

# FIRE LINES

*The California Fire Foundation - assisting families of fallen firefighters, firefighters and the communities they protect.*



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**DONOR NEWS**

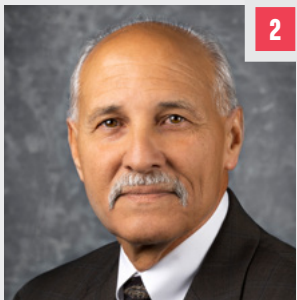
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**PAYING TRIBUTE TO THOSE WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE**



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**GRANT NEWS**



SUPPLYING AID TO VICTIMS OF EMERGENCY:  
**BRINGING LIGHT TO THE DARK**



## Message from our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

2022 marks the start of my third year as Executive Director of the California Fire Foundation. While there have been challenges along the way, my overarching belief is...

**"I WAS LUCKY TO ESCAPE** with my life. The smoke was so deadly that I couldn't even reach the front door and get my wallet and keys that were on a table just behind the front door," said Jason Vasquez, when fire ripped through his Anaheim home in June 2021.

The trauma experienced by survivors of fires and natural disasters is unimaginable. They often have to flee the scene with nothing more than the clothes on their backs and in the wake of a devastating fire or natural disaster, survivors desperately need comfort and financial

assistance. Easing that burden is what the California Fire Foundation's SAVE program is all about. "I lost everything, including id, wallet, phone, and money. The \$250 Supplying Aid to Victims of Emergency (SAVE) card gave me a place to stay, food, and ability to get a new phone. It really helped," said Jason Vasquez.

Through this program, frontline firefighters and select community-based organizations (CBOs) in California provide \$250 SAVE gift cards to eligible survivors of fire and natural disasters so they may purchase basic necessities such as

food, clothing, medicine or maybe a place to stay the night.

As the first line of protection during disaster, firefighters are on the scene witnessing first-hand, the shock and devastation of survivors as fire or natural disaster rocks their world. "The California Fire Foundation's SAVE program is incredible. To be able to hand people this amazing gift and for them be able to go buy gas or get a hotel room is such a simple gesture that people are so grateful for." said Fire Captain, Ken Smith, Chico Fire Department.

Continued on page 3



**FUNDRAISER SPOTLIGHT**  
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**MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**DEAR FRIENDS,**

2022 marks the start of my third year as Executive Director of the California Fire Foundation. While there have been challenges along the way, my overarching belief is we have made huge progress in increasing our assistance to those that need it most and in doing so we have stayed true to our mission of providing emotional and financial assistance to families of fallen firefighters, firefighters and the communities they protect.

The start of my role as Executive Director also coincided with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the last two years we have ridden, and are still riding, the storm of the COVID-19 pandemic and one of my first executive decisions was to reach out to community-based organizations and first ask, 'how can we help?' and second, made sure we delivered that help.

In the early days of the pandemic, organizations such as food

banks in underserved communities, were in uncharted territory due to this unprecedented crisis and had seen the need for their services increase by over 50%. Thanks in part to our corporate partnerships, we were able to provide funding and support as part of our ongoing disaster relief efforts to those organizations and aimed to ease the immense burden they faced.

Our grants program also aims to ease the burden on fire departments, firefighter associations and community-based organizations whose vital projects focus on keeping Californians safe. The Foundation opened its first grant cycle in 2018 and since then we have awarded over 400 grants totaling more than \$7.87 million in direct support for grantees actively serving high fire threat and/or under-resourced communities in regions throughout the state.

In my view, our grant program is all about making our communities better, whether that means enabling a fire department to purchase specialized firefighting equipment or giving a community organization the funds to rent goats to assist with vegetation mitigation and fuels reduction, the goal is ultimately the same - we want to make our communities better and safer place to be part of.

