

Wounded Warrior Project Helps Veterans in Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, Oct. 26, 2017 /[PRNewswire-USNewswire](#)/ -- Hurricane Maria roared ashore in Puerto Rico on the morning of Wednesday, Sept. 20. The powerful storm packed sustained winds of more than 150 mph, whipping through an island nation already impacted by another hurricane just weeks earlier.

As the sun rose, the island of more than 3 million people – including about 75,000 veterans – discovered terrible devastation. Puerto Rico's electric grid was in shambles. More than three weeks after Maria, the utility that provides water to 97 percent of the island struggles to meet demand.

Puerto Rico veterans have played a significant role in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. More than 700 injured veterans and family members on the island are registered with Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP). Like much of Puerto Rico, they have all been impacted by the hurricane.

WWP sent staff to the island recently and is focused on sending more people and supplies in coming weeks. Armed with food, water, hygiene kits, and baby formula, WWP staff Jonathan Pruden and Helbert Asparillo joined veterans Frankie Perez and German Rivera on a humanitarian mission. Thanks to the generous donations of the American public, they are able to crisscross the island, targeting small neighborhoods not yet reached by larger agencies.

"We have been focused on helping as many people as we can," said Jonathan Pruden, WWP warrior relations specialist. "We went to the mountains west of Cayey at the request of the Department of Veterans Affairs to check on an amputee warrior living with post-traumatic stress. We found hundreds of individuals in desperate need of assistance. We helped all we could, veteran or not."

Some of the warriors they reached need electricity to power health-aid equipment like CPAP machines and breathing devices. WWP is now sending generators to the island.

WWP is working closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs, FEMA, and other agencies and nonprofits to ensure assistance reaches as many Puerto Ricans as possible.

In more populated areas where electricity is available, that means providing food, water, and gift cards to purchase supplies.

"We are reaching warriors across the island, but more help is needed," Jonathan said.

About Wounded Warrior Project

Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) connects, serves, and empowers wounded warriors. Read more at <http://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/about-us>.

SOURCE Wounded Warrior Project

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