Hello Chapter Leaders & Members,

As Hurricane Harvey has created unprecedented flooding and destruction in the Gulf Coast area, some of our “sister chapters” in Texas and Louisiana have been greatly affected, and recovery and rebuilding will likely take years. We’ve heard from chapters wanting to help – *thank you!*  We can always count on our AACN community to offer help and support! If your chapter is collecting donations already, please hold off on that and read on.

First, let us share with you what we’ve done so far:

* Shared messages of support on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
* Created a [webpage](http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/93879322%3A7ZXTxaboN%3Am%3A1%3A2588813899%3ABB05414D8CF6C5B7439073B3F68415A2%3Ar) with a message from our president, resources and a link for volunteering in the affected area.
* This Thursday’s eNews top story will lead to the new webpage as well.

This past February we published [Parameters for Chapters’ Charitable Giving](http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/93879323%3A7ZXTxaboN%3Am%3A1%3A2588813899%3ABB05414D8CF6C5B7439073B3F68415A2%3Ar), located in the Chapter Resource Library under the sub-heading Chapter Governance & Accountability. These parameters, listed below for your convenience, meet the regulatory requirements for 501(c)3 organizations like AACN.

For those chapters that have started collecting funds to help with this disaster, we need to ask you to instead ask folks to donate to an established 501(c)3 organization, as chapters are not allowed to solicit and/or raise funds for any purpose other than to advance AACN’s mission, per regulatory requirements.

Parameters for Chapters’ Charitable Giving
We recognize there are times when chapters would like to help others in need. Many chapters have asked how they can provide a thoughtful response to the needs of others and stay true to AACN’s mission and chapters’ purpose.

Below are parameters and questions to help guide your decision-making related to charitable giving. Although the list below offers parameters, it is important to note one mandatory restriction:

* Chapters are not allowed to solicit and/or raise funds for any purpose other than to advance AACN’s mission. Nor may chapters distribute monies or gifts directly to individuals other than for nursing education.

Please contact your AACN Chapter Specialist at the national office if you have any questions regarding this document (Chapters@aacn.orgor 800-394-5995, x313).

As always, thank you for your leadership and compassion.

**Parameters**

**Mission**

* Our mission is at the core of everything we do. If extra funds are available through your chapter, consider how they can be used to advance the mission of AACN/your chapter.

When considering charitable giving look for opportunities that advance the mission, such as providing scholarships to attend NTI.

**Fundraising**

* AACN’s tax status as a 501(c)3 educational organization prohibits it and its chapters from fundraising for non-mission related purposes, including disaster relief.
* If you would like to support an individual in need (non-501(c)3), consider a crowd-sourcing site, such as KickStarter, GoFundMe, Youcaring, CrowdRise, etc. to channel individual donations by those interested. This giving should be done on an individual basis and not through the chapter.

**Recognition**

* If your chapter wants to send a gift basket or other similar gift package to recognize an extraordinary accomplishment or challenge by a unit or nurse, that is an acceptable use of chapter funds.

**Crisis or Natural Disaster Response**

* In a time of crisis or natural disaster, please consider donating to an established 501(c)3 organization, such as the American Red Cross or a local foodbank.
* Although fundraising is not allowed, excess chapter funds can be used to occasionally send “care packages” to a unit impacted by crisis or disaster.

Your thoughts, prayers, and positive energies for those affected by Hurricane Harvey will be needed for a very long time. Your donations will help people rebuild and get back to a “normal” life.

Thank you, as always, for your willingness to act – YOU are our ***“Why”!***

With gratitude,

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