These great strides in our progress spur me on for the road ahead and while I am extremely proud of what we have achieved as a foundation so far, I am equally excited by the potential to assist yet more firefighters, their families and those in the communities they so proudly serve.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

*Rick Martinez*



**Rick Martinez**  
Executive Director  
California Fire Foundation



**COVER STORY CONTINUED**



*"I just received my SAVE Card from my local firefighter. He and his team battled the fire that devastated my CONDO complex. I just want to say thank you. This small gesture of kindness goes a long way"*

- R. Perez, La Puente



The SAVE program is available to any officially organized fire department or district and runs at no cost to them. The Foundation offers training materials and works with fire departments to help roll out this vital program, giving fire departments and districts the opportunity to help

people impacted by fire or natural disaster in their own community.

Our partnering fire departments are in a unique position to not only be the first line of protection during disaster but by offering the SAVE cards to survivors of a disaster, they are also the first to offer hope in their darkest hour.

**LIVERMORE DUPLEX FIRE**

11 residents were displaced, and one was hurt when fire ripped through a Livermore Duplex one windy afternoon in March 2021. Joe Testa, the Deputy Fire Chief at the time was on the scene was able to distribute \$250 gift cards to each displaced family offering them a helping hand in their hour of need.

"The SAVE program had just been rolled out, but we were thrilled to be able to provide this support to those who had lost so much," said Joe Testa, Deputy Fire Chief with the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department.

To date, over 111 departments across the state of California are participating in the program. Fire Chief, Mary Gutierrez, Seaside Fire Department said, "The SAVE card is a small offering for residents who suffer loss after a fire but a large gesture in their eyes during their time of need. As firefighters we don't often get closure with our residents as it relates to emergency response. The SAVE card program allows us some positive closure with residents who experience traumatic events post fire, and the card always puts a smile on the faces of those who receive them."

During and following the devastating Camp, Hill, and Woolsey Fires of 2018, the California Fire Foundation mobilized direct assistance through local fire departments and volunteers. Over a three week period, cards were distributed at the FEMA center in Chico and at various locations throughout Southern California, firefighters and volunteers distributed over 10,000 cards totaling over \$2.6 million given in direct aid to survivors.

Fire Captain, Ken Smith of the Chico Fire Department has first-hand experience of presenting

COVER STORY CONTINUED

survivors with SAVE cards not only on the front line after structure fires but also during the aftermath of the Camp Fire at the FEMA center in Chico. "With the Camp Fire tragedy, an entire community was lost in 15 minutes," said Fire Captain, Ken Smith, Chico Fire Department. "After receiving the SAVE card, we had people return to the FEMA center and stand in line for an hour just to thank us."

In the aftermath of the devastating Camp Fire of 2018, that caused at least 85 civilian fatalities and destroyed over 11,000 homes, the SAVE card value was permanently raised from \$100 to

*"The program is incredibly beneficial to the two communities we serve. The City of Seaside and the City of Del Rey Oaks. Our community members are incredibly grateful to receive SAVE card assistance to allow them to buy essential needs post emergency. We thank you for keeping this program up and running. We are very grateful."*

*- Mary Gutierrez, Fire Chief, City of Seaside*

\$250. This increase was possible solely due to the commitment of the Foundation's donors, large and small, and through ongoing generous donations from individuals and corporate partnerships the SAVE program can continue to thrive.

While the SAVE program is administered directly by participating fire departments across California each day, the program also mobilizes for rapid disaster relief when communities are impacted by wildfire or natural disasters.

Last year's wildfire season once again proved to be record breaking with behemoth fires such as the Dixie, Caldor and River Fires



