



UNITED WAY
Greater Los Angeles

WILDFIRE RESPONSE FUND IMPACT REPORT

Fall 2025

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

More than six months after the devastating wildfires tore through the region, United Way of Greater Los Angeles remains committed to uniting people and resources towards healing and rebuilding our beloved communities of Altadena, Palisades and beyond.



Within a day of the January 7 wildfires igniting, United Way launched its Wildfire Response Fund to address urgent and ongoing needs and longer-term recovery. This included support for low-income individuals whose livelihood was disrupted, people experiencing homelessness, and disruptions to community organizations and small businesses.

The tremendous response and generosity from the community, philanthropists, corporations and every donor who has contributed to the Wildfire Response Fund has been inspiring.

The Wildfire Response Fund united more than 2,800 individual donors in Southern California and across the United States, along with more than 90 corporate and foundation partners. Benefactors who made particularly generous contributions of \$500k+ include AAA, Amgen Foundation, Ballmer Group, Anthem Blue Cross Foundation, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Evan Spiegel and Miranda Kerr, and Stellantis. United Way Worldwide also made a significant contribution that helped organize network resources and support for the communities most impacted across Los Angeles.

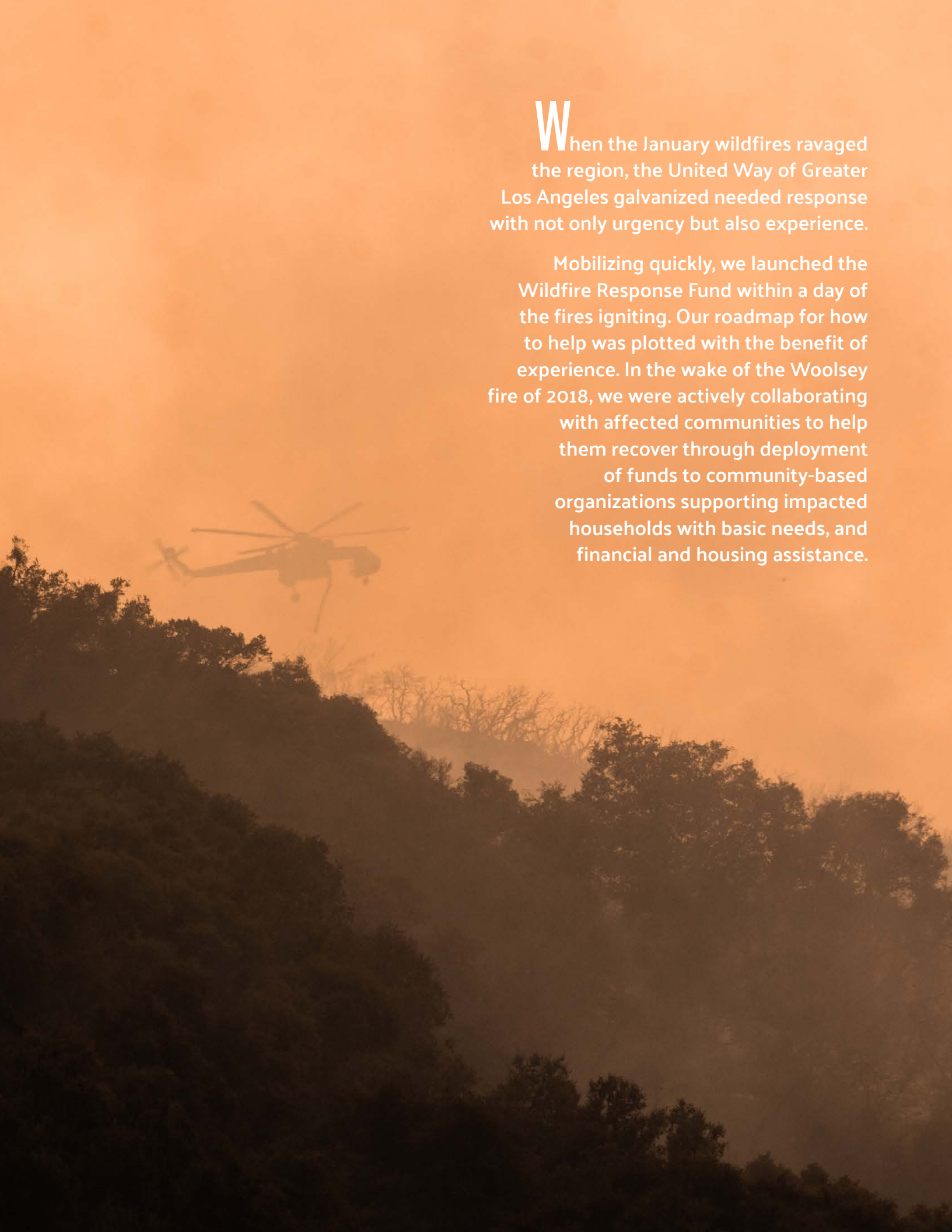
All of the important work highlighted in this Impact Report is possible thanks to the generosity of individuals and organizations that stepped up to assist people whose lives were upended by the wildfires. Providing aid in the face of devastation has required a broad-based effort, including the thousands who participated in WalkUnitedLA this summer. Every gift matters, and we are deeply grateful to all who contributed.

