



Transcript of Social Cause Panel Discussion: Disaster Relief

Hosted by: Lindsey Barta (Magnified Giving, Associate Director)

Participants: Jerry Dickens (American Red Cross), Jonathan Hauge (Shoes for the Shoeless), and Bill Perry (A Child's Hope International)

Length of Video: 28:32

Question 1: Introduce yourself and your mission.

Question 2: What's the impact of disaster relief on the community? Why is it important that people like you and people like your organizations are doing this kind of work?

Question 3: What are your thoughts on disaster relief at a global national and a local level? How this is important to students who might be living in Cincinnati, Dayton, Cleveland, but here in Ohio?

Question 4: Looking back, what brought you into working or volunteering in the nonprofit sector and specifically within this disaster relief or poverty? What drew you to this work?

Question 5: What advice would you give to students in 2020 and beyond who are interested in supporting disaster relief? How can they get involved, what are some specific ways that you think students can get involved in this cause?

Question 6: Jerry, Bill, Jonathan, do you have any lasting thoughts of encouragement to these students or anything else you want to say about disaster relief?

Lindsey (0:00-0:32): Hi everyone, my name is Lindsey, I am on staff with Magnified Giving. We are here for a cause conversation to discuss disaster relief as a social cause. We have some great representatives here from some diverse organizations in our community. I'll let Jerry start off and **introduce himself and also his mission and how that relates to disaster relief.**

Jerry (0:32-1:30): Good morning, my name is Jerry Dickens and I'm with the American Red Cross. I oversee the group coordination. I'm a volunteer with the Red Cross. I oversee the group that manages the mass care section of the Red Cross services. The Red Cross is an

organization that prevents and alleviates human suffering as a result of disasters. We do that by mobilizing our volunteers and the generosity of our donors to be able to do that because it takes resources, both practical and physical, as well as folks to do that. What we do is kind of put all that together to provide relief to folks who have been affected by disasters.

Bill (1:30-2:00): I'm Bill Perry, from A Child's Hope International. Our mission of Child's Hope is to motivate and to mobilize churches and communities to care for orphans and children that are in distress. We do a lot of humanitarian relief. We also do a lot of disaster relief when hurricanes hit, floods come, things like that. We provide food for children around our community locally regionally and around the world actually.

Johnathan (2:00-2:54) :: My name is Jonathan Haugey. I work for shoes for the shoeless. We are a faith-based non-profit up here in Dayton. We serve a 12 county region, providing shoes and socks which is one of poverty's biggest unmet needs for a child. We give out a lot of shoes and a lot of socks. Then disaster relief, we've done three what we would call disaster relief trips since we've started. We've sent a team down to Port Arthur and Beauville, Texas when Hurricane Harvey hit. We sent a team down to Pollocksville, North Carolina after Hurricane Florence. Then we had the Dayton tornadoes and so we were doing disaster relief in our own backyard.

Lindsey (2:54-3:16): To get started exploring this topic of Disaster Relief, would you share your thoughts from your perspective--**what's the impact of disaster relief on the community? Why is it important that people like you and people like your organizations are doing this kind of work?**

Bill (3:16-4:00): I'll jump in real quick, one thing I think is because you know when people lose everything they seem to lose hope and when someone comes alongside them and says "hey we can help you it may take a while but we're here to help you," they see hope. So we not only bring it [hope] through what we give but also the people in their heart because you know we don't know what that means when we lose everything. I mean the people in California right now, what a disaster is going on there. You know what those people are going to do? How would you feel if you're a whole house burn up will someone come along to help you and then you're in need. I think that's the biggest impact I believe that we can bring.

Jerry (4:00-5:10) : I agree, with Bill. I think a big part of what we do with the Red Cross, as people have just been through probably, one of the most terrible times in their life. Everything is upside down, everything is complicated, and hope is something that is difficult sometimes to see. A lot of what our agency does is point people in the right direction. So the need that people may have something physical, it may be something completely unusual. What we can do is we can help people stand up and help people say, "oh yeah, you know here there is a place that I can go help with food or help with shoes." Or help with you know all the other things that a person might need that they may have lost in a disaster.

