

WITHOUT POWER

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PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

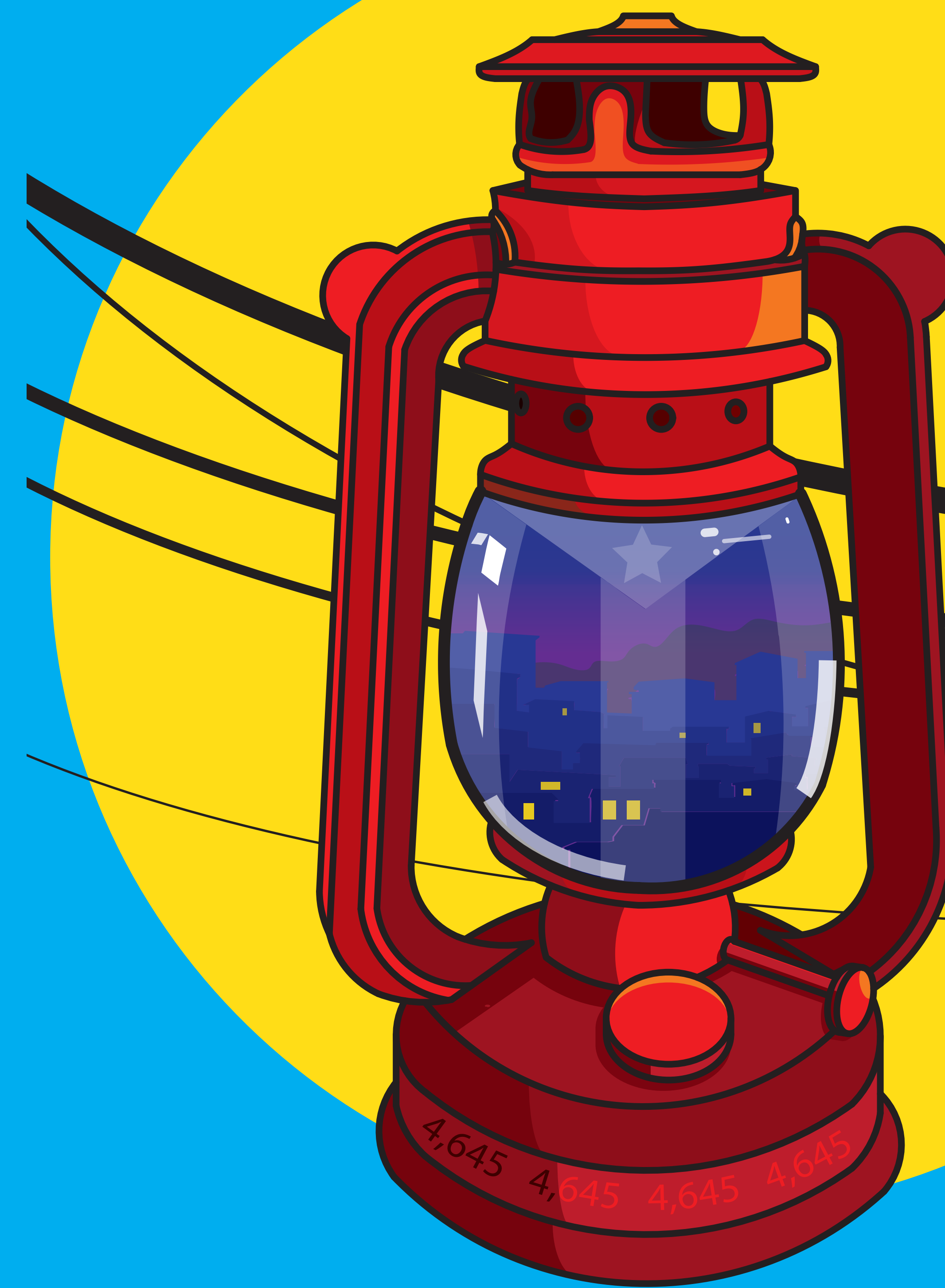
In the middle of September comes the warning of a possible development of a strong hurricane, María. After the warning, my family and I tried to prepare. We collected all the loose things in the patio of the house and with the little money we had we tried to gather some things to pass the hurricane. We only had enough to buy some candles and food for about three days. Which we thought would be enough for a family of five. The hurricane is approaching the island, they cancel classes at universities, schools and cancel working hours.

