

00:00:02 Interviewer

Let me see if I can do it now. Actually, I'm I'm able to do it now. Hold on. Oh, OK, OK, great. OK. No, you, no, you started it great.

00:00:10 Respondent

Yeah, it looks like it's there. Yeah, yeah.

00:00:12 Interviewer

So thank you so much. And so Jill, if you wouldn't mind just introducing yourself and and letting us know what your role in the what actually first, which disaster you participated in recently and just the rough roughly the location and the dates of the disaster and also what your relationship to to the CAP program is.

00:00:36 Respondent

Yeah, so we, Jill Santarelli, Vice President of Operations at Harvest House. We are a nonprofit human resources nonprofit. It was specialized in affordable housing and food pantry and drug addiction, alcohol addict addiction residents. And and so we love, love, love on people and help people get through these disasters. And we were through Debbie and built in during I think October was September, October. I'm not sure if you're from this area, Carol, but are you the one of you? I know you're not Amy, you're from Minnesota.

00:01:22 Interviewer

Are you? I'm from New Jersey, actually. I'm from new.

00:01:24 Respondent

Jersey am I? So am I originally, but yeah, I was born, I was born in Hoboken. But either way, so.

00:01:30 Interviewer

I used to live in Hoboken. I used to live on 9th Street by at least with.

00:01:33 Respondent

Delhi. That's funny, I was born in Saint Mary's. Maybe I should have shut off the recorder. But anyway, so yes, we struggled through those hurricanes this year was like boom, boom, boom, one right after the other. As a matter of fact, my dad lost his house and his car during Debbie. So it's pretty the flooding was the worst actually in this area. And that's how he lost both his house and his car. They were both flooded and, and of course we had to, you know, struggle through all of our clients and tenants. And we have both in this organization about we're at 10 campuses and about 80 units that we supply hurricane material to, to get through and also communications to, you know, kind of calm everybody down and just, you know, stay cool, calm and collected through the whole thing. And Red Cross, I can't speak enough about them. They're just we, I love our collaboration with them. And it's, you know, bar none what I would. So with the Red Cross and Harvest House, I mean, we partner, our

partnership is just, I can't speak enough about it. No matter what I ask for, no matter what I, whoever I call, it's like they're on it. And just, you know, always the response time is like is ridiculous. And so and I hopefully they feel the same way about Harvest House. But what I do feel like maybe moving forward for this next season is, and maybe it was I was, I'm new in my position and maybe this was happening, but I feel like an e-mail thread with all the organizations that can help in the different areas of, of the before, the during and the after the hurricane. Because like I said, my dad lost all his, his whole, his furniture and all of that. And then there's Streets of Paradise that can supply the furniture and, you know, to the clients and the tenants. And if we have all this, all our organizations on an e-mail thread, I feel like that would benefit us so that we can kind of e-mail each other and have that relationship including Red Cross. But I feel like if we can just have that collaboration ourselves, all the organizations. Other than that, I think everything went smoothly. I mean, I was very, we, we were very, very happy with, with how we handled the Hurricanes. Great.

00:04:12 Interviewer  
Great 1st.

00:04:14 Respondent  
Oh my God, that cat.

00:04:15 Interviewer  
Apologies for my attack cat, my chair. So it comes bring this cat hat. Which is what?

00:04:23 Respondent  
The hell.

00:04:26 Interviewer  
What you had, thank you for that, that background information. And that is definitely a recommendation we'll bring to the to the to the team. Just a little bit of information about this interview. It'll be, there'll be 4 different sections for the interview. The first section is about quality and the second section, well, actually there'll be 3 sections for this interview. The first section is about quality. The first the second section is about speed of operations, and the third section is about scalability. So most of the questions are going to be in the first section around quality of service delivery. And so the first question is around, well, you had talked a little bit about how you had partnered with the Red Cross during the past hurricane season, including Debbie and Milton and and and Helene. What was your role in that disaster response operation? What type of services did you provide for example?

00:05:22 Respondent  
Mostly food because we have a food, we do have a good sized food pantry at Harvest House and so that was I feel what we mostly provided. Yes, for the Hurricanes.

00:05:39 Interviewer

And what was it difficult to to collaborate or coordinate with the Red Cross disaster operation?

