

Over two years ago, Puerto Rico was devastated by Hurricane María. It was a crippling blow to the island. From the very beginning, Comité Noviembre, (CN), worked quickly and diligently to provide assistance directly to non-profit and business organizations in Puerto Rico at the grassroots level. In September 2017, CN launched the Estoy Con Puerto Rico Hurricane Relief Effort with its consortium of Puerto Rican leaders, organizations, business partners and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York which served as fiscal conduit for this effort. CN is proud that this effort raised over half a million dollars and has provided much needed aid and services directly to over 70 nonprofit organizations and small businesses throughout the island. These organizations deal with issues ranging from health and mental health, education, solar energy, water shed projects, food insecurity, HIV/AIDS, homelessness, suicide prevention and many basic human need services. Grants were also awarded to 44 small businesses and micro enterprises to stimulate the economy. A list of organizations is attached.



Comité Noviembre has conducted 3 humanitarian mission to Puerto Rico.

### **First Humanitarian Mission to Puerto Rico, December 11<sup>th</sup> – December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

On CN's first 8-day humanitarian mission to Puerto Rico non-perishable food, water, medical supplies, and cleaning materials were delivered to Aibonito, Barranquitas, Comerio and Naranjito in the mountains to Loiza and Maunabo by the ocean and Arecibo, Manati, Cayey, Caguas and San Juan inland. Because the trip took place during the Christmas season, toys were also distributed to children in each of the towns visited as well as to El Hospital del Niño in Bayamón.

This effort distributed over 4,000 bags of groceries; 200 bags per town to families plus other non-profits, churches and elderly residences we encountered throughout the island on our trip. Enough food to feed an estimated 20,000-25,000 people.



At the end of this mission several things became clear. The situation in Puerto Rico was changing from a relief to a rebuilding effort and the people of Puerto Rico needed the voice of all Americans, federal dollars and assistance in its recovery.

*View video of CN's Humanitarian Mission #1:  
[https://www.dropbox.com/s/8x3nt1twpftxjls/Comite\\_Noviembre\\_Revisado\\_1.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/8x3nt1twpftxjls/Comite_Noviembre_Revisado_1.mp4?dl=0)*

## Second Humanitarian Mission to Puerto Rico August 1st – August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018



The second humanitarian mission to Puerto Rico took on a new charge and an important call to action. Fifty-two participants of the trip conducted volunteer service throughout the island from planting trees and seeds at Siembra Tres Vidas in Aibonito, removing debris, gardening, painting and power washing walls in Dorado/Vega Alta with Hunger Corp., assembling and delivering 400 backpacks with school supplies and books for their library to La Escuela Jesús Sanabria Cruz in Yabucoa, to distributing greatly needed items to 30 families in Comerio; to cleaning elderly homes and apartments with Ráfaga Solidaria in Orocovis, Naguabo and Aibonito. CN also co-sponsored and volunteered at Feria de Salud: Feriarte: Arte, Salud y Cultura; a health, wellness and mental health fair with a culture and arts twist in the town plaza of Bayamón.

### **Estoy Con Puerto Rico Grants**

During this trip we also visited and presented grants and equipment to non-profit organizations and small businesses from funds raised through the *Estoy con Puerto Rico* Hurricane Relief effort. The grants range from assisting small businesses and micro enterprises re-open for business, to special programs created to help the community deal with mental health issues arising from the devastation of Hurricane María including depression and suicide prevention programs, to transforming areas of a facility into dormitories for displaced University of Puerto Rico students, assisting the forgotten elderly community and making donations to food pantries. Comité Noviembre selected organizations from proposals received from organizations and businesses and determined the amount of donations in the first two waves of funding distributions by devastation of area, loss of home/property, health issues and for basic human necessities.

As the need in Puerto Rico changed to rebuilding and long-term solutions, the *Estoy* effort focused on organizations that were creating long term solutions in solar energy, water purification systems and health and mental health issues surfacing from post Hurricane Maria trauma. Additionally, the effort focused on getting businesses back in operation to stimulate the economy. Each of the organizations and businesses funded by the *Estoy Con Puerto Rico* effort provided proof of non-profit status or business registration certificate, as well as a full written report on what contributions were used for, and the impact it had on the community.

