



Alvin College softball players clear debris.

Baylor College of Medicine

The Baylor Community Helping the Houston Community - Baylor College of Medicine (BCOM) Responds to Hurricane Harvey. Baylor College of Medicine's student-focused Hurricane Harvey relief efforts were a collaborative effort between the College leadership and the students. We were thrilled to see that students quickly organized to help one another during the first few days after the disaster and then expanded their efforts further to the entire Baylor College of Medicine community. Students and College leadership worked collaboratively to assess student safety in each of our schools and programs and then worked together to create a way for members of the Baylor community to get the help they needed to recover for the storm as well. In addition, each program within our schools worked closely to ensure that any displaced students found housing as quickly as possible.

Through this "Baylor Helping Baylor" program, employees, students and staff could submit a form indicating what type of help they needed in their home, whether it was moving furniture, removing carpet or ripping out sheetrock. Students, faculty and staff could also sign up to help those in need within the Baylor community. This allowed volunteer groups to quickly deploy to an area of need and allowed for collaboration between many groups within the Baylor community. At eight weeks out, our students are continuing their volunteer efforts in helping with Harvey recovery in the community.

The students also helped in our outpatient clinics with patient transport and welcoming/wayfinding while those who normally cover those positions were deployed to other clinic positions for staff who were dealing with flooded homes. They also provided staffing for a blood drive at one of our hospitals.

Through the Baylor College of Medicine Harvey Relief Fund, the College raised money for Baylor students, faculty and employees who suffered losses. This included selling custom t-shirts to support the effort. To date, more than \$700,000 has been raised and more than 600 people, including students, have received financial assistance.



Dr. Arya and her students from BCOM



BCOM volunteers for the second service day

Blinn College

In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, students and faculty from Blinn College's [Physical Therapist Assistant \(PTA\)](#), [Veterinary Technology](#), and [Brenham Campus Vocational Nursing](#) programs recently put their skills to work to help those in need.

PTA Program Director Dr. Christy Gantt sent her entire class of first-year students to Kingwood, northeast of Houston, to assist with housing demolitions. Though voluntary, all 25 students opted to attend the service trip. Armed with their own tools and cleaning supplies, the group split up among seven houses, removing the interior of all its contents, including furniture, cabinets, sheetrock, and insulation. Some ventured outside to clean debris strewn across the yards.

"It reflects very well on Blinn College as a whole to allow us to take an entire day off to serve others," PTA student Victoria Blackwell said. "I am proud to say that I attend a college that played a role in the hurricane recovery and rebuilding process."

In addition to the PTA Program, two students in Blinn's Veterinary Technology Program – Calli Jabin and Erica Thompson – accompanied Instructor Sheila Gibler to Beaumont to provide medical care for animals rescued by emergency responders.

Faculty and alumni of the Brenham Campus Vocational Nursing Program assisted in evacuating a La Grange nursing home that received substantial flooding. The residents were moved to a nearby shelter before being transported to a long-term care facility in Marlin.



Blinn College's Calli Jabin helps with pets displaced by Harvey.

Students from Blinn College's Physical Therapist Assistant Program help with clean up.

Brazosport College

In response to Hurricane Harvey, The Brazosport College (BC) Foundation set up an emergency relief fund to help with the long rebuilding process. To date, the BC Foundation has raised \$41,823.72, with an additional \$27,500 being added by the BC Foundation from grants and its general scholarship fund. Of the total funds raised, the BC Foundation has disbursed over \$50,000 in the form of scholarships, funding for textbooks, food vouchers, childcare expenses, and gift cards for gas and groceries. The BC Foundation has been able to help 203 students and 10 employees.

The College also set up an email address, harvey2017@brazosport.edu, and website, www.brazosport.edu/harvey, during its closure to field any questions and concerns from students and the community. The site, which is still active and updated as needed, contains not only information concerning the College, but also serves as a resource for Brazoria County disaster contact and recovery information.

Members of the Psi Psi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa at Brazosport College also assisted with Hurricane Harvey disaster relief at the Houston Food Bank where they helped fill disaster relief boxes.



Members of the Psi Psi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa at Brazosport College

Del Mar College

When Hurricane Harvey slammed into the Coastal Bend communities served by Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, it left some students without stable homes, reliable vehicles or other basic necessities. During the storm, the College kept students and employees informed of local conditions through social media. "I heard from the College more than I heard from my own parents," one appreciative student responded.

Afterwards, Del Mar personnel mobilized immediately to help our students stay in school and our employees return to work. More than 200 students from the hardest-hit communities who were already approved for Del Mar scholarships were notified that their awards had been automatically increased to \$2,000, the maximum allocated for the year.

The Del Mar College Foundation secured more than \$100,000 in special funds for students needing everything from transportation vouchers to replacement books. More than 100 students have already received another \$80,000 in Hurricane Harvey Assistance and Recovery grants with some applications still being processed. One student just needed a chain saw to get his truck out of his demolished garage, while others lost everything they owned.