00:05:46 Respondent

No, it's like I said this, this community in Sarasota County is really like all the organizations that are under the umbrella of Red Cross. We just are good people. It's it's just a good, a good group of people. Can't speak enough about them. All the organizations, we just like to help each other out. And so it was very easy.

00:06:10 Interviewer

Did you interact with the disaster, with the Red Cross disaster relief operation at all the the operation that was delivering services, you know, across the disaster?

00:06:23 Respondent

If I understand your question correctly, Red Cross reached out to us. Do you have any food available for 60 families? Yes, we do, and then we provide it. So you mean, yeah, that that that did happen? Yes. OK, Yeah.

00:06:35 Interviewer

Oh, that's great. That's great. So before the partnership with the Red Cross, can you compare your previous disaster response experience before the partnership with the Red Cross and and how it worked during the most recent disaster?

00:06:53 Respondent

I can't fairly because I'm new in, I'm new at Harvest House. I started in June and so this is my first set of hurricanes and disasters, so I really can't what happened prior. I just know what happened this year and it was phenomenal, so.

00:07:07 Interviewer

OK, great. Thanks. You know, thinking about people in your community, how easy or difficult was it for people to get assistance during the disaster?

00:07:21 Respondent

I think the, IT was easy to get assistance. I, I mostly, I think the most difficult was the funding because so many people lost a lot of stuff and so it just took a lot of money to get everything back to normal in their houses. And so I think that the funding part was the hardest part.

00:07:42 Interviewer

And did you find that there were during the disaster itself, were there adequate supplies or food? Yes. So during the disaster and and was that provided by partners or how, how did, how was that assistance provided?

00:08:01 Respondent

We get food from Trader Joe's, we get food from Publix and so and also our local food bank, our All Faiths Food Bank, which is local in Sarasota. Those three areas, those three people organizations helped us a bunch during those times or or in everyday to everyday life. But but yes.

00:08:25 Interviewer

Are there certain groups of people that find it hard to get assistance generally and were they able to access assistance as well?

00:08:32 Respondent

The group of people is the people that we support. Our clients and tenants are normally in a hard time of their life and, and so and yes, they were provided. We provided what they needed. Yes, with the help of Red Cross for sure.

00:08:53 Interviewer

And how did your your organization, how were they able to reach those people? Well, I guess you work with them on a regular basis, but we.

00:09:02 Respondent

Work with them. We before, during and after. So before the Hurricanes, we, you know, took the step of getting their phone number, the way, the best way of contact, whether it be text, phone, e-mail, e-mail address, their emergency contact, if they were going anywhere to, you know, escape this mess. So we got all the details on an Excel sheet of, you know, all of that. And then that we that way we knew before and that way we knew during, during we contacted everybody. OK, you know, let me know if you need anything. And then of course, after we did the same thing. So it's just communication is key. And that's what we kept communication. Like I say, we have 80 units and so we it was a lot, but we have a team. So we did it and.

00:09:51 Interviewer

Do you have any examples of how people who are in need of services receive services?

00:10:00 Respondent

I mean, just for one example, tub stoppers we provided, you know, we went, I want to say Red Cross helped us with that. Red Cross helped us with a lot of the emergency like lanterns and the tub stoppers, I believe, I'm not positive, but lanterns for sure, batteries like all those things that you need an emergency provided us with all of that. And then we went and brought them to our clients and tenants and said they were ready for the hurricane and sandbags, all that we provided.

00:10:35 Interviewer

Yeah. And so that was all provided in advance before the.

00:10:38 Respondent

Hurricane. Yeah, Yes, that was the before, yeah.

00:10:44 Interviewer

Did was your organization able to provide or able to meet the cultural needs of the community that you were serving?

00:10:53 Respondent

Yes.

00:10:55 Interviewer

Were there any specific cultural needs, language or food, or any particular needs?

00:11:04 Respondent

I don't know if anything stands out as far as out of the norm. Do you have any you know any examples?

00:11:12 Interviewer

What you're for example, some sometimes having Spanish speakers can help with the disaster response or or having particular foods. Some populations have dietary needs.

00:11:27 Respondent

And we have all that, yes, yes, yes. And we have all that in the food pantry. Yeah, the dietary needs, the gluten free and we do have bilingual staff that work here. So yeah, we, yeah, we provided all that.

