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Seven Houston Nonprofits Join Forces to Assist Hurricane Harvey Survivor

Volunteers Mucking and Gutting Home this Saturday, February 24 in Aldine Area

What: Final Cleanup and Fundraiser for Asha's New Home

When: Saturday, February 24th

Media are invited to arrive before lunch, around 11:00 a.m.

Nonprofits and volunteers will be working onsite 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Where: 414 Noonday Ct., Houston, TX 77060

Houston, TX (February 22, 2018) – On Saturday, February 24, The Salvation Army of Greater Houston and Texas Local Disaster Recovery Squad (TX LDRS) will come together for the final stages of mucking and gutting the property of Houston resident and Hurricane Harvey survivor Asha Ramraj. In addition, The Salvation Army and TX LDRS, along with five other Houston area nonprofits working in disaster relief, are working together to fundraise for her next home.

Ramraj's home was devastated by a fire in 2015 and during her efforts to rebuild the structure, her beloved husband, Dhanraj, died suddenly from a heart attack in 2016. Later that year, grief-stricken and alone, she did her best to save her home in the Tax Day Floods, and the belongings that remained were flooded and washed away by Hurricane Harvey in 2017.

The Salvation Army first came across Ramraj while distributing donations in the Aldine area. She had been living in the remains of her utility room with only a rusted piece of metal for a roof. The Salvation Army provided financial assistance to help her pay past-due bills. "Mrs. Ramraj's resilience and determination is the embodiment of what it means to be 'Houston Strong,'" said Melanie Pang, The Salvation Army of Greater Houston's Manager of Emergency Services. "Mrs. Ramraj is not just rebuilding her property, she's rebuilding her life, and we are all honored to be a part of that journey."

In order to continue to assist Ramraj with her property, The Salvation Army reached out to TX LDRS who began the process of clearing her property of hazardous materials. Among TX LDS past and ongoing efforts to assist Ramraj: recruit volunteers and donate 40 yard dumpster for initial and upcoming muck and gut, cut down trees impinging on neighbor's yard, and provided a truck load of care packages.

"Being able to meet Asha and understand the tremendous heartache and loss she has experienced changes you," said Melissa Vivanco, Vice President of TX LDRS. "Asha has been surviving with little to nothing, yet still manages to smile big. She deserves a second chance and it would mean everything to me to see her have a place she can call home again."

With the goal to continue to meet Ramraj's needs, a community-wide collaboration has formed. BakerRipley has assisted with care packages and other support. SBP is working to find her next housing solution, while The Alliance for Multicultural Community Services will continue to support her with case management services. Texas Q has helped to sponsor meals for volunteers and Houston Police Explorers - Central Post 2061 assisted with massive cleanup at the start of the project.

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How the public can help

- Anyone in the community interested in volunteering this Saturday can visit <https://www.txldrs.org/volunteer-sign-up>.
- For those interested in donating to help build Ramraj's next home, please visit <https://www.youcaring.com/asharamraj-1103098>.

To learn more

- The Salvation Army of Greater Houston's Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) program and disaster relief volunteer opportunities: <http://salvationarmyhouston.org/>
- Texas Local Disaster Recovery Squad (TXLDRS) volunteer opportunities and donation needs: <https://www.txldrs.org/>

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About The Salvation Army of Greater Houston

In this community since 1889, The Salvation Army Greater Houston Area Command serves Harris, Montgomery and Fort Bend Counties through youth programs, homeless shelters, disaster relief, social services, senior programs and rehabilitation. The mission of The Salvation Army Greater Houston Area Command is to meet human needs without discrimination. Nationally, The Salvation Army assists nearly 30 million Americans each year across 5,000 communities. The Salvation Army of Greater Houston is a United Way agency. For more information, please visit SalvationArmyHouston.org.

About Texas Local Disaster Recovery Squad

A Houston-based team with the goal of providing much needed aid to those impacted by the devastation of Hurricane Harvey. Since Harvey, over 350 individual donors and volunteers have come together to create a volunteer rescue and relief organization that is dedicated to being fast, flexible and most of all, EFFECTIVE. Rebuilding the lives of individuals and families across South Texas will take years but the volunteer team of social workers, medical personnel, first responders, construction experts and super-human volunteers are committed to seeing this through.

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