**\$250 SAVE CARD AIDS APPROXIMATELY 4 SURVIVORS PER FIRE/DISASTER**

**SAVE SERVES NEARLY 30 MILLION RESIDENTS**

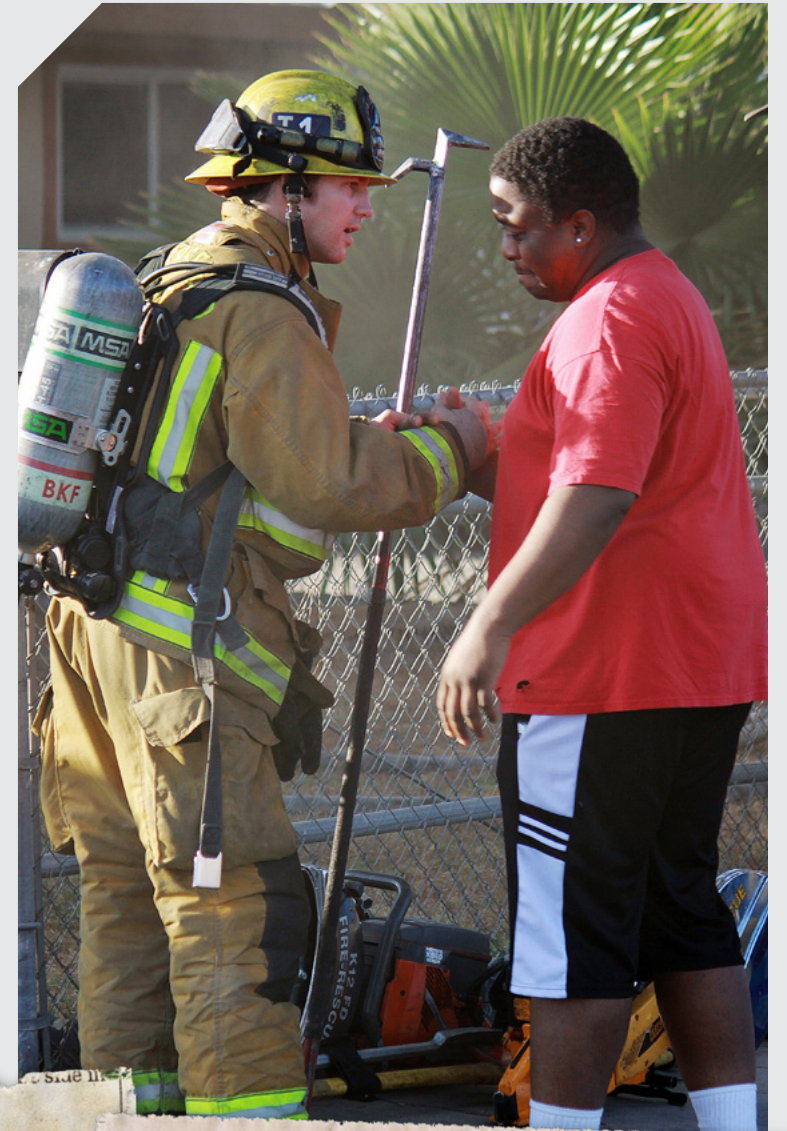
**100 CALIFORNIA FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND LOCAL UNIONS**

**SINCE 2014, OVER 60,000 SURVIVORS HAVE BEEN ASSISTED THROUGH SAVE**

COVER STORY CONTINUED

*"After we got evacuated it took a few days before we knew our place was gone. The SAVE card put a little bit of light in all that darkness."*

*- Kathy Sheldon, survivor of the North Complex Fire*



PASADENA NOW

DEC 26, 2021

"Because of the damage and an electrical shutoff which Pasadena Water and Power determined was a necessary safety precaution, a total of seven occupants were displaced from the home."

Two of the occupants were also given \$250 SAVE gift card provided by the California Fire Foundation"

READHEADED BLACKBLET

**"A \$250 SAVE card was issued to the resident to assist the displaced resident with incidental needs. The SAVE program is financed entirely through private and corporate donations made through the California Fire Foundation."**

Pleasanton Weekly

"Additionally, the LPPFD, in partnership with its firefighters union IAFF Local 1974 and the California Fire Foundation, provided \$250 gift cards to each displaced family, according to Testa. "This program had just been rolled out in the past few weeks, but we were thrilled to be able to provide this support to those who had lost so much," he said."

raging across the state. For the first time in the SAVE program's history, the California Fire Foundation worked with CBOs on the ground to assist with the distribution of the SAVE cards to those in need, ensuring they reach survivors as quickly as possible. Across the Dixie, Caldor and River Fires we disbursed over \$327,750 to those impacted.

These organizations are in a unique position to understand and recognize the immediate needs within their communities. Just as firefighters are often first to reach the frontline of fires, often CBOs are the first line of support to survivors of large-scale disaster at emergency aid centers and with their involvement in the distribution of the SAVE cards, we can get vital aid to those in need.

