

Service After the Storm: Community-engaged Disaster Response

Engagement Scholarship Consortium|2019

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of NORTH CAROLINA
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CAROLINA CENTER *for* **PUBLIC SERVICE**
Connecting Carolina and Communities



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Connecting Carolina and Communities

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Purpose and Agenda

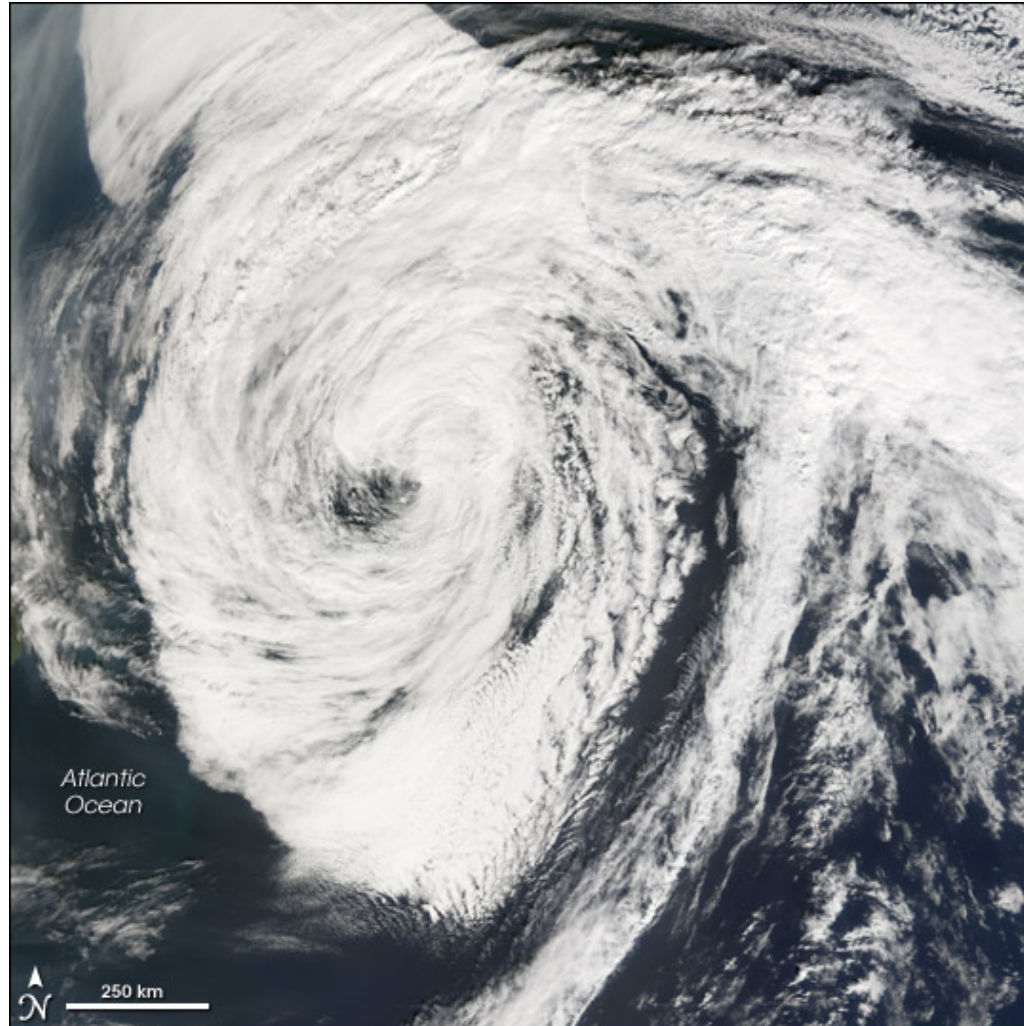
Goals

Share the experience of UNC-Chapel Hill and the Carolina Center for Public Service (CCPS) in the wake of recent hurricanes as one example of an evolving campus response to natural disasters.

Learn from the experiences of others in the group and identify strategies and challenges.



What's your version of the storm?





History and Context

Disaster response has been an ongoing part of CCPS's history and work for the last 20 years.

- Opened in 1999 to coordinate and support public service activities and assisted with Hurricane Floyd response
- **Initial efforts included:**
 - Fall break trips
 - Transporting volunteers to sites
 - Awarded faculty grants to support hurricane relief work
 - Central information source for donors and community groups





Examples of Engaged Disaster Response

We understand campuses have experienced these events in different ways.