*View video of CN's Humanitarian Mission #2:*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gnMXNz26GuxEm3nqRx39bwCsp-9KWVOG/view?ts=5bd65c75>

## One Person Can Make A Difference...

### CN Trip Participant Proposes Solar Project to the Let's Share The Sun Foundation Result: Five Non-Profits in Puerto Rico to Receive Solar Panels

Comité Noviembre is thrilled that it was the catalyst for The Sun Foundation to profile several of the locations visited on our 2<sup>nd</sup> humanitarian trip to Puerto Rico for possible solar panel installation. Thanks to Austin Behrmann, solar energy assistant at Jordan Energy in Troy, New York who participated in the trip in August 2018. He profiled each location visited for possible solar installation. Austin developed a report on his finding on the most feasible locations for solar installations.

Upon returning from Puerto Rico, this report was presented to the board of the Let's Share the Sun Foundation and they along with Fr. Eric Cruz, Catholic Charities Community Services Bronx Coordinator, decided to move forward with one installation at this time at El Mesón de Amor in Río Piedras.

A group of students from Siena College (Loudonville, NY) traveled to Puerto Rico in February 2019, to begin installation at El Meson. The five organizations selected are: El Meson del Amor, (Rio Piedras); La Hormiga/Hunger Corp, (Dorado); Siembra Tres Vidas, (Aibonito), University of Puerto Rico/Agenda Ciudadana Humacao Campus) and Proyecto de Apoyo Mutuo, (Humacao).



2019 CN trip participants checking out solar panels installed by Siena College students this past February

## Third Humanitarian Mission to Puerto Rico July 31<sup>st</sup> – August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019

On CN's third humanitarian trip to PR we visited places we had already done volunteer work in the past to continue our long term commitment to these organizations but to also see the progress of these projects and join new volunteer efforts as well.

On our first day we returned to Hunger Corp., a nonprofit organization that is building and restoring 32 homes for victims of Hurricane María in La Hormiga community of Dorado. In August 2018, CN volunteers removed debris, power-washed, plastered, and painted



throughout this area. It was truly gratifying to see the homes we worked on last year, completed and move-in-ready for their owners. This year we built the frame for the cement that would form the foundation of a new house.

As the trip continued, we witnessed people from all walks of life - young, old, employed, unemployed - waiting for hours on long lines to receive a bag of groceries and a hot meal. People were sleeping on the streets of some of the most affluent areas of Puerto Rico begging for money for food.

CN trip participants were awed by the *Asociación de Mujeres Agroempresarias* ("Association of Women Agricultural Entrepreneurs"), an organization created by a group of female farmers whose goal is to encourage the development of agribusinesses for women. They empower women

through expert training to fill traditionally-non-female jobs, allowing them to advance the economic



development of their families. They establish sustainable agricultural enterprises, and market their products thus contributing to the economic stability of their homes and their community.

We were scheduled to visit [Finca Cosechas Tierra Viva](#), the first "smart" farm in Puerto Rico, producing sustainable greens, herbs, vegetables, and fruits in an acre and a half of land. However, a torrential down pour kept us from visiting the actual farm. But its co-founder and mechanical engineer, Franco Marciano, made an incredible presentation explaining what a "smart" farm is and how it works. He blew us away with his concept: implementing accessible technology towards the production of food which in turn develops a sustainable, productive, efficient and

profitable farming model. As he simply stated, “Cosechas Tierra Viva is where ecological practices meet technology”.



Puerto Rico imports 85% of its food, and Hurricane María has shown once more the vulnerability of the island’s food security. With food security being an extremely high priority for Puerto Ricans, trip participants volunteered for *Ministerio Buen Samaritano* (“Good Samaritan Ministry” or “MARC”), a non-profit organization that provides non-perishable foods and a hot meals to Puerto Rican families in need. MARC reaches a total of 90,000 people monthly. After Hurricanes Irma and Maria, MARC distributed over 12 million pounds of food to 640,000 people, impacting forty-five municipalities on of the island.

Our volunteer experience with MARC was truly life changing for many of the participants. The day before our planned service day with MARC our location changed. The young

Pastor of the church called and said he was receiving accounts that there is great need in the Arecibo area of the island for food and he was going to do a “pop-up” food pantry distribution as well as hot meals for whomever showed up. He confided he had no dea how many people would show up because they had just announced it. Our original plan had been “just” to prepare grocery bags and serve lunch to approximately 500 people.



As our bus driver turned into the *Coliseo de Arecibo*, the largest sports arena in the area, the line of people waiting went around the coliseum 3 times, 4 people deep. As 38 members of our trip got off the bus the crowd burst into cheers. Within minutes our team was instructed, given assignments and the distribution began. The most powerful part of this experience were the

blessings, the hugs, and the tears in the eyes of the people we were serving. The humbleness and genuine gratitude from the people we were serving truly struck everyone. At the end of the day 1000 families received bags of groceries *and* a hot meal.