A month later, Del Mar Building Maintenance Applied Technology students and faculty are repairing hurricane-damaged household appliances at no charge, using more donated funds to cover the cost of replacement parts for air conditioners and refrigerators. The College also expanded our list of 8-week classes this semester to give more students the opportunity to continue their studies as they recover from hurricane damage. Those classes begin Oct. 23, and half are already full or have student overloads.

"While the College sustained minimal damage in the storm, we empathize with those in our community who lost so much. Del Mar College will continue to support our students with compassion and discernment as they pursue their dreams of higher education," stated Del Mar College President Mark Escamilla.



Construction site after Harvey



Del Mar staff helping students after Harvey

Houston Baptist University

Houston Baptist University Students Help Following Hurricane Harvey. During the deluge of Hurricane Harvey, Houston Baptist University (HBU) Head Track and Field Coach Theresa Fuqua kept up with her players, several of whom were hit by the flooding, and contacted friends and colleagues to make sure everyone was okay. "It really hit close to home," she said.

Fuqua's group visited houses in the Braeswood area and helped homeowners clear out damaged items during the course of several days.

Jud Kinne, HBU assistant men's basketball coach, was dealing with damage and leaks in his home after Harvey's winds and rains subsided. Still, he rallied with others on the Athletics staff, his team and members of the baseball team to assist others who were affected more profoundly.

The group helped clear out about 30 homes, primarily in the Meyerland and Sharpstown neighborhoods.

Jesse GrothOlson, assistant professor of Cinema and New Media Arts, dealt with a foot of water in his home and the loss of a vehicle. "I had colleagues and students come to my house over the course of many days to help muck it out and catalogue all of our belongings," he said.

Head Women's Basketball Coach Donna Finnie said her team came together to comfort one of the players whose family home was devastated. The team also collected items for families and read to children in shelters. Additionally, they helped several elderly residents clear out their homes. "The biggest thing I've taken away from it is that there are so many great people with huge hearts in our area, and at HBU," Finnie said.

HBU Relief Fund. *Like many across Houston and the region, members of the HBU family were touched by Hurricane Harvey. Please consider making a gift to affected HBU students, faculty and staff at HBU.edu/ReliefFund.*



HBU Student volunteers at a service-project site



An HBU student makes repairs.

Houston Community College

#HCCStrong Eagles Helping Eagles Creating Silver Linings in a Cloud of Disaster. The greater Houston region experienced unprecedented damage from Hurricane Harvey. At Houston Community College (HCC), the establishment of collaborative emergency support structures was critical in helping our students start the semester strong. The responsiveness from all areas of the college helped strengthen student success efforts inside and outside the classroom. HCC worked with the American Red Cross to provide a shelter for Harvey residents. Job fairs with WalMart and other companies were part of the outreach.

Coined *Eagles Helping Eagles*, emergency resource support sites were set up at our six colleges to assist the HCC community with immediate referrals for students, faculty and staff impacted by Harvey. Resource materials were developed in collaboration with local community response agencies, and donated non-perishable items were collected and distributed to students in need.

A volunteer network was established to facilitate the distribution of relief items, and several of our campuses conducted crisis training for the staff and faculty. In addition, counseling services were provided to the HCC family along with student surveys to help assess needs. Financial aid coaches are continuing to work on an emergency student fund program entitled, *Swoop to the Rescue*.

The newly developed *HCC Disaster Relief Fund* continues to provide resources as a second response. The fund's purpose is to provide grants, scholarships, and one-time special requests to HCC students and employees who were financially impacted by Harvey.

The *Eagle2Eagle* platform was developed to provide the HCC family with a place to connect to request aid and provide help to those who need it. More information is available at www.Eagle2Eagle.org.

Moving forward, through our Incident Command Structure and Recovery Operations Teams, HCC is prepared for major emergent natural and man-made events. HCC will continue to work with local resources to ensure enhanced training and the creation of best practices for future emergencies. For more information, go to www.hccs.edu/harvey.



Student volunteers at HCC show off donations.



HCC housed an American Red Cross shelter.

Lamar University

Harvey Heroes. The impetus for Harvey Heroes came from a conversation between Vice Provost Brenda Nichols and collaboration with a former alumnus (Lamar '02) and current Associate Professor of Political Science at Oklahoma University Dr. Alisa Hicklin Fryar. Drs. Nichols and Fryer were discussing students in the dorms and the overwhelming needs of our community. As they implemented the idea, Ms. Shannon Tait Tanner (Lamar Alumni '05), a friend and colleague with a Master's in Political Science and Public Administration, helped to implement the entire project.