00:11:42 Interviewer

Great, Did did you? Did the Community Adaptation Program help you to provide any new services?

00:11:54 Respondent

I mean, they provided us with for this coming hurricane a generator. So that's going to help us if we are in need that before the hurricane they provided us with refrigerators for our food pantry, shelving for the dry storage area, a power lift for the pallets. Like I don't know if this is hurricane related, but I mean it all it helps us in an everyday and then of course hurricane as well. Yeah, it's they've been great partners.

00:12:33 Interviewer

Can you talk a little more about that, about how things that were provided? You know what we call blue skies helps you when the hurricane actually hits it during Gray skies.

00:12:48 Respondent

Explain how it helps is because we have enough refrigeration pieces units to to store all the food we need for this emergency that we're that's coming because of Red Cross. We have enough refrigeration units to store, you know, for the 80 families. And then of course if another organization reaches out, like I said, and not thread e-mail, you know, that we have a family that lost their house, whatever. Do you have any food that we can, you know, supply them for for 14 days or whatever? Yeah, we sure do, because we have, you know, extra units that Red Cross provided so we can store more food. Otherwise we wouldn't be able to store as much food that we need for the emergencies. So yes, for sure, that's one example.

00:13:39 Interviewer

Right. And I guess you know, in in some cases the community sort of a collaboration or a coalition is sort of formed between different organizations. Do you have any regular in addition to the e-mail chain? Do you have like regular meetings that take place between partners, those kind of things that might help with that collaboration if somebody needs, you know, resources from another partner? Do you have, you know, any type of, you know, connections or collaborations or regular meetings that you work?

00:14:14 Respondent

You're talking about blue skies, Yeah.

00:14:16 Interviewer

Yeah, during blue skies.

00:14:18 Respondent

Yeah, Red Cross does have the meetings so that we can collaborate and kind of meet all the organizations that can help each other out during these emergencies. And even on an everyday. Like for example, I don't know, maybe three months ago now there was a fire in the next County Down and Red Cross called us. Do you have any housing? And we have we have a family that just lost their house in a fire and said, I'm like, OK, let me check it out. Yes, we do. We've brought a family of seven into one of our housing units. So I mean, even if it that's an emergency too, it's not hurricane, but but but yes, that's that. That was great, being able to help that family of seven get out of get it, you know, have them lay their head in a bed for however long they needed.

00:15:14 Interviewer

Oh, yeah, yeah. And that that's great. Thank you for doing that during, you know, not only during the big large scale.

00:15:20 Respondent

Yeah, that was blue skies, but not for them, right?

00:15:23 Interviewer

Yeah, I mean, it's it's a disaster to that family for.

00:15:26 Respondent

Sure. To that family it was yes. And so I was happy to help.

00:15:30 Interviewer

Yeah. Well, thank you for being there when they when they needed that at that time. The next question is around the are are there see, I think we already sort of covered people in the community who how you reach hard to reach populations. Is it difficult? Do you have hard to reach populations that are difficult to reach and how do you go about, how do you go about reaching them?

00:16:00 Respondent

Building relationships like, so we have, yeah, we have relationships with all our clients and tenants. And so that like I said, we have asked them for the best form of communication because some people prefer e-mail over text or, or a phone call. And so like, like I said, we have all that and we have good, good relationships already. So we, they know when, when we call or text to pick up the phone or enter the text. And so we can help them, and they know we're all a family and we help them, yeah.

00:16:33 Interviewer

That's great. During the disasters, you know, for that happened in last fall, did people get services as long as they needed them? Yes. And did you find that you were able to provide services even after the Red Cross services it ended? Yes. Can you give us an example of you know why you're how you were able to provide those services?

00:16:57 Respondent

Yes, we had families that after the adoring or after the hurricane lost their job. And so we and he's a family. So they're of course, now when you lose your job with kids, you know that food is one of those things that's right now it's great, crazy prices. And so they reached out to us. Is there anything you can do? And then of course, we would go to the food, the staff, me and my staff would go to the food pantry. A couple of us, you know, load some banana boxes up with food, cereals and dried meat and tuna and whatever. We had some produce, eggs, all of that stuff and bring it to their house. And so that's how we and that would be after the hurricane, yes. Yeah, there was a there was a few of them that lost their job, but it might have been even five families that lost their job.

