



Red Cross volunteers go above and beyond

John Gravitt and his wife, Roblyn, rode out Hurricane Iselle in their Puna home on the Big Island. As the power failed and the wind snapped the trees surrounding their house, both believed they would perish in the storm. "I honestly thought we would be crushed by falling trees," says Roblyn. "It was the darkest, longest and most terrifying night."

The following nights were also very long for Roblyn, until American Red Cross RN volunteer Candy Iha came to the rescue. John has a medical condition called sleep apnea, and needs a Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) machine that requires power. Without it, John could stop breathing in his sleep, so Roblyn kept vigil each night to make sure that didn't happen.

Turning to the Red Cross

Roblyn had ordered a generator online, but it was delayed due to the storm. Exhausted, she turned to the Red Cross.

"I received a request for a generator, and I spoke to our Red Cross Community Partnership managers. I was told that nobody had generators," says Candy. "I asked them to keep looking." Meanwhile, Candy called every possible resource, seeking a generator. Finally, she received a lead from Red Cross Community Partners volunteer, Jane Jennings, who provided the number to Puna Rentals.

"I called, and the answering machine said they were closed. I said, 'This is an emergency' and explained the situation," says Candy. "A woman named Nikki called me back saying she had a generator for John!"

Nikki not only opened the shop to get the generator, but

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Coralie Chun Matayoshi



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Red Cross volunteers go above and beyond to assist those in trouble during a disaster.

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the Red Cross saved my husband's life."
— Roblyn Gravitt**

offered to meet halfway between Hilo and Puna. "What a saint!" Candy says.

The Gravitts had a generator by 8:30 pm, in time for both of them to get their first night's sleep in 5 nights.

"Candy was absolutely great," says Roblyn. "She never gave up on finding the generator. I don't know what I would have done without her help. As far as I'm concerned, the Red Cross saved my husband's life."

Red Cross volunteers and the neighbors they help depend on the generosity of friends like you. To show your support today, please visit redcross.org/hawaii



A message
from the
Regional
CEO

With your support, we are always there

As the holidays approach, I want to thank each of you for your support of the Hawaii Red Cross.

Our preparedness skills were all recently put to the test as hurricanes Iselle and Julio approached our islands, creating national headlines of “double trouble” headed our way. We called upon 1,500 volunteers statewide for shelter assignments in anticipation of the storm. In the 11 years that I have been with the Red Cross, this was the largest shelter operation we have ever had—32 evacuation shelters housing 2,041 people in one night!

In addition, we responded to 11 fires in 3 weeks, one of which included opening an evacuation shelter due to a brush fire! We are the only non-profit that is on call 24/7, 365 days a year to respond to disasters big and small, and we could not do what we do without our wonderful volunteers and supporters.

Coralie Chun Matayoshi, CEO
American Red Cross
Pacific Islands Region—
Hawaii, Guam, Saipan

The Red Cross responds to a tragic house fire

On November 14, 2013, a tragic fire destroyed a multi-family home in Kalihi, displacing 20 individuals. A victim of this multiple-family fire, Benjamin Grimmer, lost not only his home and all his belongings, but his 22-year-old autistic son, who died in the fire.

To this day, Benjamin recalls the details of the terrifying incident—from the panicked call he received from his daughter notifying him of the fire, to his son’s body being brought out of the fire.

“We were totally devastated,” Benjamin says. “I didn’t expect to have any help... I didn’t even know that the Red Cross worked with individual families in this sort of situation, and I was blown away.”

The Red Cross offers continuous support

In response to this disaster, the Red Cross opened a shelter not only for residents of the destroyed home, but also for surrounding neighbors who were evacuated due to safety precautions—a total of 33 people.

The shelter supplied immediate emergency needs, such as temporary housing, groceries and clothing. Red Cross Disaster Mental Health volunteers also provided crisis counseling to Benjamin and his family, as well as to others who suffered from loss in the tragic incident.



The Hawaii Red Cross dispatches volunteers any time of day or night to assist during emergencies large and small.

