On Anniversary of Hurricane Harvey, AAPI Houstonians Continue to Recover

AARP Foundation’s Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund Helps Rebuild AAPI Communities

One year after Hurricane Harvey, Houston’s Asian American and Pacific Islander communities continue to recover while making preparedness a high priority to increase their resilience against disasters.

“We mark the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Harvey by acknowledging the selfless staff and volunteers who have worked to rebuild their communities and continue helping with the tremendous work ahead,” said Clara Chiu, Development Officer at AARP Foundation.

With matching funds from AARP and AARP Foundation, the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund raised $3,287,000 to help hurricane victims – especially those age 50 and older – in Houston and Southeast Texas. Among the 21 organizations that received support, four that directly serve Asian and Pacific Islander communities received $30,000 each:

- **Boat People SOS – Houston**: BPSOS was a first-responder, bringing immediate relief and recovery services to communities through direct assistance and short-term case management in during disasters. Their long-term case management and community redevelopment initiatives support those affected by natural or human-made disasters recover and rebuild.
- **Chinese Community Center**: The center’s Harvey Relief Assistance Center continues to help hurricane victims with unmet disaster-related needs. The Center provides educational, cultural
and social service programs in Houston, and their staff members speak English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, and Spanish.

- **HOPE Clinic**: With AARP Foundation’s relief funds, the clinic increased the Behavioral Health Services team’s capacity to screen and address behavioral issues in seniors arising from the hurricane experience. The funds were critical in accelerating staff preparedness and capacity to handle the increase in behavioral health needs.

- **OCA – Greater Houston**: Working alongside other community partners, OCA – Greater Houston helped pool resources and coordinate the efficient and equitable distribution of aid to all underserved populations of Houston.

“In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, the funds from AARP Foundation were a lifeline for Houston’s Asian American and Pacific Islander community,” said Chi-mei Lin, Executive Director of the Chinese Community Center. “We’re grateful for the support of AARP Foundation, which helped us quickly respond to the shortage of basic needs and services.”

“Thanks to AARP Foundation’s rapid response, we helped many individuals and families in underserved communities get back on their feet,” said Janette Diep, Executive Director, BPSOS – Houston. “But recovery is an ongoing process, and we cannot be complacent. Now is the time for continued preparation and coordination to mitigate the impact of another disaster on our vulnerable communities.”