



# HURRICANE HARVEY RELIEF RESPONSE

**Chinese American Citizens Alliance**

## YOUR RESPONSE

**Chinese American Citizens Alliance (C.A.C.A.)** lodges and members immediately raised and donated over \$21,000 to the AARP Foundation as its response to the devastating damage wrought upon the upper Gulf Coast by Hurricane Harvey's winds and raging floods.

AARP Foundation selected four Houston area agencies who brought much relief to the underserved Asian communities with a \$30,000 grant to each, totaling \$120,000 in emergency funds.

**Ed Gor**

Past National President

## **Thank You from Houston's Asian Pacific Islander Community!**

**Thanks to the urgent call and rapid response of the local lodges and members of Chinese American Citizens Alliance, the emergency funds and services for the relief to members of Houston's Asian Pacific Islander Community are greatly appreciated. Your generous and thoughtful contributions amounted to over \$21,000 raised in a short period of time which was donated to the AARP Foundation in their matching contribution for Hurricane Harvey relief efforts.**

**In many instances, contributions for major relief efforts are often not tracked to know their use or effect. It was in our interest to specifically help Houston's underserved AAPI community that we were able to identify four organizations that our community was knowledgeable about and could trust to put the most dollars to use in the most effective measures. These organizations—the Chinese Community Center, HOPE Clinic, Boat People—SOS and OCA—Greater Houston—are each heavily involved, thoroughly invested and well trusted to provide the needed immediate relief services and other long-term crisis situations in resettling. Each was awarded a \$30,000 grant, totaling \$120,000 from the AARP Foundation.**

**Even as Thanksgiving has passed, thousands in Houston are still displaced and nowhere near back to normalcy. Over 100,000 homes were flooded and most are either still under repair or have been demolished. That situation is significantly dire for children who find themselves also displaced from homes and their schools. In short, it will take over 2 years for Houston to return to what we were. However, we are Houston Strong and every citizen has vowed to do what we can to see that Houston's communities return to a better condition than before.**

**I remain humbled by all that has been done by the generosity and sacrifice of those in Houston and those from other parts of the country who have also come to the aid of our area. Hurricane Harvey hit us all and our people of all ethnicities, all religions, all socio-economic backgrounds, ALL came together to help one another.**

**I am grateful that you answered the call for help.**

**With grateful humility,**

**Ed Gor**

## AARP Foundation Announces Grants to Houston AAPI Organizations

### Chinese American Citizens Alliance Contributions Lauded



We are pleased to provide an update on the Chinese American Citizens Alliance's (C.A.C.A.) support for Hurricane Harvey relief efforts in Texas. More than \$20,000 (and counting!) has been raised from C.A.C.A. Lodges and Members, and matched dollar for dollar through a disaster relief fund established by AARP and AARP Foundation. The generosity of C.A.C.A. is a true testament to community philanthropy and people coming together in response to the storms devastating toll on so many lives.

AARP Foundation has distributed \$3 million – 100% of funds raised and matched – to organizations on the ground that are addressing the specific needs of vulnerable older adults. Some of these groups are providing short-term relief for things like housing, food, and healthcare. Others are offering longer-term recovery support, to help repair and rebuild homes and assisted living facilities, and ensure seniors have access to legal services if issues around property insurance or benefits arise. Among the 21 organizations receiving support, the four directly serving the Asian and Pacific Islander Community are the *Chinese Community Center*, *the HOPE Clinic*, *OCA-Greater Houston*, and *Boat People SOS*.

AARP and AARP Foundation also established a fund to aid victims of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, raising \$2.25 million for relief efforts in Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

**AARP Foundation**  
Clara M. Chiu | Development Officer – California

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Pasadena, CA 91101

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## Houston Hurricane Harvey Relief Efforts

Organization	Services Provided	What You Can Do To Help	Website
Boat People SOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Legal services</li> <li>-Outreach to Vietnamese community in more rural areas</li> </ul>	Donate online Funds will go towards: Legal services and outreach efforts	<a href="https://www.bpsos.org/">https://www.bpsos.org/</a>
Chinese Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-CCC Harvey Relief Assistance Center: Providing FEMA application assistance</li> <li>-Partnering with HEB grocery store to disseminate foods to clients who have been affected</li> <li>-Working with Rental Association to find transitional housing</li> <li>-Reactivating facilities as a Red Cross Shelter</li> </ul>	Donate online OR send check to 9800 Town Park Dr. Houston, TX 77036 with "Harvey Relief Fund" in the memo line. Funds will go towards: Providing help with rental assistance for displaced residents	<a href="http://ccchouston.org/">http://ccchouston.org/</a>
Hope Clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ACA special enrollment</li> <li>-Free Tetanus Vaccines</li> </ul>	Donate online Funds will go towards: Medical services, supplies and resources for victims	<a href="http://www.hopechc.org/">http://www.hopechc.org/</a>
OCA Houston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Coordinating and providing FEMA training for local organizations</li> <li>-Focusing on capacity building amongst local AAPI organizations</li> </ul>	Donate online Contribute to the Harvey AAPI Community Relief Fund	<a href="http://www.ocahouston.org/harveyrelief">http://www.ocahouston.org/harveyrelief</a>

