



**United Way
of Santa Barbara County**
www.unitedwaysb.org

For Immediate Release

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United Way Thomas Fire and Flood Fund Exemplifies the Power of Caring Community

Close to \$2 million Distributed in Santa Barbara County

Santa Barbara, CA, July 24, 2018—United Way of Santa Barbara County (UWSBC) expects to have distributed to the community 100 percent of the United Way Thomas Fire and Flood Fund donations allocated to Santa Barbara County—by the week of July 23, the nonprofit announced today. Phase 2 funds will have gone to assist households representing more than 1,200 Santa Barbara County individuals and families and 20 community organizations.

Earlier this year, UWSBC’s Long Term Recovery Committee awarded funds to 20 agencies during their Phase 1 distribution providing immediate and long-term assistance to over 10,000 individuals impacted by the disasters, such as Habitat for Humanity, Easy Lift Transportation, Women’s Economic Ventures, Family Service Agency, Hospice of Santa Barbara and the Foodbank. In April, the nonprofit further opened applications for individuals and families affected by the Thomas Fire and/or Jan. 9 debris flow for direct financial assistance. United Way of Santa Barbara County partnered with Family Service Agency to conduct individual case management services for nearly 500 families in need.

“Our community truly rallied following the devastation to support those who lost family members, homes and their livelihoods,” said Steve Ortiz, UWSBC President & CEO. “We are humbled to have the trust of our community. It has been a challenging six months for everyone; our hope is that these funds will make a difference and help families and our community continue the rebuilding process”.

The United Way Thomas Fire & Flood Fund was jointly established by the United Ways of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties to help the region recover. One-hundred percent of these donations will go directly to affected individuals and families, as well as the organizations serving them.

Fundraising/distribution at a glance:

- United Way Thomas Fire and Flood Fund allocation for Santa Barbara County: \$1,958,000

- United Way Thomas Fire and Flood Fund distributed to community organizations in Santa Barbara County: \$711,000
- United Way Thomas Fire and Flood Fund awards were distributed to 421 Santa Barbara County individuals/households (representing more than 1,200 individuals): \$812,659 (next of kin, damage or loss of personal property, and/or inability to work)
- Restricted donor funds allocated to support ongoing preparedness, recovery, and rebuilding efforts in Montecito: \$99,341
- Southern California Wildfire and Flood Fund distributed to community organization in Santa Barbara County (delivered in partnership with the United Way of Greater Los Angeles): \$335,000

Disbursements made to Santa Barbara County individuals and families ranged in size from \$500 to \$10,000 and were based on recommendations made through Family Service Agency's case management process to determine and verify needs. Santa Barbara County residents who were eligible for assistance included next of kin for individuals who lost their lives as a result of the debris flow; those who suffered damage or total loss of their primary residence (including renters) and/or personal property (including vehicles); and people who were unable to work during or after the Thomas Fire or debris flow.

Funding criteria were reviewed and finalized by UWSBC's Long Term Recovery Committee, a multi-sector group of community leaders actively involved in the community's disaster recovery efforts.

To find more information, please visit www.unitedwaysb.org/thomas-recovery.

United Way of Santa Barbara County

United Way of Santa Barbara County (UWSBC) has the unique and positive vision that "in our community, everyone has a hopeful future." Since 1923, UWSBC has served Santa Barbara County community through funding, volunteer development, and by utilizing its own unique initiatives that involve dozens of local non-profit and public sector agencies. UWSBC's local community driven Power of Partnership™ priorities help children, families & seniors with a focus on Education, Income and Health.

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