



TULSA COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES

A Division of the Board of County Commissioners
2401 Charles Page Boulevard
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74127-8435
Phone: 918.596.5560
Fax: 918.596.5568

Linda J. Johnston
Director

November 28, 2018

Imagine for just a moment that you are an 83 year old widow living alone in an old home that belonged to your parents. Your income is fixed at \$742.00 per month and you have not been able to afford insurance on your home in years. Your medication costs now are higher than your check...and an F2 tornado just hit your old home.

Imagine for just a moment that you are a 36 year old single mother of four. The father of your children took off two years ago and has not been seen since. You work as a checker at Walmart and your hours just got cut.....and an F2 tornado just hit the old mobile home that your brother gave you.

No matter what kind of disaster it is, there will always be people who do not have the means to recover from a devastating blow like this. So what happens? Who helps these disaster survivors recover?

If a mega-disaster hits, lots of money is raised quickly because of the media attention and recovery work promptly begins. In a mini-disaster, very little money can be raised, especially in the rural areas of our state. These low-attention disasters are the toughest to recover from unless you have an organization like Recovering Oklahomans After Disaster, Inc. (disasterROAD.org)!

In 2015, an F2 tornado cut a pathway through an unincorporated rural area of Tulsa County, hitting a poverty pocket in our county...of course. It was amazing to see the disasterROAD staff, then working under the Oklahoma United Methodist Disaster Response, kick into action. They brought in volunteer teams (aka Angels with hammers!) from all over the country to get the repairs done for these disaster survivors. Limited funds were available to buy materials for these projects, so disasterROAD staff worked hard to help us get these needed resources donated. Hundreds of bales of shingles just started arriving. They were masterful at coordinating the materials needed, housing and food for the volunteers, logistics of the teams and oversight of the work completed.

There is no doubt that NO recovery would have occurred for this population had the experienced and dedicated crew of disasterROAD not been so good at what they do. It was a tremendous honor to get to work with Hal, Kevin and Chad on behalf of the disaster survivors. I was humbled by their hearts.

Imagine for just a moment...no one to help that 83 year old widow - who didn't even realize that she had a tree laying across the back side of her home - not until disasterROAD staff arrived.

With Regards,

Linda J. Johnston, Chair
Tulsa Area Long Term Recovery Committee
Director of Social Services for Tulsa County

LJ:gs

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER M/F/H