During the discussion, we realized what a terrific pool of students we have and how many of them could provide some help if we could match the students with needs and organizations of Southeast Texas. To this end, we discussed if students volunteered what we could do to motivate them and for them to be given credit for their activities. The idea of using volunteer hours to earn college credit in an internship environment seemed a win-win for everyone.

The students gained experience in recovery and rebuilding efforts through partnership with local organizations and efforts to assist Southeast Texas residents. It was decided to do an orientation the next day and to develop a Facebook page for Harvey Heroes on the Lamar University website. The orientation would be about an hour long and include information on personal safety in the cleanup efforts as well as the rebuilding. In order to earn the 3 hours of Internship Credit (Political Science 4361/5354), students had to attend the orientation or view it online, participate in at least 40 hours of documented volunteer activity, read two scholarly publications related to volunteerism and submit a log with all of their activities. The course credit would be granted AFTER all the criteria were met. The Volunteers were matched and solicited by an Internship Coordinator (Ms. Tanner). Ms. Tanner vetted requests, posted opportunities and is in charge of the course.

Several things occurred which surprised and delighted us. First, expecting 25-30 students to come to the Orientation, we had 55 volunteers present onsite. Additionally, more than 100 watched the video presentation that day. Secondly, students living outside of the Beaumont area contacted us to see if they could participate in their home communities! Lastly, a number of graduate students who could not benefit from the credit hours also participated as they wanted to give back.

Opportunities ranged from working with area churches, the Food Bank, the Humane Society, HEB Food Kitchen, and working in homes for faculty, staff and community members. Students passed out water, sorted clothing, held dogs and cats, gave hugs to the community members and provided many man hours of labor to help in the clearing of homes totally destroyed.

The opportunity has had a number of side benefits. One undergraduate student with a car, gave a ride to a graduate student without transportation—and a friendship was born. The chances of the business student meeting and interacting with an internal engineering graduate student was slim; however, they became a dynamic duo! Working together to clean out homes and helping with other labor-intensive activities (hauling tree limbs, etc.), they have both learned about another culture and their values and made an unexpected friendship!

We have had more than 325 students sign up to receive the credit and more than 500 volunteers—some just tagging along with friends and others—who don't need the credit or who knew that they would not be able to complete 40 hours. The course has an 8-week time limit

and then the activities and contacts made will be merged into the Office of Student Affairs, Community Engagement Activities.



Lamar student volunteers dressed for site clean up (above)



Lamar student volunteers help with pet food donations.

Lee College

After opening the doors of the campus gymnasium as a shelter for around 100 displaced residents in the Baytown area as Hurricane Harvey passed through the area, Lee College has continued to offer help and support to students and families who have experienced losses from the storm.

Creating the Lee College Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund. Shortly after Hurricane Harvey battered Baytown and surrounding communities, Lee College President Dr. Dennis Brown and members of the president's cabinet decided to create a disaster relief fund to help students and employees recover from their losses and rebuild their homes and lives.

Since then, the Lee College Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund has raised more than \$100,000 through donations from the Lee College Foundation, Scholarship America, Santa Fe College in Florida, Inceptia, the Collette Foundation, ExxonMobil and numerous individual donors. To date, 174 students have received financial assistance from the fund to pay their Fall 2017 tuition bills, purchase textbooks lost or washed away in floodwaters, buy gas or bus fare, stock their refrigerators and pantries with food, and make repairs to damaged homes.

Incorporating Hurricane Harvey relief into the course curriculum. Students in instructor Kathleen Sydnor's English classes are tackling an unexpected assignment this semester: helping to rehab homes and other buildings in Baytown-area neighborhoods flooded with damage from Hurricane Harvey.

Sydnor added Harvey relief to her curriculum just as the storm reached Harris County, suspecting that many of her students would face challenges once the campus reopened for the fall. Rather than adjusting her classroom plans for the realities of a late-start semester, she decided to incorporate her students' struggles into their coursework — assigning them a personal narrative essay about their experiences during and after the storm, an annotated bibliography of resources for hurricane survivors, and a few hours of weekend community service revitalizing gutted homes and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Hall in Baytown.

The students even watched videos in class to sharpen their handyman skills before volunteering, learning how to rip out baseboards, tear down sheetrock and complete other renovation tasks. Many said they found it especially gratifying and empowering to give back to the community through their classroom assignments.

Launching a student-led drive to collect school supplies. When they realized that many of their classmates and students at schools across Baytown would have to start the school year without basic classroom tools like pens and notebooks, the Lee College Student Government Association (SGA) stepped up to collect school supplies to help their peers and others in need.

After hosting a weeklong school supply drive on campus, the SGA put together 126 backpacks for Lee College students that were loaded with paper, pens and pencils, spiral notebooks, binders, folders and other items. Then, SGA officers took more than two dozen additional supply packs over to students in need at De Zavala Elementary School in Baytown.



Lee College instructor Kathleen Sydnor's students help with recovery efforts at the VFW Hall (above).



