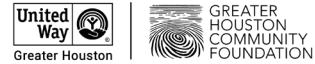


NEWS RELEASE



CONTACT: Hannah Savage
Carbonara Group
OFFICE: 713-524-8170
CELL: 713-819-1320
EMAIL: hannah@carbonaragroup.com



Greater Houston Disaster Alliance Launches Recovery Fund for Those Impacted by Severe Weather and Derecho

Disaster Alliance led by Greater Houston Community Foundation and United Way of Greater Houston in partnership with City and County leaders

HOUSTON, TX (May 21, 2024) – In response to the significant number of households affected by severe weather in recent weeks, the Greater Houston Disaster Alliance, a joint effort of Greater Houston Community Foundation and United Way of Greater Houston, has established the Severe Weather and Derecho Recovery Fund to help those impacted by the severe storms, derecho winds, tornadoes, and flooding events that occurred between April 26 and May 17, 2024.

On May 18, 2024, President Joe Biden approved a Major Disaster Declaration for these combined events impacting multiple counties, making federal assistance available to support local recovery efforts. All monies raised will complement these efforts and will be distributed as grants to nonprofit partners to provide low-to-moderate income families with emergency financial assistance, home repairs, and assistance accessing resources services in Harris, Montgomery and Waller counties.

The fund has received early support from the CenterPoint Energy Foundation (\$500,000) and a \$500,000 contribution from Comcast, which will be split into a \$250,000 cash donation and \$250,000 in-kind.

“The Greater Houston Disaster Alliance was formed so that in times of crisis, there is a swift and efficient response to help those severely impacted begin the process of recovery,” said Stephen Maislin, president and CEO, Greater Houston Community Foundation. “When disaster strikes, it requires a collaborative and coordinated response from the nonprofit, for-profit, public sector and philanthropic community to ensure the most vulnerable in our region get the help they need to start the recovery and rebuilding process.”

With over 35 years of combined experience leading disaster recovery efforts, the Greater Houston Disaster Alliance was formed by the two regional nonprofits to strengthen year-round overall disaster preparedness and ensure the Greater Houston area has the social service network and systems in place to respond rapidly, equitably and effectively in times of disaster. Through an initial investment from Enbridge and Phillips 66, the Disaster Alliance focuses on maintaining and strengthening year-round disaster preparedness and recovery.

“Outside of times of disaster, we know that 14% of households in our region are struggling on income below the federal poverty line and 31% of households in our region are working hard but struggling to make ends meet. It’s these neighbors who are disproportionately impacted when disaster strikes,” said Amanda McMillian, president and CEO, United Way of Greater Houston. “This fund allows us to lift up the most vulnerable who have been impacted by recent weather events to ensure they can not only recover from the immediate crisis, but also prepare themselves for future disasters.”

Based on data showing areas with high need, the Fund will serve residents of Harris, Montgomery and Waller counties who were affected by the severe weather. Those who need immediate assistance are

encouraged to call the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, the community's key 24/7 information source during times of disaster. United Way's 211 provides callers with the most updated information on assistance with utilities, housing or rental assistance, crisis counseling, access to senior services, information on food pantries in the community and more. Assistance through 211 can also be accessed through the following methods in the event of long wait times due to periods of heavy call volume:

- Visit 211texas.org to search resources online or chat online with a specialist.
- Email help@unitedwayhouston.org for assistance.

"We are collaborating to tackle the needs of those impacted by the recent natural disasters that impacted our area. We will work closely with United Way of Greater Houston, Greater Houston Community Foundation and Harris County to recruit the resources necessary to assist with recovery efforts," said Mayor John Whitmire. "The activation of the Severe Weather and Derecho Recovery Fund is an important component in overall recovery efforts, working to connect impacted families with the help they need to rebuild and recover."

Prior to the launch of the Disaster Alliance in 2023, Greater Houston Community Foundation and United Way of Greater Houston collaborated with City and County leadership to address urgent community needs prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Winter Storm Uri.

"My heart goes out to all those affected by these devastating disasters. During times like these, the strength and unity of our community in Harris County becomes our greatest assets. There are ways that all residents in Harris County can support. For those willing and able to volunteer, you can call 713-533-3190 or visit volunteerhouston.org. If you can contribute financially, your donation to the Severe Weather and Derecho Recovery Fund is invaluable. This fund will help us distribute relief funds to local nonprofits quickly so they can start helping folks rebuild as soon as possible. Thank you to the United Way, the Greater Houston Community Foundation and all those who are helping us recover," said Judge Lina Hidalgo.

For more information on the Severe Weather and Derecho Relief Fund and how to donate, visit www.disasteralliance.org/derecho.

###

About United Way of Greater Houston

United Way of Greater Houston connects people to possibility. We unite donors, volunteers and community partners in support of a focused plan to remove barriers on the path to financial stability for families and individuals. Programs focused on financial stability, early childhood and youth development, and physical and behavioral health care help our neighbors land on their feet and stay there. These programs are supported by a foundation of basic needs assistance and help for those escaping violence. For families and individuals who are ready, our individualized approach includes Navigators to guide them as they access multiple services on their unique journey to financial stability. United Way also connects our neighbors with help, hope and critical resources 24/7/365 through the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE. A focus on equity is integral to United Way's work and program investments are evaluated on how diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging is incorporated into policies, practices and service delivery. Our community investments are backed by research, ensured by good stewardship and deliver results. For more information, visit www.unitedwayhouston.org.

About Greater Houston Community Foundation

Since 1995, Greater Houston Community Foundation has helped Houston thrive by convening philanthropic resources and knowledge to drive philanthropy in our community, distributing over \$2.2 billion in grants recommended by its donors since inception. The organization supports high profile community and donor initiatives with the most comprehensive philanthropic resources, expertise, and innovative platforms. Greater Houston Community Foundation is widely considered to be the go-to partner for high-profile philanthropic partnerships in the Greater Houston area, including major disaster relief initiatives, such as the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund as well as Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. Greater

Houston Community Foundation leads collaborations that support the wellbeing and vitality of Houston, including [Understanding Houston](#), a regional indicator initiative with strategic research partner Rice Kinder Institute. The Foundation provides individuals, families, corporations, foundations, and advisors with the ability to expand their philanthropic impact. For more information, please visit, www.ghcf.org.