Jonathan (5:10-7:29): I think those are all really great points. I think the other kind of caveat is, depending on the magnitude of whatever the disaster was, it most likely affected everybody or most people within that community to the point that they need a hand up. They need help, they need somebody to come riding in to help point them back in the direction of what “normal” was and what “normal” can be and should be. So I think a lot of times, I think, Jerry the Red Cross is an incredible example because immediately upon a disaster hitting you know full well the Red Cross is figuring out “How do we mobilize people? How do we mobilize resources? How are we going to get into the masses?” That’s what the Red Cross does really, really well is they can spread far and wide into an area. But then I think about the other areas that that are a little bit harder to get to and that’s when we’ve gone out and done disaster stuff that’s what we focused on because we’ve said you know what the Red Cross and these other bigger organizations are going to be able to tackle the main amount of people that really need it. But there’s going to be a lot of people because what we found from working with people in poverty is a lot of times transportation was already an issue for a lot of people in poverty before the disaster. Once the disaster hits without all public transportation is really coming to a halt very abruptly and quickly. So how can we as a small and nimble organization kind of thread the needle and figure out how we can get towards those people that are gonna need the help. So that’s kind of what we’ve done we’ve partnered with the Rotary, like local Rotary and Lions Club type people to say “you know you know your communities better than we do, point us in the direction of a church who might be able to help us kind of navigate your area and maybe give us kind of a home base to set up and then we can and figure out how to do some smaller one-off kind of home type stuff.”

Bill (7:29-8:11): One thing I’ve seen too, if I can add to that is you know defining disaster. A lot of times we think of the big disasters. Well a single mom who can’t put shoes on her kids feet—that’s a disaster, you know. I think for the kids as they’re listening to this, disasters are all different forms. We can still reach out we can still meet people’s needs and I think that’s the heart of relief. Just giving someone a hope giving, them a peek and they could be small way. You don’t always have to be the biggest thing, it could be the smallest thing. So you know just defining disaster for each one of us, we never know, we just have got to be ready.

Lindsey (8:11-9:04): Yeah that’s a really good point and that actually brings me to one of the other questions that I wanted to ask, **which is what are your thoughts on disaster relief at a global national and a local level?** This topic in particular is kind of interesting for students who are interested in looking beyond the local level impact because it’s pretty easy to look at all these places and all these organizations who do work when disaster strikes in other places. But obviously, as you were saying Bill, there’s you know that impact here at the local level as well. What are your thoughts on work that you’ve seen done at global, national, or local level or even just speaking to: **how this is important to students who might be living in Cincinnati, Dayton, Cleveland, but here in Ohio?**

Jonathan (9:04-10:23): I can jump in and just give a little bit of an idea. I think this is really cool and encouraging if you see what’s happening with fires in California where you see you know the Hurricane at Washington Shore in Louisiana. Those seem like they are far and distant, like you see it on the news and we’re all like, “well it’s just really sad, I don’t really know what I can

do personally to help.” But, there's a lot that we can do as a local community to come alongside those people that are far away. That's how you get connected with a group like the Red Cross or a group like a Child's Hope International, or Shoes for the Shoeless, or another group that is out there going to do something to help. You say, “you know what, I need to help. I want to help, how can I get involved? What kind of a donation drive can I can put together in my neighborhood? Can I put together my school? I'm gonna collect toiletries, because that's important they're going to need that kind of stuff. I'm going to send it down in one of these trucks from one of these organizations.”

