



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release: January 13, 2004**

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### **Jewish Community Disaster Fund Impacts People in Need**

The Jewish Community Foundation recently released a report on the use of the Jewish Community Disaster Fund to date. The Fund was established on October 27, 2003 by the Jewish Community Foundation and the United Jewish Federation of San Diego County with the sole objective of providing assistance to Jewish families and other community members who were affected by the devastating fires that ravaged the San Diego region in October 2003.

More than \$325,000, representing over 570 individual gifts, has been raised to date from contributors across the country including many synagogues, sisterhoods, retirement communities, schools, and Hillel campus centers.

“The community has truly rallied to help rebuild the lives of the affected families,” said Marjory Kaplan, Jewish Community Foundation Executive Director. “We’ve been overwhelmed by the support and warm wishes expressed.”

A total of \$48,000 in cash grants was immediately distributed in the week following the fires to Jewish families who lost their homes as well as families at two FEMA Centers in the Crest area for a range of out-of-pocket expenses including rent, food, and replacement household items.

Distributions have also been made to Jewish Family Service (JFS) to provide case management services, long-term therapy, and to help meet immediate needs. Funds have further been allocated to agencies in the general community providing services that JFS does not offer. Interfaith Community Service in North County received a grant for expanded winter shelter operations to house renters and marginally homeless people impacted by the fires. Other general community organizations are also being considered. In addition, grants are being made to assist firefighters who lost homes or who were injured by the fires, in both the San Diego and Julian areas.

“The strength of the partnership between the UJF, the Foundation and JFS allows us to better assist those impacted by the fires in a way greater than that of each individual organization,” said Gary Jacobs, UJF President. “The combination of community-wide planning, direct service provision and fundraising are together helping service the communities in need in a particularly effective and meaningful way.”

“Grants from the Jewish Community Disaster Fund are allowing essential services to be provided to both Jewish and non-Jewish families from every part of the affected regions,” stated Andrew Viterbi, Foundation President. “As these individuals confront the many challenges of putting their lives back together, we hope the distributions will demonstrate that the community is behind them.”

The UJF and the Foundation are currently working with JFS on other long-term uses for the funds and will continue to update the community as plans progress.

If you have any questions about the Fund or would like to receive a full copy of the report please contact Charlene Seidle at 858-279-2740 or [charlene@jcfsandiego.org](mailto:charlene@jcfsandiego.org).

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Since 1967, the Jewish Community Foundation has partnered with donors and community organizations in achieving their philanthropic goals. In addition, the Foundation works to increase current and future support for a vibrant and secure Jewish community in San Diego, Israel and around the world. During fiscal year 2002/2003, the Jewish Community Foundation distributed more than \$35 million in 3,000 separate grants to 700 different charitable organizations.

The United Jewish Federation of San Diego County provides life-saving and life-enhancing humanitarian assistance to those in need, and translates Jewish values into social action on behalf of thousands of Jews in San Diego County, in Israel, in the former Soviet Union, and 60 countries around the world.