00:17:50 Interviewer

And and you, you're able to know about their needs because of your regular case work that you do with those families.

00:17:56 Respondent

Well, they call us. That's the relationship we have, yeah. The tenants and clients would call

us and say, hey, is there, this is what happened. Is there anything you guys can do to help us? And that's our our biggest go to within is our food pantry outside when people call Red Cross calls us for help or other organizations calls for help. It's food pantry and housing. These people, our people are already in housing. So they don't ask for housing. They ask for. That's the only thing we can provide is food obviously in time. But other organizations can look at us for housing as well, like when the fire happened.

00:18:33 Interviewer

So for when Red Cross has a shelter, for example, have you ever been asked to help with relocating people from a shelter, a Red Cross shelter?

00:18:43 Respondent

But I'll think not. Not while I'm on board, no.

00:18:51 Interviewer

During the recent disaster, how did the local groups work together? So you mentioned it's a great group of people that work together really well. How did that work during the disaster? Did and, and you also mentioned that there are some meetings that take place regularly. Did did everything sort of flow as smoothly? How do you coordinate with other people?

00:19:13 Respondent

Yeah, I think it floats smoothly. Again, I'm new in this position, so I don't know for sure. I'm I started in June and then these hurricanes, you know, September, October. And so, you know, I'm just trying to get my feet on the ground in the position and then the hurricane. So I'm not sure. Like I said, the thread with all the organizations on it ready now with all the organizations on it would be great. Of course, with Red Cross attached, I feel like during these hurricanes, but it could have just been me. I was reaching out to Red Cross for this organization and that organization instead of I could've just went to the organization. That's why I'm asking for that thread with all the organizations so I don't have to bother Red Cross with things I don't have to bother Red Cross for. There's some things that I want to talk to Red Cross for specifically, but then there's sometimes where they don't really have to be involved. I can just ask the partner for whatever, like Streets of Paradise for example, for furniture that I need because this house lost their furniture.

00:20:09 Interviewer

And, and, and that would be, you know, sort of the people would call you and they would ask for different types of assistance. And so you would try to provide what you could provide and then what you couldn't provide would want to reach out to other clients. And so just a mechanism to do that easily would be helpful.

00:20:26 Respondent

Yes, that's my fault. And that's really, that's really it. I feel like it really went smoothly and we got hit boom, boom, boom. And yeah, it didn't. This would be.



00:20:40 Interviewer

Did the so did you see that there was any overlap of services between the organizations or was that coordinated pretty well? Did you see like a duplication of of services in any way?

00:20:55 Respondent

Not that I recall. No, not that I recall.

00:21:00 Interviewer

And do you think that you were able to avoid that through, you know, any type of coordination or how did, how did?

00:21:07 Respondent

You avoid.

00:21:08 Interviewer

Not go into, you know, an area where another partner was working.

00:21:13 Respondent

I think it's just the relationships and knowing what everybody does, I think is how that happened. We all know. We all know each other and know because of Red Cross. They're really good at that collaboration piece of having us meet, you know, in a group setting and having us learn about each other and what we can provide. And so that eliminated the overlapping.

00:21:39 Interviewer

Compared to other disasters, Oh, actually maybe you don't have that since you only started in April. You might, you may have a different perspective on this, but did did you, did you feel the community got services more quickly or do you, did you feel like the services that they got services as quickly as they may have wanted them?

00:21:59 Respondent

Yeah, I do, yes.

00:22:02 Interviewer

So how long do you think from the time the disaster struck to the time it took to get services to people who needed them? How long do you think that. Was.

00:22:12 Respondent

Roughly, yeah. I feel like we, I feel like we were providing services before, during and after just like just in time. Like, yeah, I mean, I don't think they were really waiting.

00:22:28 Interviewer

And how do you think what, what enabled you? So you had mentioned that you had some resources beforehand, so you had some lanterns and other resources beforehand. So what enabled you to to do do that type of service delivery before, during and after the disaster?

00:22:48 Respondent

What enabled me to do that? Well, Red Cross provided it and then we transported it to the people, to the houses.

