



iLEAD COMMEMORATES ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE MARIA IN PUERTO RICO

Second aid trip to hurricane-stricken U.S. territory planned in April

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CASTAIC, Calif. – As the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Maria’s landfall on the island of Puerto Rico approaches this week, iLEAD students are preparing for their second humanitarian aid trip to the U.S. territory.

The charitable program began last spring when students from SCVi, iLEAD’s founding school, and from other iLEAD sites traveled to Puerto Rico as part of the inaugural [Backpacks Full of Hope](#) service learning trip. The students spent a week replanting forests, building sustainable housing, and distributing the thousands of dollars in donated supplies they had collected from their families, friends, and community. A group of 16 students is slated to travel back to the island, which is still reeling from the effects of Hurricane Maria, for a [second aid trip](#) in April 2019.

The program is coordinated by Cultural Bridges, the international learning division of iLEAD Schools, which organizes these important service learning trips and other global initiatives for students. Last year’s student participants raised more than \$20,000 for Puerto Rican aid efforts, and this year’s crop of attendees hope to raise \$30,000, according to Matt Watson, Director of Maker Outreach for iLEAD Schools Development.

“On the anniversary of Hurricane Maria’s devastating landfall on Puerto Rico, we at iLEAD remain conscious of our duty to reach out and give back wherever we can,” Watson said. “We are so looking forward to returning to Puerto Rico on our second Backpacks Full of Hope trip, and are grateful for the support of our incredible community as we prepare to return to the island to continue our work.”

To support the students’ fundraising efforts, please visit <https://culturalbridges.global/puerto-rico/donate/>.

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iLEAD Schools, celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, is a network of 13 charter schools throughout California and the Midwest. iLEAD empowers learners to become conscientious, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world, and inspires them to become creative thinkers and leaders with a lifelong love of learning.

The iLEAD learning model promotes individualized instruction, active learning methods and opportunities for self-directed learning. The organization celebrates and fosters each child's individuality, and supports them in discovering their highest potential in the environment which best suits their learning needs.