## Harvey Relief Assistance Center Report, November 2017 Chinese Community Center

To date, CCC has provided 580 low- to moderate-income households with comprehensive disaster case management services, which, depending on each household's specific needs, include:

- rental assistance of up to \$600 for people who became unemployed or displaced as a result of the hurricane;
- utility assistance of up to \$400 for people who received disconnection notices;
- transportation assistance to help pay for auto repair and/or vehicle rental services for people whose vehicles were damaged so they could commute to their workplace;
- financial assistance to help FEMA clients pay for uncovered “muck-and-gut” services to remove flood-damaged materials from their homes and/or replace property;
- cash assistance of up to \$200 for individuals and families through the distribution of VISA gift cards so that people from low- to moderate-income households could meet their urgent needs;
- assistance with enrolling in public benefits, such as FEMA, Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loans, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Medicaid, and health insurance through the Marketplace; and
- basic resources, such as clothes, baby essentials, food, and water.



CCC continues to provide ongoing case management and follow-up to 35–40 households daily. Services are available to people living anywhere in and around the Greater Houston metropolitan area, including Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Waller, and Brazoria Counties. Clients have come from more than 60 different ZIP codes and as far away as Beaumont and Port Arthur, which are 85–90 miles outside of Houston.

### **Red Cross Shelter**

During September 17–22, 2017, CCC was activated as a Red Cross shelter to house an average of 200 evacuees a day while temporary housing was being arranged for them. The evacuees had been staying at the George R. Brown Convention Center previously and were among the most medically vulnerable and elderly of the evacuee population. Links to stories about this event from ABC-13 and CW-39 are provided below.

- “Red Cross working to move Harvey evacuees from GRB,” September 18, 2017, ABC-13: <http://abc13.com/red-cross-working-to-move-harvey-evacuees-from-grb/2428636/>
- “Evacuees at George R. Brown moved to Chinese Community Center,” September 18, 2017, CW-39: <http://cw39.com/2017/09/18/evacuees-at-george-r-brown-moved-to-chinese-community-center/>



*Above: The Chinese Community Center is activated as a Red Cross shelter on September 17, 2017.*

### **Hope for Texas Homeowners Fair**

From October 3 through 5, CCC, in partnership with the City of Houston and Hope Now, hosted the Hope for Texas Homeowners Fair, which was attended by about 350 people. Attendees were able to discuss options with their mortgage servicer, apply for assistance with a nonprofit housing counselor approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, meet with representatives of local organizations that can provide resources and aid, and receive education and awareness on recovery and rebuilding.



*Above: The Chinese Community Center hosts the Hope for Texas Homeowners Fair on October 3, 2017.*

## **Client Story**

Mary (pseudonym) is a 20-year-old woman who is the primary provider for her household, which includes her mother, 17-year-old brother, and 8-year-old sister. The family's home in Missouri City, Texas, which they rent, sustained damage during Hurricane Harvey. Mary applied for FEMA assistance but withdrew her application once she learned that her landlord had already applied for FEMA assistance for the home. Mary was unable to work for multiple weeks after Hurricane Harvey struck, and as an hourly employee, she lost wages that she was counting on for paying rent and bills, which included utilities and a monthly car note. She was in the process of negotiating with her landlord for leniency on the utility bills, and she was particularly concerned about falling behind on the car note, since the car was the family's lifeline to stability.

Mary met with a case manager at CCC's Harvey Relief Assistance Center. Although Mary had withdrawn her FEMA application, the case manager encouraged her to resubmit the application in case she was eligible for financial assistance to replace the belongings that her family had lost during the hurricane. The case manager also provided her with emergency financial assistance to help her become current on her car note and utilities balances.

Mary stated that the assistance she received from the Harvey Relief Assistance Center helped the family weather their crisis and remain financially stable while she waited to return to work. Mary is now back at work, and her mother recently obtained employment as well, which will help the family maintain their stability.



# HARVEY AAPI COMMUNITY RELIEF FUND

*OCA–Greater Houston and our community partners have established the Harvey AAPI Community Relief Fund that will work in conjunction with the Harvey Community Relief Fund founded by other trusted organizations in Houston to pool resources and coordinate their distribution. We want to make sure that the AAPI community is represented and adequately served in efforts to recover and rebuild, and that aid is distributed efficiently and equitably to all underserved populations of Houston.*

## **How is the money being used?**

First priority for the use of the funds raised will be to support the extra staffing/time that will be needed by our partner organizations and OCA-Greater Houston to do the actual work of getting Harvey related assistance information out and helping people get the assistance/benefits they can qualify for and for the longer term fight to make sure that government benefits and policies are applied equitably and include AAPI survivors.