"We are witnessing first-hand the devastation and trauma people are experiencing when they come through our doors but the SAVE cards from the California Fire Foundation are like sending angels to allow us to help others," said Cathy Rahmeyer, Director of Operations at the Plumas Crisis Intervention and Resource Center.

"Simply put, it is thanks to donations that the SAVE card continues to offer those in need the hope to get them through disaster," said Rick Martinez, Executive Director, California Fire Foundation. "It is also thanks to the dedication of those distributing the cards, whether that is a firefighter on scene at a house fire

or an organization on the ground assisting with a major disaster, we are grateful for their assistance in getting these cards into the hands of those in desperate need." Please visit [cafirefoundation.org/save](http://cafirefoundation.org/save) to learn more about the objectives, responsibilities and procedures for implementing SAVE within a fire agency.

# DONOR NEWS

## Thank You Donors

The support we receive from our corporate donors helps us accomplish our Foundation goals such as assisting firefighters and their families and supporting the communities they serve. The contributions we receive truly make a difference. We wanted to say a huge thank you to Target and Union Pacific for supporting the California Fire Foundation. Their funds will support a variety of programs that provide assistance to the survivors, firefighters, and communities that are affected by natural disaster. These programs support critical needs of those touched by natural disaster — from immediate assistance to long-term recovery.



Union Pacific's Francisco Castillo presenting a check to Rick Martinez



## LINE OF DUTY DEATHS

# PAYING TRIBUTE TO THOSE THAT MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

The California Fire Foundation honors our state's fallen by sharing memories from their lives, both inside and outside the profession. We take a moment to honor those that made the ultimate sacrifice.



**WILLIAM R. JAMES**  
*Los Angeles Fire Department*

The Los Angeles Fire Department are deeply saddened to announce the death of active-duty Captain William R. James. Captain James began his LAFD career on October 23, 2000. He was assigned to Fire Station 85, "C" Platoon, in Harbor City at the time of his at-home passing on December 11, 2021. Brother James is survived by his wife, daughter and son.



**JONATHAN FLAGLER**  
*LA County Fire Department*

It is with great sorrow that the LACoFD shares the line of duty death of Fire Fighter Jonathan Flagler. Fire Fighter Flagler sustained fatal injuries while battling a residential structure fire on Thursday, January 6, 2022.

Firefighter Flagler was a 21-year veteran of the fire service having served 19 years with the Vernon Fire Department before transitioning to the LACoFD in October of 2020. Remembered as a loving husband, father, uncle, friend, and brave team member, Brother Flagler leaves behind his wife and two sons.



**DAVID SPINK**  
*Barstow Fire Protection District*

The Barstow Fire Protection District mourn the loss of Fire Engineer David Spink, who passed away on January 9, 2022. Engineer David Spink's untimely death follows a courageous battle after sustaining major injuries in a job-related accident on December 5, 2021. Engineer David Spink began his career in 1990 with the Barstow Fire Department and proudly served the citizens of Barstow for over 32 years. Brother Spink is survived by his wife and son who is a Barstow Firefighter/Paramedic following in his father's footsteps.



**VIDAL "MAX" FORTUNA**  
*Stockton Fire Department*

Stockton Firefighters Local 456 and the Stockton Fire Department are saddened to announce the loss of one of their own in the line of duty. Stockton Fire Captain Vidal "Max" Fortuna was shot in the early morning hours of January 31 while responding to a fire. He was transported to a nearby hospital where he died of his wounds. Remembered as a man who loved his job and his community, Brother Fortuna was a 21-year veteran of the Stockton Fire Department and a proud member of Stockton Firefighters Local 456. "He never missed a day and never complained about being on the job," said Local 456 President Mario Gardea. When he wasn't on the job, Brother Fortuna was on the ball field, coaching youth sports in his community. He also played bass in his church ministry in Modesto. Brother Fortuna leaves behind a wife and two adult children.

GRANT NEWS

# GRANT NEWS

Since 2018, CFF has teamed up with funding partners across the state to help communities and organizations by awarding over 400 grants totaling more than \$7.87 million in direct support for grantees actively serving high fire threat and/or under-resourced communities in regions throughout the state.

