

# Gulf Coast Community Foundation's Hurricane Ian Disaster Relief Fund

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## HURRICANE IAN DISASTER RELIEF FUND ACTIVATED

GULF COAST  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

In response to the devastating impact of Hurricane Ian, Gulf Coast Community Foundation has activated the Hurricane Ian Disaster Relief Fund.

According to Jon Thaxton, Senior Vice President for Community Leadership at Gulf Coast Community Foundation, the immediate focus of the funding will be on triage for families in crisis in those areas most affected by Ian: South Venice, Northport, Englewood, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda and possibly DeSoto County.

Saxton, a fifth generation Sarasotan has had a great deal of experience with tropical storms and flooding and as soon as he saw the path that Ian was going to take, he told his staff, “This is one we need to worry about.” Sure enough, he was right. “Gulf Coast Community

Foundation, as the name implies, has a laser focus on our immediate area and that does not change when a disaster occurs,” says Thaxton. “Our gig is raising money and applying it in the most strategic way to provide relief. We have our partnerships and relationships established and everything we needed to make this happen, was set up over the weekend.”

Thaxton and his team have been working with nonprofit and for profit partners on assessing the immediate needs and then providing funding quickly. However, because of the hazards created by Ian, they are just now able to get into the hardest hit areas. For food needs, the Foundation is teaming up with All Faiths Food Bank. For mental health, they are working with partners like Centerstone and First Step. With these and other agency partners, the Foundation is able to get relief money to those in need within a very short time. As soon as the Gulf Coast Hurricane Ian relief initiative was activated, the Foundation added \$800,000 into it as an initial investment. As of Tuesday, they’ve received numerous donations, including one for \$100,000.

“Like the real estate market and the pandemic, this storm is going to disproportionately impact our working core,” says Thaxton. “Covid was first to hit and then on top of that, there was a second hit that drove housing costs into the stratosphere beyond their ability to reach. Ian is the final blow. These families are going to need a lot of help for a long time to survive. We can convert generous philanthropy into actionable relief efficiently and immediately,” he adds.

The website for Gulf Coast Community Foundation is now dedicated to hurricane relief. You can make a tax deductible donation there and know that your money will go immediately to emergency triage. The Foundation will be covering all credit card fees.

“There has been a lot of emotion inside our organization,” says Thaxton. ”That’s why we are in this business. It's our passion and we want to take our personal feelings and convert them into assistance to our brothers and sisters to the south of us. We want to get these people out of harm's way and restore their lives to normalcy as soon as possible.”

<https://www.gulfcoastcf.org/hurricane-ian-disaster-relief-fund>

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