Lee College's Student Government Associate donates school supplies.

Prairie View A&M University

Prairie View A&M University has worked hard to support the stabilization of students and families affected by Hurricane Harvey. The University's office of Development established the Hurricane Harvey Emergency Relief Fund to support students, faculty and staff who have been adversely impacted by Hurricane Harvey. Through a \$100,000 investment, the university was able to make more than 450 awards from the 546 applicants.

President Ruth Simmons is continuing to interview students with the most critical needs and making larger awards. Our student leadership also worked to support the campus community. The Student Government Association (SGA) created Panthers United to Serve and Help (P.U.S.H.), so that students could donate everything from toiletries to apparel in the SGA office and affected students could pick up items daily.



Students at Prairie View A&M assemble donation bags.

Rice University

Through the coordinated effort of the Center for Civic Leadership, the Doerr Institute for New Leaders, the Graduate Student Association and the Student Association, Rice University established the Rice Harvey Action Team (R-HAT) to organize volunteers for a twofold mission: 1) to provide volunteer crews for Rice faculty, staff and students in need of home clean-up and demolition assistance; and 2) to collaborate with longstanding non-profit partners to provide volunteers to help affected Houston community members. From Aug. 31 to Sept. 4, R-HAT deployed 1,356 volunteers who provided approximately 7,610 hours of service.

In order to assist members of the Rice community affected by the storm, R-HAT first organized a student phone bank that contacted 929 Rice faculty, staff and students who had indicated in a survey administered by the university's Crisis Management Team that they had sustained damage in the storm. Once the nature of the damage was documented, R-HAT mobilized crews of four to eight volunteers to go to 69 homes and coordinated follow-up crews as needed. In addition, R-HAT coordinated with the following nonprofits to address a range of immediate needs and reach a diversity of populations across the city:

1. City of Houston Shelter at George R. Brown Convention Center
2. Baker Ripley Shelter at NRG Center
3. Salem Lutheran Church
4. Crosspoint Church
5. Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center
6. Congregation Beth Yeshurun
7. Houston Food Bank
8. Black Lives Matter Houston
9. Congregation Emanu El
10. Undies for Everyone
11. Salem Lutheran Church
12. HISD
13. Willow Meadows Baptist Church

Even after classes resumed on Sept. 5, R-HAT has continued to provide volunteers for community partners and developed a training program in disaster relief and recovery for all outgoing volunteers.



Rice students volunteer in wake of flooding.



Rice students make sandwiches and organize food donations.

Sam Houston State University

The country watched as Hurricane Harvey brought record-setting rainfall and devastated south Texas. Then, Texans showed the country the power of people working together to help others through difficult times. During this catastrophic event, the students, faculty, and staff of Sam Houston State University (SHSU) came together to assist those impacted by the hurricane, fulfilling the SHSU motto "A Measure of a Life is Its Service."

It was still pouring outside when SHSU associations stood in the rain to collect clothing and food donations to take to the local evacuation shelters. Trading bats for brooms, our 2017 history-making baseball team spent days helping local families clean their demolished homes. And seeing some students lose everything, departments organized fundraisers to financially help those Bearcats in need.

SHSU's faculty, staff, and students not only opened their hearts, but their doors to assist in recovery efforts. For a week, SHSU hosted more than 350 National Guard Troops at the Johnson Coliseum as a staging base for troops preparing to aid hurricane victims. Helping more than people, the SHSU Agricultural Sciences department utilized their rodeo arena to house the small pets of evacuees at the local shelter.

Hurricane Harvey taught the SHSU community that everyone can give back in different ways. SHSU Alumni and Admissions Counselor Victoria White used her outstanding singing voice to bring evacuees relief, joy and, most of all, hope. Her voice and Bearkat spirit was shown to the whole nation when she delivered her message of keeping faith on The Tonight Show.

Although SHSU was closed for a week, our students learned a lesson greater than anything they could have been taught in the classroom – the importance of serving and helping others.



SHSU hosted more than 350 National Guard troops preparing to aid hurricane victims.

SHSU student volunteers

San Jacinto College

San Jacinto College Response to Hurricane Harvey. As Hurricane Harvey ravaged the Texas Gulf Coast, many people from around the nation saw the fourth largest and most diverse city in the country respond with small town neighborly helping hands. Many San Jacinto College Board Members, leaders, faculty, staff and students jumped into action to help colleagues, friends and even strangers in our region.

One board member opened and ran a shelter for the impacted area of the South Belt-Ellington area of town. Others helped fellow employees and students with the clean-up of their homes after the storm passed and left so many flooded.

San Jacinto College athletes collected donations of water, insect repellent and non-perishable food items to deliver to areas affected by the storm. The giving spirit caught on, as other teams within Region XIV also donated items. The San Jacinto volleyball team delivered the supplies to Rockport, Texas. All the athletic teams helped in the community through mud out teams and even helping a special needs group get kids back on the field and back to normal after the storm passed.