**ESTOY CON PUERTO RICO  
ORGANIZATIONS, SMALL BUSINESSES & MICRO ENTERPRISES FUNDED  
November 2017 – November 2019**

**FIRST WAVE OF ESTOY DONATIONS – NOVEMBER 2017**

<b>NAME OF ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>AREA IMPACTED</b>	<b>PROGRAM AREA</b>
BRIGADA RÁFAGA SOLIDARIA AYUDA PUERTO RICO/ACACIA	ALL PUERTO RICO	ELDERLY
CARITAS OF PUERTO RICO	ALL PUERTO RICO	SOCIAL SERVICES/RELIGIOUS
CASA AMOR, FE Y ESPERANZA:/MESON DEL AMOR	RIO PIEDRAS	EDUCATION/RELIGIOUS
CENTRO UNIDOS DE DETALLISTAS	ALL PUERTO RICO	BUSINESS
COMITE NOVIEMBRE	ALL PUERTO RICO	FOOD/WATER
HEALTH PRO MED	ALL PUERTO RICO	HEALTH
INITIATIVA COMUNITARIA	SAN JUAN, PONCE	HEALTH/HIV AIDS
NY FOUNDLING DE PUERTO RICO	ALL PUERTO RICO	CHILDREN/EDUCATION
OLD SAN JUAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION	LA PERLA	HUNGER
PR CoNCRA	ALL PUERTO RICO	HEALTH
PUERTO RICO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	ALL PUERTO RICO	BUSINESS
AGROPÓNICOS, COSECHA PUERTO RICO, INC.,	GUAYNABO	BUSINESS
LOS TEQUES CORP.	MAYAGUEZ	BUSINESS
HOJALDRE AÑASQUEÑA	AÑASCO	BUSINESS
EL VERDE GAS	COMERIO	BUSINESS
ATABEY	CIDRA	BUSINESS
BUFETE QUIÑONES	OLD SAN JUAN	BUSINESS
LABORATORIO CLÍNICO VILLA BLANCA	CAGUAS	BUSINESS
RECAOS ORTIZ INC.	SAN LORENZO	BUSINESS
VELEZ ACCOUNTING SERVICES PSC	HUMACAO	BUSINESS
ADVANCED ACCOUNTING SERVICES,	OROCOVIS	BUSINESS
CHAPARRO MEDICAL SERVICE	ARECIBO	BUSINESS
HISPANIA GROUP, INTL	AGUADA	BUSINESS
RAMOS COMPUSIGNS	MOROVIS	BUSINESS
GFC FARMS INC.	GUAYAMA	BUSINESS
ALGARET FOOD	NAGUABO	BUSINESS
PAPAYO'S	CAYEY	BUSINESS
DANNYS QUICK LUNCH	VILLALBA	BUSINESS
WARRIOR PRINTS	SAN SEBASTIÁN	BUSINESS
SALVÁ ELECTRONICS	UTUADO	BUSINESS
CARIBBEAN CONVENTION CENTER	SAN JUAN	BUSINESS

RESTAURANTE LOS NARANJOS	OROCOVIS	BUSINESS
DISTRIBUIDORA DE ALIMENTOS LA REVÉS, INC.	OROCOVIS	BUSINESS
IVÁN MUFFLER	OROCOVIS	BUSINESS

### SECOND WAVE OF DONATIONS - DECEMBER 2017

ORGANIZATION	AREA IMPACTED	PROGRAM AREA
BANCO DE ALIMENTOS DE PUERTO RICO	ALL PUERTO RICO	HUNGER
ESPERANZA PARA LA VEJES, INC.	ALL PUERTO RICO	ELDERLY
FUNDACION NACIONAL PARA LA CULTURA POPULAR	OLD SAN JUAN	EDUCATION/CULTURAL
SALON LITERARIO LIBRO AMERICA EN PUERTO RICO	ALL PUERTO RICO	EDUCATION