00:23:01 Interviewer

And was there any, did you think of did you see any delays, any, any obstacles or any delays that you may have had? No, nothing. OK, great. So the the next couple of questions are about the scalability of this program. And so as you may know, the the community adaptation program is in about 19 different areas throughout the country right now. And so we're thinking about, you know, how can we mail this program or elements of the program. So what do you think was most helpful about working with the community adaptation program, particularly in disaster response efforts? So what were some of the things about community adaptation that was helpful for you?

00:23:46 Respondent

The communication and the willingness to help the organizations and I needed help. I feel the communication piece where it's like they weren't providing stuff just to provide, you know, they went actually took time, went to the organization. What do you need? What you know, reach for the stars. Tell me what you need and then I'll do you know what we can do. But at least let tell me what your organization needs. And I I think that that was huge, the communication and then the willingness to provide. Yeah.

00:24:22 Interviewer

And were there things that helped your organization to work better or more effectively?

00:24:27 Respondent

Yeah. All the equipment that I said they provided, it was, yeah. I mean, I couldn't be more thankful.

00:24:36 Interviewer

And how did they help you because you mentioned building relationships as being important, How how did they help in building relationships? You mentioned, you know, they sort of brought some of the partners together. Were there other ways that they helped in helping you to build relationships in particularly with the other groups?

00:24:56 Respondent

That's all I could think of is is the meetings, which is huge, yeah.

00:25:04 Interviewer

And did they help with reaching out to the community members? Was it was there anything that helped with that aspect? Because I know you're really good at, you know, identifying and finding people in the community who need services. Did the CAT program help you to do that aspect of your work in any way?

00:25:24 Respondent

As far as reaching out to the community, I believe we we did that ourselves.

00:25:34 Interviewer

Yeah, I'm sorry. Oh, go ahead, go ahead.

00:25:38 Respondent

I just feel like Red Cross reached out to us and then we reached out to the community, kind of like that.

00:25:42 Interviewer

Yeah, yeah 'cause you have those relationships.

00:25:44 Respondent

Right, exactly.

00:25:47 Interviewer

Is there anything that we haven't asked you that you think is important to share about how Red Cross is working in communities to deliver services? Is there any other questions that we haven't asked you?

00:26:05 Respondent

I don't. I don't think so. Like I said in the beginning, I can't speak enough about this actual county and Red Cross team that actually is over us. Very thankful that I have that we have the group of people that we have. Didn't realize until I came to Harvest House how exceptional Red Cross is. So yeah.

00:26:29 Interviewer

Great, I.

00:26:29 Respondent

Don't think there's anything that you haven't asked. I'm very happy.

00:26:33 Interviewer

Oh, great. Well, thank you so much. Is there anything that that you think should be done before the next disaster? Because I know unfortunately you're probably going to experience another disaster in the future. Is there any apart from the and we will bring back that the the idea of the e-mail chains, but is there anything for future disasters that you think should

be put into place?

00:26:55 Respondent

Besides the e-mail thread, the only thing I asked Melissa for is Melissa from Red Cross is to have meeting like we have, like I said, the clients and the tenants to have maybe a couple of meetings to talk about preparedness for Hurricane, to hear it from someone actually from the Red Cross that has all that experience and she can hold a couple of classes. I talked to her about that. That would be helpful, but but that's about it.

00:27:27 Interviewer

OK, great. Well, thank you so much. I, you know, we, we, we very much appreciate all the work that you do in the community and we very much appreciate you sharing your insights and, and experience with, with us today. And, and we just want to reiterate that your experience is so incredibly valuable to us and it's going to help us to improve the, the community and attention program. So if you have any questions or if there's, if you think of anything that we should have asked you, please feel free to reach out and and we're happy to answer any questions you may have.

00:27:58 Respondent

Thank you very much for the nice talking to you both. Thank you. All right. Thank you.

00:28:02 Interviewer

Have a good day. Amy, do you want to stay on for just a moment? Thanks. Thank you all.

00:28:06 Respondent

Right. Thank you.

00:28:08 Interviewer

Bye Amy. I apologize. I used the a different script because you know.

00:28:14 Respondent

I was wondering.

00:28:15 Interviewer

If it was just me, no, no, no, no.