The College's Foundation established an Emergency Relief Fund to assist impacted students and employees. To date, the fund has raised nearly \$100,000, including contributions from Scholarship America and Barnes and Noble Book Stores. The Foundation goal is to raise nearly \$300,000 to meet over 600 requests.

Sheldon ISD, a partnering school district of San Jacinto College, suffered catastrophic loss of a few facilities. The San Jacinto College North Campus worked with the school district and now houses 417 students from the district until the high school's facilities are back on line.

In addition, Lone Star College suffered loss on their Kingwood Campus. Several dental assisting students are now using San Jacinto College facilities for their courses.



San Jacinto's Dobie Shelter



Pets at San Jacinto's Dobie Shelter

South Texas College of Law Houston

South Texas College of Law Houston Responds with Compassion After Hurricane Harvey. We have been encouraged and inspired by how our South Texas College of Law (STCL) Houston community has united to find hope and forge a path forward following Hurricane Harvey.

Several South Texas students and employees experienced loss from the storm in varying degrees, from the loss of vehicles to entire homes. Alumni and friends acted swiftly to offer financial support through our Hurricane Relief Fund, which raised approximately \$30,000 for students and staff in a matter of days. We will continue to disburse aid, including in-kind donations from vendors.

Additionally, through our year-round [Law Suits](#) program, alumni donated new or gently used business attire to students who lost everything in the floodwaters.

While classes were canceled the week of August 28, the law school administration took steps to ensure students did not lose valuable instruction time. After consultation with the American Bar Association (ABA), faculty members offered video streaming, recorded class sessions, and used other ABA-approved instructional methods to accommodate students who were unable to return to campus immediately.

The Randall O. Sorrels Legal Clinics staff responded in real time to the needs of the local community. The week after the storm they hosted a Hurricane Recovery Session for students, faculty, alumni, and staff. The presentation covered FEMA assistance, insurance filing information, and legal concerns related to lost documents, landlord responsibilities, child custody, and other issues. Clinics staff and students are actively providing resources and services to displaced citizens at shelters throughout the city.

Our school, faculty, staff, alumni, and students acted quickly and effectively – from volunteering at the Houston Food Bank to helping neighbors rip out drywall – with minimal impact on their studies. We will continue to support our STCL Houston family impacted by Hurricane Harvey as they seek to rebuild following the storm and return to a renewed sense of normalcy.

About South Texas College of Law Houston. *Founded in 1923, South Texas College of Law Houston provides a diverse body of students with the opportunity to obtain an exceptional legal education, preparing graduates to serve their community and the profession with distinction and to be a positive force for change. The law school develops some of the country's best litigators, advocates, negotiators, and transactional lawyers, but also empowers every student with something equally valuable: The unshakable notion that a legal education is a tool for making the world a better place. For more information, please visit www.stcl.edu.*



South Texas College student volunteers from the College of Law Houston

Texas A&M University

As the world watched Hurricane Harvey batter the Texas Gulf Coast, Texas A&M University mobilized its resources, research expertise and spirit of selfless service to make a difference.

Students provided relief through the #BTHOHarvey effort, which raised thousands of dollars and truckloads of supplies.

When the university's branch campus in Galveston closed, nearly 100 of its students were bussed to the College Station campus where they were sheltered until their campus reopened.

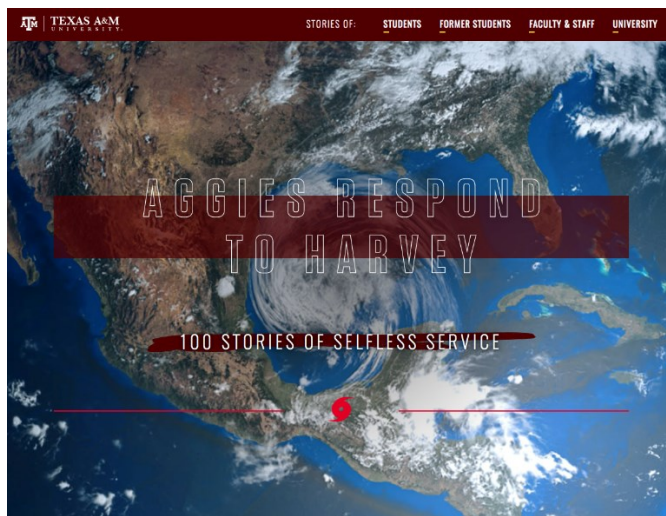
Scores of Aggies braved the elements to help neighbors and complete strangers, such as [Seth Rich](#) and [Kyle Holmes](#). More than 100 stories of selfless service can be found on [Texas A&M Today](#).

In addition to supporting disaster relief for all Texans, Texas A&M established a [hurricane relief fund](#) specifically for students, faculty and staff. The fund raised thousands, including a \$100,000 donation from the Southeastern Conference (SEC).