### THIRD WAVE OF DONATIONS - MARCH 2018

ORGANIZATION	AREA IMPACTED	PROGRAM AREA
ACACIA NETWORK	ALL PUERTO RICO	HEALTH
ASOCIACIÓN SUPERACIÓN NIÑOS SÍNDROME DOWN	ARECIBO	HEALTH/DOWN SYNDROME
CARITAS OF PUERTO RICO	ALL PUERTO RICO	SOCIAL SERVICES RELIGIOUS
CROEM ALUMNI	MAYAGUEZ	EDUCATION
ESPACIO RIO/ CASA AMOR FE Y ESPERANZA FISCAL CONDUIT	ALL PUERTO RICO	MENTAL HEALTH
FUNDACIÓN AGENDA CIUDADANA, INC.	ALL PUERTO RICO	SOCIAL SERVICES
FUNDACIÓN FELISA RINCÓN DE GAUTIER, INC	OLD SAN JUAN	ENCARCERATED WOMEN
HUNGER CORP	ALL PUERTO RICO	REBUILDING PIERTO RICO
MEZCOLANZA INC. FERIARTE	BAYAMÓN	HEALTH/CULTURAL
NY FOUNDLING OF PUERTO RICO	ALL PUERTO RICO	CHILDREN/EDUCATION

### FOURTH WAVE OF DONATIONS - JULY 2018

ORGANIZATION	AREA IMPACTED	PROGRAM AREA
FUNDACION NACIONAL PARA LA CULTURA POPULAR	OLD SAN JUAN	EDUCATION/CULTURAL
INITIATIVA COMUNITARIA	SAN JUAN/PONCE	HEALTH/HIV AIDS HEALING BRIGADE
MESON DEL AMOR/ESPACIO RIO	RIO PIEDRAS	EDUCATION/HOUSING
OLD SAN JUAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION	VIEQUES	SOLAR ENERGY
COMITE NOVIEMBRE	ALL PUERTO RICO	ALL
ACADEMIA DE MÚSICA PEÑA	HUMACAO	EDUCATION
CENTRO COMUNAL LA VUELTA DEL DOS	AIBONITO	ELDERLY
CENTRO DE SALUD ARARAT	PONCE	HEALTH/HIV/AIDS

CENTRO PARA PUERTO RICO/ FUNDACIÓN SILA M. CALDERON	ALL PUERTO RICO	SMALL BUSINESS
LA GRAN FAMILIA BARBER SHOP	FAJARDO	SMALL BUSINESS
MONINOS	SAN JUAN	SMALL BUSINESS
HEALING ENERGY CENTER	CONDADO	SMALL BUSINESS
GALAXY COFFEE	BAYAMÓN	SMALL BUSINESS
PRE-ESCOLAR BONNY	TOA ALTA	SMALL BUSINESS
MRG HOGAR PARA EL ADULTO MAYOR	SAN JUAN	SMALL BUSINESS
QUALITY TRAINING	NAGUABO	SMALL BUSINESS
YAIMAR DESIGNS	HUMACAO	SMALL BUSINESS
PUERTO RICO PORTFOLIO	SAN JUAN	SMALL BUSINESS
CENTRO PARROQUIAL DE AYUDA SOCIAL DE AIBONITO	AIBONITO	SOCIAL SERVICES HUNGER/RELIGIOUS
COLEGIO MERCEDES MORALES	GUAYNABO	EDUCATION
CENTRO PARA NIÑOS EL NUEVO HOGAR PARA NIÑOS	ADJUNTAS	ORPHANAGE
ESCUELA JESUS SANABRIA CRUZ	YABUCOA	EDUCATION
FUSIÓN JONDA	ALL PUERTO RICO	SMALL BUSINESS
HACIENDA TRES ANGELES	ADJUNTAS	BUSINESS
HOGAR BETHAIDA DE NAGUABO	NAGUABO	ELDERLY
JOSE SANTIAGO, INC. /MESÓN DEL AMOR	RIO PIEDRAS	BUSINESS/FOOD
KAIRIANA NUÑEZ SANTALIZ	SAN JUAN	SMALL BUSINESS
LOS VIOLINES DE MARQUITO	SAN JUAN	BUSINESS
NO TIRE REUSE	OLD SAN JUAN	SMALL BUSINESS
PABELLÓN CIVICO DE COMERIO	COMERIO	SOCIAL SERVICES
PROYECTO DE APOYO MUTUO MARIANA ASOCIACION EDUCATIVA DE DESARROLLO HUMANO	HUMACAO	EDUCATION
REPOSTERIA ONLINE EMPRESARIAL	SAN JUAN	SMALL BUSINESS
SECOND CHANCE ANIMALS OF PUERTO RICO	VILLABA	ANIMAL RESCUE
SIEMBRA TRES VIDAS	AIBONITO	SMALL BUSINESS
SOUVENIR 154	OLD SAN JUAN	SMALL BUSINESS