Second priority for the use of funds raised will be to help coordinate physical donations and purchases of things like food and supplies. For example, seniors will need help getting medications that they need immediately and cannot wait for the time it takes to get insurance approvals. In the past we have also provided culturally competent food items that the regular food banks do not have.

OCA-Greater Houston is not taking any administrative overhead. All funds remaining after the PayPal credit card processing fees will be used to support the actual work of helping people.

## **Information & thank you's received from Boat People SOS and the HOPE Clinic:**

Dear Ed and Clara,

Thank you so much for supporting our community in the Harvey recovery process. With AARP support we are able to provide case management and some financial assistance to our seniors who are struggling to recover from the devastation of the storm. We will continue to keep you updated.

Regards,

*Jannette Diep*

*Executive Director, BPSOS-Houston*

*BIA Accredited Representative*

*11360 Bellaire Blvd. Suite 910*

*Houston, TX 77072*

*Direct: [832-300-5553](tel:832-300-5553)*

*Office: [281.530.6888](tel:281-530-6888)*

*Website: <http://www.bpsoshou.org>*

*Email: [jannette.diep@bpsos.org](mailto:jannette.diep@bpsos.org)*

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## **AARP Foundation Announces Grants to Houston AAPI Organizations**

Dear Ed and Clara,

First of all thank you so much for keeping HOPE Clinic in mind as we rebuild after Harvey. We are truly grateful as the funds come at a critical time. We have projected that the need for Behavioral Health Services will increase within the next 2 months and peak at 6 to 9 months after Harvey. We have started preparing to increase our team's capacity to screen and address behavioral issues in seniors arising from the hurricane experience and the emotional and financial impact it will have on our senior community. The funds will be critical to accelerate our staff preparedness and capacity to handle the increase in behavioral health events and provide much needed case management.

Thank you again for your advocacy, support and commitment to our AAPI community,

Sincerely,

**Andrea Caracostis, CEO**

**HOPE CLINIC**

7001 Corporate Dr. Suite 120

Houston, TX 77036

Direct Line: 713-337-3640

Assistant: 713-337-3641

713.254.2235 (cell)

## **THE CALL FOR ACTION**

First, thank you to all who have already responded so generously to the call for donations to the Harvey Community Relief efforts and I trust this will continue amongst all the National Board and local lodges through the remainder of the year. **National must always lead in times like this**. This has been a long, arduous process for anyone who has been directly or even remotely affected by this tragic event. Even with the same effects of Irma and Maria on those areas, it is still an ongoing emergency response here locally. Not a day goes by when I don't see all the build-up of trash and debris from destroyed homes left on the curbs for pickup. A record of 51.88 inches of rain fell on Southeast Texas in what is called a 1-in-1000 years' flood damaging over 203,000 homes and causing 507,000 people to register for FEMA assistance. Here's how we can continue to help:

As I promised during the convention, I wanted to not only find the best way to facilitate the handling of your contributions but also to have a voice in where and how these funds are deployed. With so many, many groups out there raising funds, I wanted to give you confidence that these monies would go where they'd have the most effect for OUR communities of Asians and Asian Americans. When a hurricane hits, it hits everyone equally hard and everyone suffers. However, we also know that the access to relief assistance is usually **most difficult for our underserved, underrepresented and sometimes those unable to navigate the systems**. This is what C.A.C.A. members, friends and supporters can do:

### **Q. WHO SHOULD I CHANNEL DONATIONS TO FOR HURRICANE HARVEY RELIEF?**

#### **A. AARP FOUNDATION**

During my conversations with AARP to become a major sponsor of the convention, they apprised me that their AARP Foundation had instituted efforts to receive donations for Harvey Relief with a matching amount up to \$1.5 million. Unfortunately, that amount was reached very quickly in the early stages, so while our intent was to seek their match for these efforts, that will not be the case. Nonetheless, it is still the most efficient method for us to send donations to them since they will also provide: (1) your tax-deductible receipt of your donation and (2) acknowledgement that your funds were part of the collective C.A.C.A. effort for Harvey relief.

### **Q. HOW CAN I DONATE TO THE AARP FOUNDATION?**

1. Due to the most recent hurricanes, Irma and Maria, the **AARP Foundation webpage for donating to Harvey has been removed** and updated for Irma and Maria. However, you can still send donations using the attached form which provides an address to send checks to and also the name of Clara Chiu, who works with the AARP Foundation and is also a C.A.C.A. LA member. She will bundle the checks and handle the acknowledgements. If you DO send directly to Clara, please email me ([ejgor@comcast.net](mailto:ejgor@comcast.net)) that you have sent a donation to her as I'm tracking these separately for a total of donors and donations.
2. Alternatively, you can send the checks and forms to me and I'll forward to Clara. Send to: Ed Gor, 4604 Oakdale St., Bellaire, TX 77401.

