

BEST WESTERN AIMS FOR A BETTER WORLD

Members give \$1M toward disaster aid, clean drinking water and education

January 10, 2018

LAST YEAR SAW unprecedented levels of natural disaster in the U.S. It was also a year marked by giving back.

Best Western Hotels & Resorts' hoteliers have committed approximately \$1 million over the next five years in support of the brand's charitable arm – Best Western for a Better World.

Portions of these funds were donated to the American Red Cross – the charity's disaster relief partner – to aid victims in the aftermath of 2017's powerful hurricanes in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico and wildfires in California.

"Since our brand's beginnings, Best Western hotel owners have felt a strong sense of responsibility to the communities in which they work and live," said David Kong, president and chief executive officer of Best Western Hotels & Resorts. "Our employees and hoteliers were deeply saddened by the wave of disasters that impacted the nation this year. I am inspired by the many heroes, including members of our own Best Western family, who mobilized to support first response efforts and bring hope and healing to disaster victims."

Members of Best Western's industry-leading loyalty program, Best Western Rewards, also supported disaster relief efforts this year through the donation of Best Western Rewards points. As a result, Best Western contributed an additional \$250,000 to the American Red Cross to bolster relief efforts associated with Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria. These funds were used to provide critical services to disaster victims such as meals, emergency shelter and medical assistance.

"The Red Cross relies on the generous donations of our corporate partners to fuel our first-response efforts and provide emergency relief to families and communities impacted by disaster," said Kurt Kroemer, chief executive officer of the Arizona American Red Cross. "We thank Best Western – along with its hoteliers and BWR members – for their steadfast partnership and financial support, which helps us provide rapid, on-the-ground services when they are most needed."

In addition to disaster response, Best Western for a Better World supports initiatives in the areas of education and poverty. The company partnered with Water, a non-profit organization that provides clean and safe drinking water to people in developing nations. It is helping to fund projects in Nepal and Ethiopia, including the construction of water infiltration and well systems, which will bring clean drinking water and handwashing stations to local children and families when they are completed in the spring.

Best Western for a Better World has formed a partnership with the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Foundation in support of its Opening Doors to Opportunity campaign, which provides scholarships to some of the hospitality industry's brightest students.

"We are dedicated to ensuring a strong and thriving hotel industry both now and in the future," said AH&LEF Interim President Rosanna Maietta. "It's partners like Best Western that make this critical endeavor possible, allowing us to identify and cultivate the leaders of tomorrow."

To make a donation in support of Best Western for a Better World, visit <https://bwbw.kimbia.com/bestwestern>.