What factors affect a college or university's involvement?

Dunlop et al, "The Engagement of Academic Institutions in Community Disaster Response: A Comparative Analysis" (2014)



UNC-CH as an Example of Engaged Disaster Response

Carolina's efforts in the wake of Hurricanes Matthew, Florence and Dorian:

- **Before the storms**
- **In immediate response to the storms**
- **Ongoing efforts moving forward**

Less Engaged

More Engaged





Before the Storm

Hurricane Matthew

- No specified staff roles
- Did not know the full extent of the impacts of the storm
- Well-established network of partners and contacts
- Disaster relief webpage on CCPS site and Public Service Newsletter


Hurricane Florence

- Existing partnerships and programs for disaster relief following work with Hurricane Matthew
- Staff had clearly assigned roles
- Knew our role at the University
- Set up website in advance of storm

Know protocols, policies & points of contact.

Clearly define your and your unit's role.

Prepare templates and draft content.



What actions can campuses take in advance to prepare for disaster response?



Immediately After the Storm: Campus Programming



Bucket Brigade, Nov. 2017



Princeville relief trip, Dec. 2016



Long-Term and Ongoing Efforts: Grants

Grants

- Up to \$1,000 for relief trips
- Up to \$5,000 for recovery projects
- Application process:
 - Community partner and description of relationship
- Orientation & post-trip summary report

Online Disaster Relief Trip Orientation

How can we prepare our volunteers?

Talk about expectations.



Provide detail.



Discuss emotions.



Share an article.



Use travel time.



- **Talk with your group about their expectations for the trip, as well as your own.** What are they looking to get out of the trip? Do their expectations match the plan that you and the planning team have created?
- **Provide as much detail as possible about what they'll be doing and the partners with whom they'll be working.** Make sure you are aware of any accommodations that your volunteers may need so that you can plan for them during the trip. If your volunteers need special training, equipment, or if they will be doing any work that could be dangerous, provide them with safety tips and resources for how to prepare before you leave.
- **Discuss the emotions that might come up while they are on the trip,** both for them and the members of the community they will be working with, and how you can cope with them.
- **Send out an article or other reading material about service,** disaster relief, the specific

Incorporate faculty & research

Create accountability measures & review process for grants

Empower other units to lead drives & trips

“What can we do to help?”

- What is it about disasters that brings out people’s sense of community and generosity in ways that other issues might not?





Engaged Disaster Response

- **Proactive** rather than reactive, in terms of crisis readiness
- **Informed** by lessons learned and strategies that have worked
- **Needs-based**, as identified by the community
- **Collaborative** with communities, existing and new partners and other populations
- **Sustainable** through long-term relationships and the promotion of research



Thoughts from Community Partners

“I have witnessed love and well wishes from students to survivors and their children. I have listened to the hardships a survivor has shared and the quiet listening from students. I have seen the commitment to getting a house painted, clothes organized, brick cleaned, siding put up, just to name a few things. I can tell you without a doubt that volunteers have made an impact here with survivors.”



Ann Wade, Volunteer Coordinator
United Methodist Conference on Relief
Robeson County, NC



Thoughts from Community Partners



“The groups from UNC have indeed been a blessing to the Filling Station. They have brought energy, creativity and most of all, heart to serve our community.”

Mary Ann LeRay
*Board of Directors, Filling Station
Pollocksville, NC*



What We've Learned

Before the Storm

- Know policies, protocols & points of contact
- Clearly define your role & your unit's role
- Prepare templates & content ahead of time

Long-Term/Ongoing Efforts

- Incorporate faculty and research
- Grants:
 - Create accountability measures for recipients
 - Develop a review process
- Empower other units to perform direct service

In Immediate Response to the Storm

- **Communication:**
 - Know who will convene groups & disperse info
 - Track requests and interest
 - Check in with other institutions
- **Relief Trips:**
 - Plan trips with local organizations in response to need
 - Minimize burden, maximize benefit
 - Respect & reflect
- **Additional Campus Programming:**
 - Encourage collaboration between units
 - Know what works for your campus
 - Adapt existing programs and resources



What have you learned?

What is an action step you can take this month to move your campus toward a more engaged disaster response?



Special thank you to:
Becca Bender, Senior Program Officer for Community Engagement
Sarah Leck, Office of the Chancellor



Stay Connected

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