Texas A&M researchers contributed their expertise to help explain the devastation and assist in recovery efforts. Prof. John Nielsen-Gammon was one of many experts who [applied research](#) to forecast and track the storm, and assess its impact. One research crew [braved the storm](#) at sea. Prof. Robin Murphy deployed [drones](#) to help monitor river heights, Texas A&M safety experts warned of the potential for explosions at the [Arkema chemical plant](#), and the Texas A&M [Veterinary Emergency Team \(VET\)](#), many of them [students](#), provided aid to displaced or injured animals. Some rescued animals were [therapeutic for first responders](#).

Researchers laid out their visions for a hurricane-resistant Texas. Prof. Bill Merrell's proposition of building a wall dubbed the ["Ike Dike"](#) gained national attention, Prof. [Sam Brody](#) advocated for a more flood-resistant Houston and [TCWP](#) Director John Jacob underscored the importance of [wetlands protection](#).

"Words cannot begin to describe how proud I am of the Aggie community in the wake of Hurricane Harvey," said Texas A&M President Michael K. Young. "Current and former students, faculty and staff have stepped up in the most amazing ways to help their fellow Texans survive and begin to recover from this devastating storm."



Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

A&M-Corpus Christi Campus Community Weathers Hurricane Harvey, Continues to Provide Student Support. After Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi leadership announced the mandatory evacuation of campus ahead of Hurricane Harvey, thousands of students found themselves facing uncertainty about the days ahead. That's why providing a "personal touch" and easing Islander students' anxiety was the core mission of more than 50 Island University staff who volunteered to work at the Islander Help Call Center. The center opened Aug. 31, just one day after University employees were cleared to return to campus, and was established to aid students affected by the hurricane. More than 50 phone calls and emails were received in the first three hours the call center was operational. By the end of the first day, nearly 200 student concerns were addressed by well-trained staff from departments across campus.

Although the call center is now closed, faculty are still finding ways to provide much-needed support to Island University students. The Center for Faculty Excellence hosted several "Healing After Harvey" sessions during September. Open to all faculty and staff members, these sessions focused on teaching strategies for helping distressed students, as well as providing self-care tips for dealing with personal stress.

Off campus, the College of Education and Human Development's Counseling and Educational Psychology program professors helped to heal post-Harvey anxiety, worry, depression and trauma when they volunteered to lead student therapy sessions on Oct. 4 at Ingleside High School. Faculty and researchers in the College of Science and Engineering are also helping the Coastal Bend community through oil spill recovery efforts, Unmanned Aircraft System surveying, oyster reef restoration and much more.

For more Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi campus news, visit <http://www.tamucc.edu/news/index.html>.



TAMU-CC students and faculty at call center



TAMU-CC students and faculty training for call center

Texas A&M University-Kingsville

The athletics teams and student groups of Texas A&M University-Kingsville have been a nearly constant presence during weekend clean-up activities in areas affected by Hurricane Harvey since shortly after the storm made landfall. More than 100 students from more than a dozen student groups have volunteered in various communities. Faculty and staff from the Dick and May Lewis Kleberg College of Architecture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences have also assisted with clean-up efforts, as have most of the staff in the university's Office of Marketing and Communications.

Additionally, the Office of Alumni Services & Giving (OASG) has established the Javelina Student Emergency Relief Fund. More than \$10,600 has been raised for the fund. The OASG has also raised more than \$1,400 from the university's football fans for the Coastal Bend Community Foundation C.A.N. Disaster Relief Fund, and they have sent school supplies to several Corpus Christi-area schools who took new students after Harvey.



TAMU-Kingsville student volunteers



TAMU-Kingsville student volunteers
in Victoria

Texas Southern University

Texas Southern University's spirit of service gives support during Harvey crisis. Hurricane Harvey impacted the Texas Southern University (TSU) family and the lives of countless Houstonians. TSU's faculty, staff and students answered the call to care for the campus during this historic weather event. Immediately, TSU announced the creation of TSU Cares – A Pathway to Healing from Harvey. TSU Cares was a dedicated emergency fund designed to assist faculty, staff and students impacted by Hurricane Harvey. The University was able to provide 1,021 members of the Tiger family with \$250 stipends.

TSU's Department of Public Safety, Housing officials and Sodexo worked around the clock and lived on campus to ensure that students in residence were safe with the necessary provisions. Once the storm passed and damaged was assessed, University officials learned that the home of Dr. Thomas Freeman, TSU Debate Team Coach Emeritus, sustained severe damage. Freshmen students from Lanier West Hall, sprang into action to start the clean-up process and salvage any precious memorabilia.

The Golden Triangle home of women's basketball junior point guard Joyce Kennerson was severely damaged. So, Head Coach Johnetta Hayes Perry, with help from members of TSU National Alumni Association–Houston chapter, loaded the team bus with supplies to help Kennerson in her time of need.