Bill (10:23-11:56): There's *always* a place for a person to serve, there always is, so when people say “what can I do? You get it a lot you know a girl that came in and she heard that we were doing something for a local community down the road. So she took out her own project and she came up with “A Bag for Hope” that's what she called it, and she organized people and got hygiene products and all that kind of stuff and got it in so we can get it out. So there's always a place [for service], I just think people just need to make a choice to help. By doing that they bring hope to themselves. When it comes to the hurricanes, as you said too, we do a lot of international work here. But when it comes to hurricanes, when it hits like that when the Florida one hit, the one hit in Texas, and when the floods hit. We stop and we regroup and we send the food to there because they need it just as much. Different organizations get to use our food but we depend on local people to come in here to help us with it because we can't pack all that food ourselves there's only seven of us on our staff. We will do eight million meals this year and so we depend on people just to come in [to volunteer]. So I think that's the local impact for us, people coming and being a part of the hands and feet. We are a Christian organization too, and so we want people to be hands and feet of Jesus Christ and so we want to give them that opportunity.

Jerry (11:56-13:21): I agree with both of you guys, and I think if there's one thing that we all will know as far as whether the disaster is local, national, or global/international is that no one agency can do it by itself. So that is a big focus for us in the Red Cross is just as big as anything else is what all of our partners can bring. It has very little to do with what my agency can do as much as it is how can I meet the needs of this person that's been affected by the disaster. I think when we think of a large-scale type disaster, whether it's the tornadoes in Dayton or whether it's something on the other side of the country right now, we have to think “how can we bring all these partners together?” and not just, “how is the Red Cross going to get this meal out? How are the *partners and the Red Cross* going to get this meal out? Or get this clothing need met? or get any need met at any one time?” So that's a big part of our focus. What you know regardless of where the disaster is.

Bill (13:21-13:58): I think partnership is a major key. Just as Jerry was talking about, as Jonathan was talking, about shoes and stuff. You know we had a whole container of shoes come in and we shipped them out. So knowing your organization, that's something. If they [shoes] come in, I can give you a call and say “hey I got a whole trailer for you” and you know how many shoes do you need? I think that's a key when you look at it locally, we partner together. I don't think any disaster relief should have a flag.

Lindsey (13:58-14:20) : I would love to know from each of you **looking back, what brought you into working or volunteering in the nonprofit sector and specifically within this disaster relief or poverty? What drew you to this work?**

Bill (14:20-14:31): Well that's going to take a long time, I will let one of you guys go first.

Jerry (14:31-16:20): As a volunteer now, I've been a volunteer throughout my career. My career started in healthcare, I was a paramedic firefighter for a long period of time and the Red Cross has just seemed like kind of a natural segue for me to do the work. Because it's always been more about the work and less about the pay or about some indescribable sense that you get from the feeling that you get from helping folks and from organizing compassion and getting together with a bunch of people that have the same idea in mind—which is how are we going to help these folks get back on their feet. That has its own power and has its own draw for me. I'm a person that likes change, now the Red Cross is definitely an organization that's changing, we do that because it's you never know what the disaster is and if you are you ready for it, we don't know what it is so we have to always be flexible and ready to change. So that's something that we do quite often, that's what drew me to the work. I kind of have a rescuer personality so naturally, the Red Cross was the right fit for me.

Jonathan (16:20-18:34): I just think back to when I was in high school and when I was in college. I've always internally had this desire to want to help people and serve people, but it took me a little while to get into the role that I'm in now. I started out of college doing marketing and graphic design. I did a couple of kinds of agency jobs and a couple of corporate jobs and then I had always been on the board of trustees for Shoes for the Shoeless and eventually we had grown so much that we needed to bring a second person on full-time staff along with our executive director. The board approached me and asked if I'd consider doing this as a career for now and fundraising and marketing. We're small, so the beauty is I get to have my hands in just about kind of everything that we do. I go on deliveries right now, we're doing drive-throughs, and I kind of conduct traffic acting as a traffic cop kind of moving the flow of the drive-through line like chick-fil-a. Then I'll take orders and kind of fulfill that as we're going but it's been a really cool journey I've learned a lot. I think one of the most intriguing things of it all has been just how much I've learned about poverty in general and the different things that affect it and how to really come alongside somebody to help them in a caring and loving way that's not condescending and does not judge why they're in the situation that they're in but just care for them and love them and figure out how we can tangibly meet one of the needs that will hopefully allow them to kind of take care of some other ones on their own.