#### **FIFTH WAVE OF DONATIONS - AUGUST 201**

<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>AREA IMPACTED</b>	<b>PROGRM AREA</b>
ASOCIACIÓN EDUCATIVA DE DESARROLLO DE CULEBRA	CULEBRA	EDUCATION
CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS AVANZADOS DE PUERTO RICO Y EL CARIBE	SAN JUAN	EDUCATION
CIRCUITO DE INNOVACIÓN Y RESILIENCIA QUEER	SAN JUAN	HEALTH
COLEGIO CALADOS	BAYAMÓN	EDUCATION
ESCUELA NACIONAL DE CIRCO DE PUERTO RICO	ALL PUERTO RICO	YOUTH
FUNDACIÓN LUIS MUÑOZ MARÍN	TRUJILLO ALTO	EDUCATION
INCUBADORA BIEKE MICRO, INC.	VIEQUES	MICRO ENTERPRISES



INTERGRATED HEALTH PROJECT/ SALUD ACUPUNTURA PARA EL PUEBLO, INC.	ALL PUERTO RICO	HEALTH
LE FILM	BAYAMÓN	CULTURAL
MUSEO DE ARTE DE PUERTO RICO	SAN JUAN	EDUCATION/CULTURAL
PARA LA NATURALEZA	PONCE, BARRANQUITAS, RIO PIEDRAS, FAJARDO, OLD SAN JUAN	WATER SHED PROGRAM
PROTECTORES DE LA CUENCA	YAUCO, CULEBRA, GUANICA	WATER SHED PROGRAM
PONCE HEALTH SCIENCE UNIVERSITY/ MENTAL HEALTH CENTER	PONCE	MENTAL HEALTH
RADIO VIEQUES	VIEQUES	HEALTH/COMMUNITY
SUPERHEROES	AGUADILLA	EDUCATION
TALLER SALUD	LOIZA	HEALTH

### SIXTH WAVE OF DONATIONS

CASA MONTESSORRI DE VIEQUES	VIEQUES	EDUCATION
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### SEVENTH WAVE OF DONATIONS - AUGUST 2019

ACADEMIA MUSICA PEÑA	HUMACAO	YOUTH
ASOCIACION DE MUJERES AGROEMPRESARIAS	LAS PIEDRAS	AGRICULTURE FOOD COLLECTIVE
COLECTIVO PERLARTE	LA PERLA	ARTIST COLLECTIVE
CONCILIO DE PUERTO RICO	GUAYNABO	YOUTH
HUNGER CORP.	DORADO	HOUSING
MESÓN DEL AMOR	RIO PIEDRAS	RELIGIOUS / HUNGER
MINISTERIO BUEN SAMARITANO MARC	MANATI	FOOD BANK
EMERGE PUERTO RICO	HUMACAO	COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
NAGUABO SENIOR CENTER	NAGUABO	ELDERLY
PUNTO DE LA MONTAÑA		HEALTH

### How to Continue to Support Puerto Rico

Two years after Hurricane Maria and the people Puerto Rico are still struggling. Now more than ever our brothers and sisters on the island need our help and our support counts the most. Comité Noviembre urges each and every one of you to continue to volunteer and donate to any and all organizations that touch your heart – there are many!

CN is proud that we have been able to directly support so many organizations. Each of the organizations and businesses funded by the *Estoy Con Puerto Rico* effort provided proof of non-profit status or business registration certificate, as well as a full written report on what contributions were used for, and the impact it had on the community.

Please feel free to contact us to get information on any of the organizations listed. You can donate directly to these organizations or send CN the donation and we will continue to make sure that aid is sent where it is needed.

**To Make Donations:**

**By Check or Money Order:**

Make check/money order payable to: **Comité Noviembre**

And mail to: Comité Noviembre Managing Office,

C/O: TAS Communications, LLC, 45 East Hartsdale Avenue, Suite 3L, Hartsdale, NY 10530

If your donation is for a specific organization please state in memo section of check or to Comité Noviembre for the *Estoy Con Puerto Rico Fund*.

**By PayPal:**

Go to: <https://www.paypal.com>

Follow prompts to pay by email: CN email is: [cnevents@comitenoviembre.org](mailto:cnevents@comitenoviembre.org)

If your donation is for a specific program, please state in memo/comment section

PayPal charges a 3% administration fee that will be charged back.