TSU family members went out into the Houston community to lend a helping hand. Confucius Institute staff volunteered at the NRG Disaster Relief Center to provide translation for Asian-Americans, cultural activities for Asian displaced children and other needed services.

Several colleges have continued their fundraising efforts to assist students with recovery assistance.



Confucius Institute staff from TSU volunteered at the NRG Disaster Relief Center.



TSU freshmen volunteers worked at the home of Dr. Thomas Freeman, TSU Debate Team Coach Emeritus.

Texas Woman's University

Compassion: The Tie That Binds. With three campuses spread over 270 miles, fostering a unity among students may seem an impossible task. However, at Texas Woman's University (TWU), students on the Denton, Dallas and Houston campuses are enveloped in a "one for all, all for one" mentality. And during the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, compassion became the tie that bound across the university campuses.

Students on the Denton and Dallas campuses worked quickly to gather supplies for their fellow students in Houston. And as weather-weary students walked through the doors of the Houston campus for their first class of the semester on September 5, 2017, they were greeted with huge banners splayed across the walls offering words of support and comfort. Those words were backed with an unprecedented number of financial donations to the student emergency fund that would later be shared with students effected by Hurricane Harvey. Supplies of food, school materials, TWU t-shirts and medical scrubs were also donated by students and faculty to feed and outfit those in need.

The thread of compassion was even thicker between Houston students toward their classmates who had suffered great losses. Just one example is of the 2020 physical therapy cohort, comprised of 60+ students, that banded together to help a fellow student – a widowed, single mom who had lost everything. Together they worked to rip sheetrock, remove soiled furniture, and restore some semblance of order to her life, and that was before they'd even had one class at TWU.

The compassion extended beyond the TWU borders and into the community. With the need great at the NRG and George R. Brown Convention Center mega-shelters, nursing faculty and some 98 nursing students volunteered their time to help in the disaster relief efforts, conducting disease surveillance surveys, cot-to-cot, at the 2 mega-shelters. They also worked with the Multi-Service Centers throughout the city to collect, organize, and distribute necessary goods to storm victims. Some students were out in Fort Bend County with the Friends of North Richmond agency going door-to-door conducting healthy home inspections and teaching residents how-to clean up after flooding and how-to access resources such as FEMA.

As nursing professor Dr. Ann Malecha said, "These students will one day be the leaders in disaster relief. The knowledge and experience they gain today will impact our community tomorrow."



Students hold banners they made to greet weather-weary Houston students as they started classes on Sept. 5.

The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston

Hurricane Harvey and The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston Students. When you look at the hospitals, labs and classrooms on The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston (UTMB) campuses, they look untouched by the flooding brought by Hurricane Harvey. But talk to those walking the halls and sidewalks and you'd find hardly a student, faculty or staff member unaffected by the devastating storm.

There have been many responses to the disaster, but students faced their own unique challenges. So even before the waters had completely receded, UTMB administrators and professors were busy finding ways to help students wherever they happened to be and with whatever needs they may have.

Faculty and staff from the schools of Medicine, Nursing, Health Professions and Graduate Biomedical Sciences reached out to all of their students to find out where they were and how they were doing. The responses came quickly and ranged from those who were completely fine to those who had lost everything.

UTMB quickly set up a fund, with the help of the United Way, which will go to help students. Deans at UTMB have also been allowed to use their "Greatest Needs Funds" to help students who might need to replace books, computers, medical equipment such as stethoscopes, or might have to find new transportation after their vehicles were flooded or even new places to live after their homes were damaged.

The schools and the various departments also worked to have online materials for classes available for students and to arrange classes and exams so that students wouldn't fall behind. And even while many students were putting their own lives back together, UTMB students were also quick to help others in the community.

Teams of students and faculty members have helped families all over the county, including a World War II veteran in Dickinson, clean out their homes and prepare for remediation and recovery. On Oct. 14, the Student Government Association, along with student organization volunteers, will host a day of volunteering throughout Galveston County to continue offering Hurricane Harvey relief.

UTMB students have also helped with area organizations such as the Rehabilitation Services Volunteer Project that helped distribute needed medical equipment and other supplies. The UTMB Student Government Association has also raised funds to help students impacted by the storm.

Dr. Janet Enderle, a professor in clinical laboratory sciences department and director of clinical education for the department, said it has been good for both students and faculty to be reach out and help each other.

Enderle said one of her students lost her home, as did her parents. Her sister's home had also sustained damage. "She lost just about everything," Enderle said.

Enderle reached out to the student and let her and her husband stay in her home in Galveston while they sort out their housing situation. It was just the right thing to do, Enderle said.

"Our students are not just a number here," Enderle said. "We are all a family here."



