



Shrinking time between disaster and recovery.

For immediate release

Getting people home faster: SBP kicks off first rebuild after Hurricane Harvey

National non-profit focuses on vulnerable Southeast Texas families who lost everything

HOUSTON (November 1, 2017) – Sylvia Garcia, her mother, father, sister, and uncle painstakingly waited out the rain Hurricane Harvey dumped on Southeast Texas, watching as the floodwaters rose to nearly waist deep in their home. They made their move to evacuate after sitting in the water for 12 hours, wading to the closest main road where family members picked them up and drove them to safety.

With her home flooded, she felt lost. After all, at only 26, she was housing and caring for her parents and now their world was turned upside down.

“It’s not just that we lost everything in the flood, it’s the unknowns that make this even worse,” Garcia said. “I’ve lived in Houston all my life and we never thought we’d be dealing with this. The SBP team has helped provide a light at the end of the tunnel for my family.”

Today, SBP, along with AmeriCorps members and volunteers from Toyota and Gulf States Toyota began rebuilding Garcia’s home. It’s one of the first Houston homes SBP has begun reconstructing.

Garcia bought the home three years ago for herself and her parents who are unable to work because of health issues. Her sister, niece and nephew also moved in. Currently, all six are living with an uncle until they can move back home. Now, Garcia and her sister carpool to work an hour each way. The family said they have always enjoyed their backyard; so much so, Garcia’s mother has been returning home just to sit outside and imagine life as it was before the storm.

It won’t be long until some semblance of that life returns. With rebuilding underway, SBP expects the Garcias to be back in their own home before Christmas.

“We’re working to rebuild as many houses as we can,” said Zack Rosenberg, SBP co-founder and chief executive officer. “Rebuilding did not start this quickly in New Orleans after Katrina. That’s why we’re also partnering with local non-profits to share all the lessons we’ve learned since Katrina so our collective efforts are multiplied and we get more people back in their homes faster.”

SBP exists to try to shrink the time between disaster and recovery. The national non-profit responded quickly in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey to help Texas homeowners begin the process of recovery by providing them with resources to help navigate the FEMA process, avoid contractor fraud, and complete mold remediation. SBP has also organized teams of AmeriCorps members and volunteers from across the nation to muck and gut homes, remediate mold, and now begin to rebuild.

In the months since Hurricane Harvey hit, SBP has worked with hundreds of members of Team Rubicon, as well as Habitat for Humanity, to share best practices for mold remediation. In the coming months, it will work with other rebuilding organizations to teach SBP’s proven/effective rebuilding model – based on the Toyota Production System (TPS). That training, as well as the rebuilding of homes by SBP,

AmeriCorps members and volunteers, is being made possible by gifts from Toyota, the J.J. Watt Foundation, Jefferies and Bass Pro Shops.

“Toyota supported SBP’s deployment to Texas because it is important to homeowners, local businesses, and the economy that recovery begin as fast as possible,” said Mike Goss, general manager, Social Innovation, Toyota Motor North America. “This is just the start of the recovery process. It’s going to take a long time; SBP and other non-profits will continue to need support from corporations, foundations and individuals – in both monetary donations and volunteer time.”

Toyota’s support of SBP goes back nearly a decade and includes a recent donation of \$1 million and 11 additional vehicles for Hurricane Harvey response. Additionally, Toyota has donated more than \$6 million to SBP, as well as trained the organization on TPS.

Formed in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, SBP has grown from a rebuilding organization to a team committed to doing everything possible to shrink the time between disaster and recovery. Each year, SBP works with more than 25,000 volunteers and 320 AmeriCorps members as it rebuilds homes, counsels non-profits, corporations, and government entities as to best practices for a quicker recovery.

“It’s amazing,” Garcia said. “Total strangers donating their time to help get us back in our home. This gives us hope. We feel blessed.”

About SBP

SBP’s mission is to shrink time between disaster and recovery. Since its founding in 2006 in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana following the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina, SBP has rebuilt homes for more than 1,300 families with the help of 180,000 volunteers in New Orleans; Joplin, Mo.; Staten Island, N.Y.; Rockaway, N.Y.; Monmouth and Ocean Counties, N.J.; San Marcos, Texas; Columbia, S.C.; White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.; Baton Rouge, La. and Houston.

SBP’s model is enhanced by AmeriCorps, which provides 320 members annually to manage worksites and clients, and train the organization’s volunteers nationally.

Through its Disaster Resilience and Recovery Lab (DRRL), SBP works to share lessons learned, prevent common barriers to recovery and help communities utilize SBP’s standardized, repeatable and proven-effective model.

To learn more, visit www.SBPUSA.org and like/follow on Facebook & Twitter @SBPUSA

Media Contacts:

Elizabeth Egle, (646) 856-9287, eele@sbpusa.org

Ashley Brauer, (502) 649-3205, ashley@guthriemayes.com

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