

MICHELANN OOTEN
State Director



MARY FALLIN
Governor

STATE OF OKLAHOMA
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

To Whom It May Concern,

Recovering Oklahomans After Disaster (ROAD) will be a vital partner in aiding the state's most vulnerable residents following emergency events. Chad Detwiler, Kevin Walker, and Hal Wright have been instrumental in assisting thousands of Oklahoma families as part of the Oklahoma United Methodist Disaster Response (OKUMC DR) ministry. These three men have served the disaster community as principal volunteer organizers and construction project managers following the four central Oklahoma tornadoes in 2013, state-wide flooding in 2015, numerous ice storms, flooding in Lawton and Maysville, tornado events in Tulsa, wildfire recovery, and other disasters around the state.

When OKUMC's disaster response ministry closed, Chad, Kevin, and Hal established ROAD to continue the vital work of mobilizing volunteers and repairing homes for those impacted by disasters. Most disasters in Oklahoma do not receive any assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for families or individuals. Our non-profit partners are our first and last line of defense in assisting families when federal programs are not available. Even when federal assistance is available, it is usually a small fraction of the total cost of repairs, which leaves Oklahomans on fixed incomes, those with disabilities, and single parents and their children especially vulnerable to further hardships. Without the efforts of ROAD to continue to recruit volunteers and repair homes, many families will simply never recover.

Disasters begin and end in the local community, but many communities may struggle with recovering from even small disaster events that leave a few dozen families or individuals without housing. Reliance on national non-profits is unrealistic in the face of numerous large disasters across the country, including fires, hurricanes, severe storms, and other hazards. The commitment of ROAD to serve local communities across Oklahoma, as well as the institutional knowledge and capacity of their staff, offer the best hope for successful outcomes for vulnerable Oklahomans to repair their homes and resume their lives.

Recovering Oklahomans After Disaster has a unique mission and capacity, a professional staff with an established history of success and innovative practices, and a demonstrated ability to provide holistic construction services during and after disasters. Please join us in welcoming ROAD to the Oklahoma Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster and support this vital organization.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Luke N. Pratt".

Luke N. Pratt
Individual Assistance Officer
Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management