One such partner is Edison International, and through their generosity the California Fire Foundation can award individual fire prevention and preparedness grants up to \$15K to recipient Southern California departments and organizations in support of projects and programs focusing on wildfire prevention and preparedness assistance.

Last year alone, the California Fire Foundation disbursed more than \$1.78 million to 62 fire departments/ local firefighter associations and 64 community organizations, and we are pleased to announce that our Spring 2022 funding cycle is now underway.

Here are some organizations that know all about the benefits of submitting a grant application.

## Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District

California Fire Foundation awarded a grant to Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District to assist with the purchase of educational tools for children to provide more realistic and engaging ways to help them learn about fire safety.



## Kern County Fire Safe Council

Kern County Fire Safe Council volunteers distributing free Go-Bags for their community.



Soboba Fire Dept working on educational program.

## Soboba Fire Department

"We at the Soboba Fire Department are thankful to the California Fire Foundation and Edison for this grant. It will be hugely beneficial to the members of our reservation and to our surrounding communities to help us be better fire prepared," said Fire Captain, Roger Salmo of the Soboba Fire Department that was awarded a grant to implement a multi-media education program for the members of the Soboba Reservation and its surrounding cities on the importance of being fire prepared through multiple community events, handouts and promotional videos.

"This award allowed Monterey Firefighters Association to purchase an emergency vehicle to help support evacuation efforts of community members who don't otherwise have vehicles or transportation available. This is a MUCH-needed resource and we're so grateful for CFF's help in making it possible."

Community Foundation for Monterey County



"The awarding of our California Fire Foundation grant has allowed us to create amazing videos using their in-house production team at Firestar that has helped us educate our residents on important public safety issues. We have invited our local elected officials to join us in creating joint messaging revolving around public safety issues."

Long Beach Firefighters Local 372  
2021 Wildfire Prevention & Preparedness Grantee

"CRFPD would like to thank the California Fire Foundation for their generosity in allowing us to successfully complete our Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Acquisition Project through the Fire Prevention Grant Program. The awarded grant has assisted us in providing our personnel with modern wildland PPE in order to enhance our wildfire mitigation efforts and keep communities safe."

Campo Reservation Fire Department



Southern California fire departments, firefighter associations or nonprofit community organizations located in Edison's service territory may apply for funding now through March 25<sup>th</sup>. **APPLY TODAY!**

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:  
[www.cafirefoundation.org/grants](http://www.cafirefoundation.org/grants)

# FIREFIGHTERS IN ACTION

➤ Firefighter Sawai rushes a dog, overcome by smoke, for immediate aid in Torrance, Ca. Torrance Fire Dept Local 1138.

If you or someone you know might be interested in featuring in Firefighters in Action, please send images to [cafirefoundation@cpf.org](mailto:cafirefoundation@cpf.org)



Picture by Jonathan Androwski

## FUNDRAISER SPOTLIGHT HARKER SCHOOL

Images courtesy of Nathan Liu



Students at the Harker School, San Jose, held a "Tribute to Fallen Heroes" charity fundraising concert to benefit the California Fire Foundation on December 4, 2021. This is the second year the students have organized such a concert and to date they have raised over \$31,000 for the California Fire Foundation. A huge achievement we are so grateful for – Thank you Harker School!

### CALIFORNIA FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL

## CALIFORNIA FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL 2022

The 20th Annual California Firefighters Memorial Ceremony has been scheduled for July 30, 2022. This ceremony will celebrate the service and sacrifice of the California Firefighter Memorial wall honorees from 2020, 2021, and 2022, after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The California Firefighter's Memorial proudly honors the brothers and sisters we have lost and serves as a reminder that they will forever be remembered. If you know of a fallen firefighter yet to be included on the California Firefighter Memorial Wall, the deadline for applications is Friday, April 1, 2022.



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CALIFORNIA FIRE FOUNDATION  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



*On behalf of our Board of Directors and the California Fire Foundation staff, thank you for supporting the California Fire Foundation - we are truly grateful.*

**Brian K. Rice**  
Chair, California Fire Foundation  
Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (retired)  
President, California Professional Firefighters

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