

HardisonInk.com

National hospital group with Williston roots champions hurricane relief effort for Puerto Rico



This map created by the National Weather Service's National Hurricane Center shows the historic trail from Hurricane Maria's wind path. It reflects that it crossed Puerto Rico with a direct hit just two weeks after Hurricane Irma also devastated that island. Puerto Rico is an unincorporated territory of the United States of America.

Story, Photo and Video

By Jeff M. Hardison © Sept. 24, 2017 at 10:17 a.m.

WILLISTON – A letter sent Saturday (Sept. 23) via email shows a national hospital group with Williston roots is championing an effort to send help to Puerto Rico.

Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico just two weeks after Irma caused as much as \$1 billion in damages on the island.

HardisonInk.com



A still shot of the Lear Jet at Williston Municipal Airport, shows this is among the methods of transportation used by George Perez when he visits Regional General Hospital of Williston. Perez owns Regional General Hospital, and he is a leader in helping rural hospitals across America.

<https://youtu.be/hLRWAUvFvP4>

This video shows a jet landing at Williston Municipal Airport on Aug. 29 as Jorge Perez arrived to discuss National Alliance of Rural Hospitals business with attorneys via a telephone conference conducted at a conference room in Regional General Hospital of Williston. It was this same day when Dr. Charlene D'Acosta who is originally from Puerto Rico announced that she would be accepting new patients for general medicine in Williston.

That hurricane crossed Puerto Rico on Tuesday (Sept. 19).

Jorge Perez, the chairman of the National Alliance of Rural Hospitals (NARH), wrote on Saturday (Sept. 23), that “the past month has seen an unprecedented wave of natural disasters hitting our country and our hemisphere.

“As is the spirit of our country,” Perez continued, “citizens gather together in order to find ways in which they can help their friends and neighbors in their time of crisis. The NARH and its members pray for all those in distress and we are doing what we can to offer assistance or resources.”

As NARH chairman, Perez is among the leaders of the NARH, which includes President Michael P. Murtha of Tallahassee; and a board of directors comprised of Mark Blake Cadira, M.D., of Tampa; Robert Devrnja, M.D., of Knoxville; Christian Fletcher of Lifebrite Laboratories of Atlanta; Carolina Jarquin of Miami; Michael Layfield of Lauderdale Community Hospital of Ripley, Tenn.; Tilman Mears of Regional General Hospital of Williston; Paul Nusbaum of RCHA, of Charleston, W. Va.; and Greg Reece of

HardisonInk.com

Indianapolis.

“The most recent catastrophe has been truly heartbreaking to all,” Perez wrote. “On September 19, Hurricane Maria laid a path of destruction across the Caribbean, slamming into the island of Puerto Rico, leaving it in ruins.

“A native of the island, Dr. Charlene D’Acosta, in conjunction with Regional General Hospital in Williston, has led an effort to help. The NARH is actively conducting a relief mission to Puerto Rico which will leave within the next few days.”

Perez noted that the NARH membership is collecting and aggregating, medical, healthcare and other supplies for the people of the island of Puerto Rico.

They are being staged in storage facilities at airports in both Tampa and Miami.

“We are working with FEMA and the Turrin Aviation Group, the entity officially designated to coordinate all civilian relief efforts into the island,” Perez wrote. “Aircraft donated on behalf of the NARH will load the supplies at the staging areas and deliver them to island.”

Chairman Perez noted for interested persons that all supplies will be placed into the hands of those who can use them for the most good.

“We are asking any who might want to participate in this critical mission to contact Dr. D’Acosta or NARH President Mike Murtha at mmurtha@ruralhospitalalliance.com,” he wrote. “Community is the cornerstone of the NARH, as every rural hospital in America was built by individuals giving of themselves and coming together for the greater good. Please participate, and please keep all those who are suffering in your prayers.”

To see the most recent archived story with updated information about Regional General Hospital of Williston, click [HERE](#).