One team of UTMB students from the School of Nursing



Volunteers from UTMB's School of Medicine

University of Houston

Our highest priorities during Hurricane Harvey were the wellbeing of our students and to ensure their academic standing was not jeopardized. To accomplish this, our mission was to continuously communicate with our students via email, text and social media, understand their challenges and accommodate their needs so their studies could resume as seamlessly as possible. For the nearly 2,000 residential students who remained on campus during the storm, we continued dining services at no charge and provided free parking in garages so their cars would not flood. University of Houston (UH) first responders relocated 140 students to temporary housing when their apartments became surrounded by floodwaters.

Away from campus, many of our 45,000 students did lose their cars, their homes, were displaced for extended periods and needed time to address life's essentials. President Renu Khator's charge was to provide support, flexibility and compassion. Facing great uncertainty, numerous deadlines were extended, including dates for drops, withdrawals, residency applications, health insurance and payment plans. Every student who applied to withdraw was personally contacted to help troubleshoot challenges and remain enrolled.

UH solicited private donations to the Cougar Emergency Fund. Our resilient student community sprang into action to help each other, starting its own donation drive and coordinating volunteer trips to support others across the city. Our football team, which had relocated to Austin, returned with a convoy of 18-wheelers from college Athletics programs across Texas packed with donated supplies for communities around us.

The day UH reopened, despite much of Houston still flooded and major arteries gridlocked, our parking lots and classrooms were full. Our administrators had hustled to successfully relocate classes from damaged buildings. A month after the storm our withdrawal rate for the fall was on par with past semesters. Many challenges for effected students remain and we are committed to guiding them to succeed.



UH first responders help others.



The UH football team unloads donations.

Victoria College

The Victoria area was struck by sustained winds up to 130 mph as Harvey made landfall on Aug. 25. Many homes suffered severe damage and power was out for much of the city for over a week. Victoria College (VC) suffered minimal structural damage, but many tree limbs were downed.

A voluntary cleanup effort by approximately 75 VC employees began on Aug. 31. Over 40 students and employees from Laredo Community College (LCC) made the 180-mile trip to Victoria to join the effort and assist in the cleanup. LCC, Texas A&M International University, and the Webb County Sheriff's Office collected and delivered two tractor-trailer truckloads of relief items – clothes, bottled water, canned goods, diapers, and other essentials – to Victoria College. VC distributed the items to students and employees three times over a two-week period.

The Victoria College Foundation established a Hurricane Harvey Student Emergency Assistance Fund to aid students who experienced home or auto damage with funds for food, clothing, temporary shelter, and other essentials. The VC Foundation dispersed \$14,900 in cashier checks for emergency assistance and an additional \$7,941 in scholarships to assist with payment plans, benefitting 60 students. An additional \$10,575 was dispersed to 41 employees requesting assistance.

In response to students' feedback regarding uncertainty with the FEMA application for assistance, Victoria College hosted a FEMA Q&A for students and employees on Oct. 10. Attendees learned about the FEMA application process, what to do if FEMA said they were ineligible, and how to appeal FEMA's decision. FEMA specialists were on hand to address specific questions about individual applications.



Victoria College President Dr. David Hinds chats with students on Sept. 5 as they wait in line to receive relief items at VC's Student Center.

Laredo Community College students made the 180-mile trip to Victoria to assist with VC's campus cleanup on Aug. 31.

Wharton County Junior College

Wharton County Junior College Served the Community in the Wake of Crisis.

Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) employees helped to prepare the college in both the wake and aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. Time and again, WCJC employees reached out to volunteer their time to relief organizations, assist in dangerous rescue efforts, make donations, and lend a helping hand to others in crisis.

When Hurricane Harvey struck the college's service area, Wharton County Junior College was here to help. The college immediately opened its doors to serve as a hub for first responders. The college continued to serve the community by offering housing to these vital members of the crisis rescue team by providing a comfortable central location to rest, bath, and share meals. The college hosted staff from the Department of Public Safety, the City of Wharton Emergency Medical Services, the Texas State Guard, the National Guard, and the U.S. Army. Additionally, the college allowed the Wharton Police Department to set up a command post on campus, provided a group of community volunteers with needed space to set up a relief station to offer meals, and served as relief location for a county animal rescue group.

Immediately after the storm, Wharton County Junior College established a relief fund named #PioneersCARE for employees whose homes were lost or damaged in the disaster left by Harvey. The campaign raised thousands to assist these employees.

The Wharton County Junior College Foundation recently donated \$100,000 to the college to assist students directly affected by the storm and the subsequent flooding. Efforts are underway to establish an account that can be accessed for tuition, fees and books for qualified students.

This disaster reminded the Wharton County Junior College family of how important each individual employee and student is to the college.



In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, Wharton County Junior College allowed Wharton County residents to use its parking lot as a distribution site for water, food, and supplies.



This document is available on the [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website](http://thehighereducationboard.org).

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