You make it possible

The Hawaii Red Cross is continuing to assist Benjamin and his family in their recovery process. “I’ve been able to provide services throughout and keep track of Benjamin and his family,” says Adina Nakamura, Red Cross Disaster Mental Health volunteer. “We could not have provided this service without the support of the community.”

At any time of day or night, trained Red Cross volunteers are activated to respond to the scene of home fires and provide food, shelter and emotional support to those affected. All Red Cross disaster assistance is free to those in need, because of generous donations from people like you.

National daily impact

Thanks to your support, **each day**, the Red Cross is able to provide:

190
disaster responses

1,000
services to members
of our armed forces

25,000
lifesaving trainings

424,000
measles vaccinations

Keeping you safe: home fire prevention tips

Every year, the American Red Cross responds to 70,000 disasters (one every 8 minutes), most of them home fires. In Hawaii, the Red Cross responds to disasters statewide every 4 days. With the holidays just around the corner, we urge everyone to follow these steps to help avoid a fire in their home.

Cooking safely

- Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling or broiling food, or turn off the stove if you need to step away.
- Stay in your home while simmering, baking, roasting or boiling food. Check it regularly and use a timer to remind you that food is cooking.
- Keep anything that can catch fire—like pot holders, towels, plastic and clothing—away from the stove.

Smoke alarms

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas.
- Teach children what smoke alarms sound like and what to do when they hear one.
- Once a month check whether each alarm in the home is working properly by pushing the test button.
- Replace batteries in smoke alarms at least once a year. Immediately install a new battery if an alarm chirps, warning the battery is low.
- Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years. Never disable smoke or carbon monoxide alarms.
- Carbon monoxide alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms. Know the difference between the sound of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms.

Candle safety

- Keep lit candles at least 12 inches from anything flammable, and out of reach of pets and children.
- Always extinguish candles before leaving a room.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children.

Fire escape planning

- Ensure that all household members know two ways to escape from every room of your home.
- Make sure everyone knows where to meet outside in case of a fire.
- Practice escaping from your home at least twice a year, and make sure everyone knows how to call 9-1-1.
- Teach household members to STOP, DROP and ROLL if their clothes should catch on fire.



For other preparedness tips, visit redcross.org/hawaii

Donate your HawaiianMiles to the Hawaii Red Cross



Log onto hawaiianair.com, sign in to your HawaiianMiles portal, and under “Manage My Account,” click on “Donate to Charities.” Choose the American Red Cross, Hawaii Chapter. Click on the “Donate Now” button to donate your HawaiianMiles to us. Hawaiian Airlines will take the total miles donated to the American Red Cross, Hawaii State Chapter, and match the donation total up to 500,000 miles.

Donate Your Car (Oahu only)

Donating your vehicle—in any condition—through the American Red Cross Vehicle Donation Program is another great way to help us help others. We accept cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles, boats and even jet skis. Call 1-855-927-2227 or visit redcross.org/cardonation for more information.

Supporting military families before, during and after deployments

The American Red Cross is committed to supporting service members and their families. Before, during and after deployments, the Red Cross is there to provide training, information and support.

The Red Cross, with support from Walmart, has developed the Reconnection Workshops to assist in the transition home after a deployment.

“I am extremely proud to be a military spouse but military life is not without its challenges, especially when it comes to deployments,” said Amy Creech whose husband has been an active duty Army soldier for over 16 years.

“Homecomings bring tremendous happiness and a great sense of relief but are not always easy. That’s why I am so glad that the American Red Cross offers the Reconnection Workshops.”

The workshops are confidential small groups, led by licensed mental health professionals and designed to help



Reconnection Workshops are just one way the Red Cross supports our servicemen and women.

participants respond to the challenges of readjusting to and transitioning back to civilian life. They are completely free to service members and their families.

“It’s a wonderful program to be a part of,” Amy concluded.

For more information about the Reconnection Workshops, or to register for future workshops, go to redcross.org/reconnectionworkshops

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