The Wildfire Response Fund demonstrates the power of unity and the commitment to one another that we have in Los Angeles. Together, we have the power to rebuild and strengthen our community.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elise C. Buik". The script is fluid and cursive.

Elise Buik
President & CEO
United Way of Greater Los Angeles



When the January wildfires ravaged the region, the United Way of Greater Los Angeles galvanized needed response with not only urgency but also experience.

Mobilizing quickly, we launched the Wildfire Response Fund within a day of the fires igniting. Our roadmap for how to help was plotted with the benefit of experience. In the wake of the Woolsey fire of 2018, we were actively collaborating with affected communities to help them recover through deployment of funds to community-based organizations supporting impacted households with basic needs, and financial and housing assistance.

The Wildfire Response Fund puts into action the key strategies at the heart of all our work: supporting people in crisis and building shared prosperity. And it focuses on aiding the same populations that United Way of Greater LA has sought to elevate socioeconomically disadvantaged, unhoused, and communities/households facing barriers to access.

The Wildfire Response Fund is structured to make a difference by backing community partners deeply familiar with the conditions and necessities of their constituents. Resources from our donors support the full continuum of what is needed including rapid response, long-term recovery, and community resilience. Already, funds for urgent, ongoing needs and rebuilding have made a difference, helping the residents and businesses hit hardest by disaster to persevere and begin to heal and forge their futures.

THE SCOPE OF DEVASTATION

Eaton fire

13,836 buildings destroyed, including family properties and businesses

6,119 residential structures destroyed

98 commercial properties destroyed

2,646 families impacted

60% were displaced from home

Palisades fire

6,837 total buildings destroyed, including family properties and businesses

5,546 residential structures destroyed

102 commercial properties destroyed

667 families impacted

55% were displaced from home



Loss of Black generational homeownership

Altadena has a long history of Black homeownership, becoming a refuge for Black families migrating from the South starting in the 1930s and throughout the Civil Rights era. After redlining and restrictive housing practices prevented Black families from buying homes elsewhere, they found opportunity in Altadena, leading to high rates of homeownership that fostered generational wealth. **According to a UCLA analysis, nearly half (48%) of Black households in Altadena experienced severe damage or loss of their homes due to the Eaton Fire. Additionally, of the 13,836 buildings destroyed, 61% had been owned for over a decade.**

MEETING URGENT NEEDS

PHASE I

The first phase of Wildfire Response Fund distributions occurred in late January. With \$1 million awarded to 25 organizations, the United Way of Greater LA supported community response and urgent relief efforts to assist those most impacted.

In March, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, in collaboration with the LA County Wildfire Recovery Health and Social Services Task Force, developed a rapid needs assessment for residents who live or lived in the Palisades or Eaton Fire-impacted areas.

The survey was designed to understand what the affected communities need to recover and, ultimately, to help direct resources to support the most critical, community-identified needs.



HOUSING

Eaton Fire

- 21% Lacked home or renter insurance
- 39% Getting home cleaned or repaired
- 36% Getting an air purifier
- 31% Debris removal
- 25% Help with rent/mortgage payments

Palisades Fire

- 25% Lacked home or renter insurance
- 27% Getting home cleaned or repaired
- 32% Getting an air purifier
- 23% Debris removal
- 27% Help with rent/mortgage payments

FINANCIAL

Eaton Fire

- 45% paying for lost belongings, such as furniture, clothing, or other household items
- 37% covering costs for rebuilding or repairing their home or property
- 29% covering daily living costs other than rent/mortgage

Palisades Fire

- 30% paying for lost belongings, such as furniture, clothing, or other household items.
- 28% covering costs for rebuilding or repairing their home or property
- 28% covering daily living costs other than rent/mortgage

HEALTH

Mental health emerged as a critical need for respondents from both fire areas. Respondents also reported widespread concerns regarding physical health.

