

Rebuilding After the Storm: How AAPA's Emergency Relief Fund Supported Thad Angelloz and His Family Following Hurricane Ida

When Hurricane Ida made landfall as a Category 4 storm at Port Fourchon on August 29, 2021, the devastation was unlike anything Thad Angelloz, Director of Grants & Communications at Greater Lafourche Port Commission/Port Fourchon, had ever seen. For someone who had weathered many storms in south Louisiana, Ida was a catastrophic force that brought shock and disbelief.



Thad Angelloz

The Immediate Impact of Hurricane Ida

In the days that followed, Thad and his team faced the enormous challenge of restoring essential services. Communication lines were down, complicating their efforts to assess and manage the damage. Thankfully, the Greater Lafourche Port Commission had established some resilient infrastructure, allowing limited internet capabilities in an undamaged section of the administrative office. Still, the port's re-opening was a race against time, requiring the restoration of power, clearing of roadways, and ensuring the safe flow of maritime traffic.

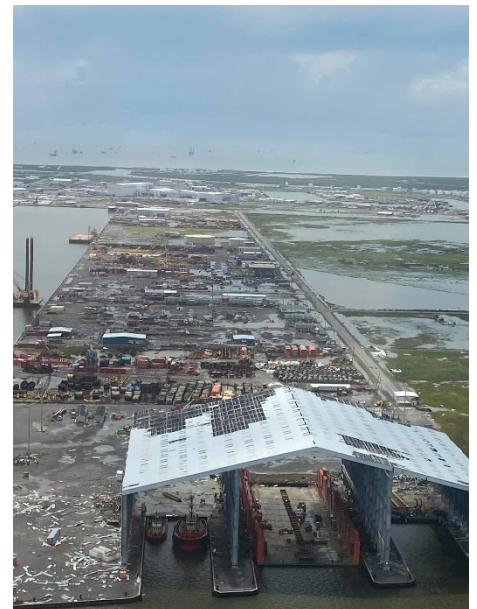
Discovering AAPA's Support Network

During this challenging time, Thad learned about the AAPA Emergency Relief Fund through AAPA's former CEO, Chris Connor, who reached out to offer support on behalf of the organization. Through Connor's guidance, AAPA streamlined the process to provide financial assistance to Port Fourchon's employees—a much-needed lifeline for Thad and his family.

The aid they received was a relief in a time of immense uncertainty. With his wife and four children evacuated, the financial support helped offset the costs of their travel and other urgent expenses. "The financial assistance was critical at a time of so many unknowns," Thad explained. It provided a sense of stability as his family navigated the costly aftermath of the storm.

Easing the Burden in a Time of Crisis

In the chaotic days following Ida, Thad faced the overwhelming task of handling insurance claims, addressing property damage, and managing the expenses that come with disaster recovery. The support from AAPA's Emergency Relief Fund lifted a significant burden, allowing him to focus on both his work at the port and reuniting with his family. "This assistance absolutely helped lift a burden off my shoulders during this chaotic stretch of time," Thad shared.





Gratitude for a Caring Community

Knowing that the port community was there to support him during such a challenging time brought a profound sense of gratitude. "I can't say enough wonderful things about the team at AAPA and member ports who supported this program through their generous donations," Thad said. Knowing that others were thinking of him and willing to provide meaningful support reassured him that he was not alone in this struggle.

To those who contributed to the fund, Thad extended heartfelt thanks: "We are all one family in the port world and understand how Mother Nature can uproot all we hold dear within a few minutes, hours, or days. This sort of giving is impactful because it helps to alleviate some of the weight off a person's shoulders when they have so much happening all at once."

A Lifeline for the Port Community

Reflecting on the experience, Thad emphasized the importance of the AAPA Emergency Relief Fund as a vital safety net for port employees. "At the end of the day, the work we do as AAPA members is invaluable to our country," he noted. "But we all face personal challenges at some point, so having a fund like this is a needed and worthy endeavor that everyone should strongly consider supporting."



Thad's experience with the AAPA Emergency Relief Fund stands as a testament to the solidarity within the port community and the critical support that AAPA provides during times of crisis. Through this assistance, Thad and his family were able to find stability and hope in the wake of Hurricane Ida's devastation.