Airbnb Hosts Open Their Homes to Disaster Evacuees and Relief Workers

Through Open Homes, Airbnb Hosts Around the World Can Open Their Homes to Those That Have Been Displaced by Disaster

NEW YORK (PRWEB) July 26, 2019 -- When Hurricane Sandy hit in 2012, tens of thousands of New Yorker's found themselves stranded. In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, Airbnb host Shell, who rents out her Brooklyn loft, decided to open her doors to stranded and displaced New Yorker's for free. Over a thousand hosts joined her, and the idea for the Open Homes program was born. Recently, Kellie Bentz, the Head of Global Disaster Relief and Recovery at Airbnb, teamed with YourUpdateTV to share details on the program.

A video accompanying this announcement is available at: https://youtu.be/VIUWUJMRSIw

Through Open Homes, Airbnb allows hosts to open their homes to those that have been displaced by disaster, those fleeing conflict, or those with life-threatening illness seeking care and respite. To date, the Open Homes platform has housed roughly 30,000 people from 61 different countries. Since 2012, the program has responded to hundreds of disasters and helped find temporary housing for evacuees and relief workers around the world.

In response to the California wildfires last year, over 2,500 people found housing through the program. After Hurricane Harvey hit Houston in 2016, over 1,000 hosts opened their homes and housed over 1,400 people impacted by the disaster. Other past activations include in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria, the 2017 Puebla earthquake in Mexico, and Hurricane Florence in 2018.

When disasters strike, many people are in need of temporary housing. Whether it’s neighbors evacuating or relief workers deployed to help, a home gives people much-needed space to figure out what’s next.

Recent Open Home activations are currently finding temporary for housing for victims of Tropical Storm Barry in the Gulf Coast and the flooding and landslides in Nepal.

For more information, visit https://www.airbnb.com/disasterresponse

About Kellie Bentz:
Kellie joined Airbnb in May of 2015 to lead their Global Disaster Response and Relief efforts. In this role, Kellie works across the enterprise to respond to crises and disasters that impact the Airbnb community that includes over 6 million hosts in 191 cities globally. Since starting with Airbnb, Kellie has led responses ranging from Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico to the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe and the Middle East.

Kellie is an Affiliate Faculty member at Harvard’s National Preparedness Leadership Initiative teaching meta-leadership for leaders managing through crises. The National Preparedness Leadership Initiative (NPLI) is a joint venture of the Harvard School of Public Health's Division of Policy Translation and Leadership Development and the Harvard Kennedy School's Center for Public Leadership.

Prior to Airbnb, Kellie managed Target’s Global Crisis program where she led the development of Target’s crisis response plan, Target’s emergency management partnerships and the company’s enterprise wide crisis management team. Kellie has served in voluntary leadership roles with National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), Louisiana VOAD, and as an Advisor for Operation Dragon Fire, a CDC funded...
initiative, Sustained Dialogue Campus Network, Bayou District Foundation and currently an Advisor for Urban University.

About YourUpdateTV:
YourUpdateTV is a social media video portal for organizations to share their content, produced by award-winning video communications firm, D S Simon Media (http://www.dssimon.com). It includes separate channels for Health and Wellness, Lifestyle, Media and Entertainment, Money and Finance, Social Responsibility, Sports and Technology.
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