Eaton Fire

- 77% their household has experienced worsening mental health since the fire
- 24% needed help finding mental health support or counseling services
- 74% have health concerns about themselves or their household being in or nearby areas that were burned
- 59% of their household has experienced worsening physical health since the fire

Palisades Fire

- 74% their household has experienced worsening mental health since the fire
- 20% needed help finding mental health support or counseling services
- 68% have health concerns about themselves or their household being in or nearby areas that were burned
- 55% of their household has experienced worsening physical health since the fire



OTHER

Eaton Fire

- 30% safe drinking water
- 30% essential goods, including household cleaning supplies
- 28% bedding or sleeping essentials
- 25% cooking supplies
- 25% PPE to wear while cleaning up their home
- 20% groceries or food assistance programs

Palisades Fire

- 21% safe drinking water
- 20% essential goods, including household cleaning supplies
- 18% bedding or sleeping essentials
- 18% cooking supplies
- 18% PPE to wear while cleaning up their home
- 17% groceries or food assistance programs



A key pillar of the Phase 1 funding integrated mutual aid, direct cash assistance, food assistance, and other emergency response and recovery support. This work benefited low-income communities impacted by the Eaton, Palisades and Hurst fires and wildfire-caused evacuations, as well as affected communities across the county. **To make it happen, we partnered with 25 organizations that provided immediate response including transportation and safety supplies for unhoused people and financial assistance to domestic workers, day laborers, union members, and outdoor workers such as street vendors, landscapers, and recyclers.**

COMMUNITY DRIVEN RESPONSE

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

45,000

people served

3,000+

households received essentials
such as groceries and water

5,000+

outdoor workers received
cash assistance

3,000

meals provided to
unhoused neighbors

3,000

meals served daily

1,000

union members who lost
their homes received
financial assistance

473

households received
financial assistance

310

people received
cash assistance

IMPACT IN ACTION

With support from the Wildfire Response Fund, the LA Federation of Labor has supported over 500 families directly impacted by the Eaton and Palisades fires. That aid included air purifiers, basic needs kits, hygiene products, food, and housing referral information. Additionally, volunteers at a recent event prepared essential food items that were given out at distribution sites, homeless shelters, churches, parks, and homes in Altadena, the Palisades, and across Los Angeles County.

That distribution benefited at least 1,000 families in need.

LIST OF GRANTEES

Phase 1

- IDEPSCA (Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California)
- Inclusive Action for the City
- Labor Community Services Los Angeles
- National Day Laborer Organizing Network
- Beacon Housing
- Brotherhood Crusade
- Christian Church Disciples of Christ (First Christian Burbank)
- Flintridge Center
- Foothill Unity Center
- Holy Assembly Church of God in Christ
- Movement Innovation Collaborative
- Mutual Aid LA
- North Valley Caring Services
- Project Angel Food
- Pukúu, Cultural Community Services
- Thinkwatts Foundation



- Walk Good LA
- Water Drop LA
- Friends in Deed
- LA Family Housing
- Safe Place for Youth
- St. Joseph Center
- Sycamores
- The People Concern
- Union Station Homeless Services

Phase 2

Altadena Community-Driven Collaborative:

- Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI)
- Bet Tzedek Legal Services
- NAACP Pasadena / Passion Project
- LA Voice
- Dena Heals
- My Tribe Rise

Additional Investments:

- Neighborhood Housing Services of LA County
- Southern California Grantmakers



A huge thank you to United Way of Greater Los Angeles for the \$25,000 donation supporting our fire impact relief efforts! We are working hard to support those in our Friends In Deed community who are struggling due to losses caused by the Eaton fire, and we are incredibly grateful to know that we are not working alone.



—Friends In Deed

RECOVERY AND HEALING

PHASE 2

The first round of Phase 2 distributions, totaling \$1.8 million, was issued in June 2025 to 7 local organizations to aid residents most impacted by the wildfires in recovery and rebuilding. One of these partners was Neighborhood Housing Services, Southern California's largest nonprofit affordable homeownership provider, who is providing essential counseling and financing for impacted renters and homeowners as they work to navigate public disaster assistance, find short-term housing, and make plans to repair or rebuild.

Second-phase funding supplied families looking to:

- Reconstruct single-family dwellings with access to guidance
- Securing financial assistance
- Multilingual legal workshops
- Disaster resource clinics
- Insurance and tenant support services.

Additionally, a targeted group of organizations rooted in Altadena and providing significant response and recovery for its residents were funded through Phase 2. This community-driven collaborative will meet to coordinate their recovery efforts and to develop the “People’s Action Plan” that will shape public and commercial space rebuilding and inform United Way’s next stage investments for the Wildfire Response Fund. **This is just the beginning.**

Phase 2 funding will expand into multiyear investments, bringing together a spectrum of stakeholders to plan and realize solutions that remediate the wildfires’ long-term impact on LA County communities.



Altadena Community-Driven Collaborative includes:

Kounkuey Design Initiative, a community development and design nonprofit that advances equity in under-resourced communities

Bet Tzedek Legal Services, a provider of free, person-centered free consultation focused on systems navigation and pro bono supports for impacted/displaced elderly population.

