The Community Preparedness, Recovery, and Resiliency initiative explores and strengthens the efforts of people, organizations, and communities in navigating disasters.

Community Preparedness, Recovery, and Resiliency Newsletter
Catalyzing Engagement as Disasters Swirl

Transforming Higher Waters: Suncoast Quality of Life Into Community Preparedness, Recovery, and Resiliency

Within each of The Patterson Foundation's (TPF) diverse initiatives, one will find a consistent thread of efforts working toward outcomes that strengthen opportunities for people to thrive.

In April 2022, TPF created its Higher Waters initiative to explore and grasp the implications of rising levels of our gulf, bays, rivers, and inland waters. This endeavor sought to unravel how these rising waters may dramatically reshape our coastlines and landscapes, ultimately influencing our overall quality of life. Understanding the realities of

Phases of CPR-R

In the Discovery Phase, we will connect with and learn to identify existing community resources related to community engagement in the disaster preparedness, recovery, and resiliency arenas. Additionally, we will connect beyond our four-county region to identify programs and efforts to be replicated locally and create spaces for others to collaborate.

In the Sharing/Engagement Phase – we will engage people, organizations, and communities as we share our learnings.

In the Action Phase - We will strengthen our communities' disaster preparedness, recovery, and resiliency in various ways.
mounting water levels can help people of the Suncoast respond proactively and secure opportunities to thrive now and in the future. In the early discovery phase of the initiative, TPF connected with experts and efforts already underway. Hurricane Ian's landfall in 2022 caused much destruction and impacted millions, yet it reaffirmed our work in this space.

Hurricane Ian served as a reminder of the far-reaching impact of natural disasters beyond our immediate surroundings and revealed the resources and community structures necessary for preparedness, recovery, and resiliency must be strengthened.

As we reflect on Hurricane Ian's first anniversary, TPF has evolved its Higher Waters initiative to **Community Preparedness, Recovery, and Resiliency (CPR-R)**, reflecting a transition of focus from addressing higher waters to exploring how our community navigates disaster preparedness, recovery, and resiliency.

Our communities have long been vulnerable to natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods and, more recently, increased impacts from higher temperatures and the pandemic. TPF understands the disaster recovery process includes three distinct phases:
- **We cope** by ensuring our safety and addressing the immediate needs essential to survival.
- **We adapt** to living through disaster by adopting new systems and methods to create stability.
- **We innovate** by embracing a possibility mindset and discovering fresh ways to live, work, and play.

The increased prevalence of natural disasters due to climate change creates an opportunity for TPF to connect and collaborate with our communities to strengthen three distinct areas in terms of disasters: Preparedness, Recovery, and Resiliency.

These three areas are defined as follows:
- **Preparedness**: planning, organizing, and equipping people, organizations, and communities to better respond and cope with the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

One Year Later: Learnings from Hurricane Ian

In September 2022, Hurricane Ian landed in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, leaving much destruction and damage behind. Millions of people were impacted both directly and indirectly. One year later, we reflect on five takeaways.

1. **Disasters impact all aspects of our quality of life** – Whether sea-level rise or forest fires, disasters of all sorts can impact our everyday quality of life. They aren't only a threat to the homes along the coast or rural businesses, they're a threat to the schools we support, the parks we cherish, and the places we turn to for shelter during storms like Hurricane Ian. All in all, it's the things we value the most.

2. **The importance of being proactive** – Disasters offer community leaders like nonprofits and funders an opportunity to be proactive. Community leaders and philanthropic organizations, especially foundations, could benefit from shifting their focus from reactive to proactive responses and looking for ways to remain an engaged and effective partner in communities' equitable recovery.

3. **Environmental anxiety in the face of disaster is real** – "It's too big. We can't do anything about it. I'm just one person. I can't make a difference." These statements are symptoms of environmental anxiety – the fear of doom when people experience natural disasters or observe the effects of climate change. The key to addressing it is sharing your knowledge with others who...
Recovery: resuming normal operations begins with stabilizing the incident and ends when the community has recovered from the disaster's impacts. Effective recovery includes communication, coordination, collaboration, cooperation, and adaptation.

Resiliency: Individuals, organizations, and communities organize themselves innovatively to learn from past disasters and reduce their risks to future ones. It includes the ability to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from disasters and stressors in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.

Rather than focusing on the space of short-term responsive actions, CPR-R examines opportunities to optimize efforts in preparedness, recovery, and resilience toward long-term impact.

Strengthening Our Region
Through the Suncoast Disaster Recovery Fund

The memory of Hurricane Ian's devastating landfall on Florida's Suncoast in September lingers in the minds of many. This menacing storm, classified as a formidable Category 4 hurricane, left an estimated $50 billion worth of destruction in its wake, including entire roads and bridges that crumpled upon impact and the ruin of thousands of homes, businesses, schools, cultural centers, and coastlines. Along with dismantling so many structures and natural features, the people who lived through Ian were significantly impacted.

In September, The Suncoast Disaster Recovery Fund was activated in anticipation of the impacts of Hurricane Ian. The fund has been crucial in providing financial assistance to those affected by the storm. As of now, the fund has raised millions of dollars to support recovery efforts.

Cope
Following a disaster or unexpected challenge, we first focus on ensuring our safety and addressing the immediate needs essential to survival.
Ian to assist with the long-term recovery efforts following the storm. Donors have the opportunity to address the long-lasting effects of disasters on people’s lives, anticipating the needs that will emerge beyond the immediate emergency. By doing so, the fund empowers long-term, forward-thinking programs aimed at sustaining vital human service agencies serving the residents of Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, and DeSoto counties.

For updates on the allocation of funds from the initial round of the Hurricane Ian Suncoast Disaster Recovery Fund, please refer to the press release provided by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County. The second grantmaking cycle for the Suncoast Disaster Recovery is taking place now. Learn about the process here.

We welcome your thoughts or any questions. Contact Karen Windon at kwindontpf@gmail.com.

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