## **Q. HOW AND WHERE WILL THE FUNDS BE DISTRIBUTED?**

1. One of the stipulations I asked AARP was whether these C.A.C.A. donated funds and any additional AARP funds could be directed to specific agencies or groups that are involved with providing service to AAPI communities in Houston. Clara Chiu, Daphne Kwok and I have discussed with colleagues of mine in Houston to target several known groups with a proven record and reputation for serving our Houston community. Till the Foundation Board meets to allocate specific funds for Harvey, then Clara and Daphne will provide the Houston input to the Board for consideration. While there are no promises, the AARP Foundation has directed them to AAPI organizations in the past for other similar causes. I remain in regular communication with them and will report updates. Attached is a list of those organizations under consideration in which my own due diligence can offer assurances of their service capabilities.

## **NATIONAL SHOULD AND MUST LEAD THE WAY**

While those who anticipate going to Boston for the 2019 convention are facing the “Lobster Challenge”, **I would put a challenge today to all National Presidents (Past, Present and Future) to match my \$1,000 donation to the AARP Foundation. All other National Officers are challenged to donate \$500 if you’ve served 2 or more terms and \$250 if this is your first term.** We have not made very many appeals to raise funds among our membership in a several years. This is a good time to come to the aid of Asians on the Gulf Coast. I will see that your money and my money is put to best use. So far, AARP Foundation has received just over \$11,000 from those who answered the early call. I’ll publish a complete list soon, but let me acknowledge the generosity of **San Antonio Lodge which has stepped up with a heartfelt \$5,000.**

**Donations from Chinese American Citizens Alliance  
For AAPI Harvey Relief Fund**

**THANK YOU! \$21,345 RAISED FROM 54 GENEROUS "FIRST RESPONDER-DONORS"**

\* denotes National Board member

\$25 to \$99	\$100 to \$249	\$250 to \$499	\$500-\$999	\$1,000-\$3,000	\$5,000+
Eddie Chin	<b>John Gee*</b>	<b>Nancy Gee*</b>	C.A.C.A. Seattle Lodge	C.A.C.A. Salinas Lodge-CIF	C.A.C.A. San Antonio Lodge
Evangeline Song	<b>Robert Gin*</b>	Franklin & Sharry Quan	<b>Suellen &amp; Munson Kwok*</b>	C.A.C.A. Portland Lodge-CIF	
Margaret M. Cochran	Robin D. Shoffner	Meng & James Ansley, Jr.	<b>Julie &amp; Paul Wong*</b>	C.A.C.A. San Francisco Lodge	
Gloria Lee	Siu Wong	Andrew & Betty Sit	<b>Juanita &amp; William Mei*</b>	C.A.C.A. Chicago Lodge	
C.A.C.A. Mississippi Lodge (Shirley Kwan)	Kent & Nancy Lee	<b>Tammy &amp; Charles Mau*</b>	Collin Lai & Susan Hum	<i>(above includes Corky Lee in-kind photograph donation &amp; auction bid donation by Lucy Suen)</i>	
Collin & Ellen Wong	Betty Jean Lee Trust	Chinese Womens Auxiliary of the Chinese Assn.	John & Sharon Wong		
Gail M. Leong	Warren Seeto	Winston Wu		<b>Jeanie &amp; Ed Gor*</b> <i>(includes AARP Foundation &amp; AAPI HPD Officers Harvey Relief Fund)</i>	
Stanley & Carolyn Jee	<b>Tony Q. Chan / Carolyn H. Chan Rev. Trust*</b>				
Pamela & Dennis Jong	Shirley Warren				
Herbert & Sandra Wong	Richard & Roberta Yee			C.A.C.A. Phoenix Lodge	

\$25 to \$99	\$100 to \$249	\$250 to \$499	\$500-\$999	\$1,000-\$3,000	\$5,000+
David & Stephanie Yee	<b>Charles &amp; Joan Sung*</b>			<b>Davace Chin*</b> <i>(contributions divided to Hurricanes Harvey and Maria)</i>	
<b>Mohkeed &amp; Ted Gong*</b>	Keith Sato				
EJF & KL Fitzpatrick	<b>Melanie Chan*</b>				
	Michael T. Yep				
	Florence Kong				
	Eva Li				
	<b>Mary Ann &amp; Rudy Yee*</b>				
	Tom & May Gee				
	David D. Kuo				
	C.A.C.A. Peninsula Lodge				

END OF REPORT