On September 20, 2019, one of the most horrible day the island has spent and the most stressful day I've ever lived. It wasn't an ordinary morning, the sun didn't come out, everything was gray. It was about six in the morning where it started raining for long hours. It was a rain that never stopped. Suddenly we start to hear strong noises, it was a totally shocking wind. Around noon **EVERYTHING WAS OFF**, there was no way to communicate. Rubble was seen flying in the street, roof pieces and branches.

The night came, everything was dark and there was still a hard wind noise and was still raining. No one on the street knew what had happened beyond what we could see. We clean the street, and help to remove debris from the courtyards and roofs of each of the neighbors. In addition, they sought my father to assist in the emergency. We spend the days worried about our family and friends.

The days passed; they became weeks. The nights were dark and we slept in the garage because of the unbearable heat inside. My father left before the sunrise to distribute water in the high parts of the south coast and returned very late at night. We didn't know anything about him all day. We lived with the worry that something would happen to him and he returned home to sleep for only a few hours for weeks. As the days went by we ran out of food, we didn't have food and we didn't have much money either. So, the neighbors helped us with ice and some food.

Classes resumed a month and a half later. Even half of the island was still without power, communications had been restored to a 30%. My family and I were without electricity for two full months and we had no generators. We were in total darkness, sleeping with the noise of the generators of some neighbors. Almost a year after the hurricane, there were still sectors without electricity. In two years there are still houses without roofs. I experienced the most difficult moments of my life, I wish that this kind of thing will not happen and that no one will pass the catastrophe of an atmospheric event as powerful as Hurricane Category 5 Maria.



HURRICANE MARIA

Hurricane Maria was one of the most powerful and catastrophic hurricanes in recent years. Which left serious damage in the Caribbean and in the Mainland of United States, damages such as: floods, landslides, homeless people, property damage and thousands of deaths. The passage of the hurricane in Puerto Rico left millions of people without power for several months, half of the population had no drinking water and there was no telephone service. In addition, it was one of the deadliest hurricanes to pass over the island, causing the death of 4,645 people directly and indirectly. Indirectly, we mean not having the necessary first aid, not having the medical help on which many depended and not having food and water supplements. Many were trapped in their homes and could not leave until almost a week later, they managed to rescue them. Others did not receive necessary medical help because of the lack of electricity.

ALTERNATIVES FOR UNIVERSITIES TO GIVE A BETTER HELP TO SOCIETY AFTER A NATURAL DISASTER

This situations should be a reason for everyone's union. Two alternatives to improve the situation at after an event of a hurricane or natural disaster, that universities could use to increase their help towards students and the general community, specifically:

1. Provide Individual and GROUP Psychological Assistance:

This help will be provided to anyone who feels the need to let off steam, is at a point post-traumatic stress after the events that have occurred and can assimilate and accept their situation. In addition, to share your situation with other people who have gone through the same and thus feel understood.

2. Invite the different programs that the university has to participate as support and reinforcement groups:

The Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico has 160 undergraduate programs among its three campuses. In addition, it has a little more than approximately 10,000 students. This means that groups of volunteers could be organized according to the programs they are preparing and provide voluntary assistance services according to the profession they are learning. For example, in the 2019-2020 academic year the PUCPR School of Architecture has 285 students, a selected group of volunteers could be made among the third-fifth year students. They have the appropriate knowledge to provide help in different areas such as: construction, planning and planning proposals, repair, help in the placement of a temporary roofing, development in home reconstruction designs, among others. It would be as an aid to Voluntary Agencies Leading and Organizing Repair, local organizations such as "Tu Hogar Renace" and the federal agency FEMA.