DENA Heals, a Pasadena coalition whose mutual-aid marketplace offers mental health services, trauma-informed healing, storytelling, community education, and support for basic needs

LA Voice, a multiracial, multifaith community advocacy organization

NAACP Pasadena, committed to providing a voice for Black people and other minority populations

My Tribe Rise, a grassroots community organization that serves working-class, elderly, and disabled Black residents in Altadena and Pasadena



We're very blessed and fortunate to be partnering with United Way. We launched DENA Heals as a fire recovery effort anchored by those who have been working and living here in the community for decades ... because those directly impacted know the needs but also know the solutions this community needs.



—Mike de la Rocha, DENA Heals



WALKUNITEDLA SUPPORT FOR WILDFIRE RECOVERY

LA County residents and communities will recover from the wildfires. But it cannot happen overnight – years of work still lie ahead. United Way of Greater LA is fully committed to this ongoing effort. In keeping with our longtime mission, we will pursue it with equity and transparency, guided by the voices of the communities that were directly impacted by the fires.

In one example of forward-looking Wildfire Response Fund support, the 2025 WalkUnitedLA event, cohosted by the NFL's Los Angeles Rams, raised funds to support wildfire recovery and healing efforts in Altadena, Pasadena and other communities impacted across the County.

The power of a gift to the Wildfire Response Fund comes from our reach and our experience. We have learned what it takes to follow through with disaster recovery in particular, and to drive change more broadly. This helps us to work closely with public, private, nonprofit, and community leaders, maximizing your philanthropic impact.



Tens of thousands of your neighbors in LA County need support. The difference you make when you donate to the Wildfire Recovery Fund helps to transform lives. We invite you to join and continue with us on this journey.



“

United Way's broader mission of equity, access and rebuilding in Los Angeles County is deeply meaningful. We'll do whatever we can to support our neighbors—not just to get back to where we were, but to build something even better.

”

—José A. Gómez,
Pasadena City College President



“

When you hear those stories, when you hear that people are still displaced or homeless, that people are still living in their cars, that really shows the need is still great, and it's important that partners, like United Way, tap into local organizations that have the reach to the people who have been displaced, to the community that has experienced this loss, and I think it's important to say that we can't do it alone.

”

Brandon Lamar,
NAACP Pasadena, President



THE PATH FORWARD

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

The cost of the January wildfire devastation has been estimated at \$250 billion. United Way of Greater Los Angeles' Wildfire Response Fund will continue to accept donations and invest funding to support long-term recovery. Early phases focused on community response and equitable rebuilding efforts while future funding will focus on community resilience.

During the summer, funding enabled the kickoff of a community-driven rebuilding collaborative led by six organizations anchored in the communities most directly impacted by the disaster, including Altadena and Pasadena. In August 2025, leaders of these organizations gathered to discuss their vision for the path forward.

The meeting, hosted by United Way of Greater Los Angeles, was facilitated by Kounkuey Design Initiatives (KDI), a Los Angeles-based community development and design nonprofit that partners with under-resourced communities to envision and create productive public spaces that address community need (e.g., infrastructure builds, green spaces, etc.). The discussion launched a working group focused on devising a "People's Action Plan," a community-led revisioning to establish vibrant hubs, cultural spaces, and/or income-generating opportunities that support families, individuals, and the broader community impacted by the fires.





The primary goal of the initial meeting was to share learnings and create a dedicated space for partnership and planning around long-term recovery efforts for the community of Altadena. It was curated as a holistic development strategy aimed to improve the environmental conditions, promote economic activity, and maintain and strengthen the social fabric of these vibrant neighborhoods.

This effort will further inform the next stage of United Way's Wildfire Response Fund, which is currently planned to include:

- **Supporting community members and leaders** to align assets and strengths for economic resilience and housing opportunities
- **Engaging in policy action** to protect impacted community members
- **Helping build local economic systems** that are sustainable and resilient. These areas may include deploying creative solutions for shared ownership, cooperative/community businesses, etc.
- **Supporting Pasadena City College's Construction Career Program** that equips high school and college students with college credit and valuable construction skills that will enable them to help rebuild their neighborhoods.

Much remains to be done for the those who still struggle to rebuild their homes and lives following the wildfires. Giving makes a difference for thousands of individuals and families and we are grateful for your continued partnership.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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With gratitude to the

UNITED WAY WORLDWIDE

network who leveraged national and international relationships to help grow the Wildfire Response Fund.

\$100k to \$499k

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These dedicated supporters are recognized for their contributions directly to United Way of Greater Los Angeles' Wildfire Response Fund. We also pay tribute to our many donors who have chosen to remain anonymous. We take pride in accurately listing and recognizing our donors. Should there be a case of an error or omission, please contact Donor Services at donorservices@unitedwayla.org

To support United Way of Greater
Los Angeles' Wildfire Impact Fund,
please contact emorton@unitedwayla.org



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