Bill (18:34-20:12) I've been in the ministry since 1990 as a district manager for Wendy's for 17 years and the Lord called me into the ministry. I started with ministry and every mission trip I went on seemed like when I went overseas it would be with an orphanage. Even though that wasn't our intent, by the time we got there it seemed like that's where we landed every time. I think the Lord just kept showing me "I got kids in your plans you don't know that yet but I do" and so you just keep doing what you're doing so I did. After 14 years of doing that Lord says, "I

want you to go and work for Child's Hope," and I did. I've been here ever since, and I never knew about Child's Hope before, never heard of them in fact I get a phone call from a man I never heard of and he asked me if I wanted to come along and staff with him and feed children around the world, and so I think I just was obedient to what the Lord told me to do. I didn't seek it out. I think it's just something that you serve and you know no matter what, as Jerry said or Jonathan said, it's something that we felt this is what we should do, you know so it's not a career, it's not a job it really isn't it's more than that. I think for the students if they're looking for a career go find a job but if you're looking to serve nonprofit's a good place it really is.

Lindsey (20:12-21:12) : I just want to point out to you to the students who are listening is just that they're these causes are all interrelated you know you're hearing Jonathan talk about poverty, hunger a lot of these organizations aren't just focusing on one thing and that's really cool so if there are things if there are multiple things you're passionate about the cool thing is that you can usually find organizations that are really hitting on things you care about, maybe multiple things—disaster relief and poverty, disaster relief and hunger, education, children, disaster relief, you know these things all tie in together. So I just want to point that out too. **What advice would you give to students in 2020 and beyond who are interested in supporting disaster relief? How can they get involved? Bill spoke a little bit about this earlier, just kind of jumping in and making a choice, but what are some specific ways or maybe even just some broad ways that you think students can get involved in this cause?**

Bill (21:12-22:36) Let me just try one thing and I'll let these guys hit more on it. When you ask that question, I was just thinking, I truly believe a person who's looking for a service job, won't serve because they get the job unless they're already serving. So that's my advice to these students, would be: serve now in any little way. Just start serving, I mean, because if you think you're gonna wait to care for the poor, you're going to care for the homeless, or those who need shoes, or those in disasters, and you're not already caring for someone it's going to be hard for you. But start now and care. I mean, what about someone you're sitting at a lunch table next to you and a kid, he's all by himself. Well, care enough to go over there, maybe sit with them. That's a start, it's a little thing but it's a start, and I think as you walk through that, especially as students they have all the rest of their high school years and their college years or whatever they're going to do in their life if they start now by the time they get as old as I am. I would encourage them with that, again it can be in any facet, it doesn't matter where you go just start. Start small, work your way, and see where Lord takes you, so that'd be my place.

Jerry (22:36-24:40): Yeah, I agree with you, kind of put your toe in the water with an organization and see if it's the right fit for you or not. That's always been, it seems like with the Red Cross that's been kind of a good way for people. They can volunteer with us of course as they could with maybe Jonathan, or through with your group, and get a little feel for what it's like and if it is your cup of tea. If it is your passion you will find out quickly and that may be a great way to kind of focus on "where am I going and what am I doing? Is this the right field for me?" Right now everybody knows what all is going on nationally with all the emergencies with one hurricane behind another and wildfires and the pandemic there are plenty of opportunities at the

Red Cross for anybody who is interested in volunteering. That is a bit of a plug for a volunteer for the Red Cross but I do say that is a very good way, as Bill mentioned, if you get in there and serve you can do it, it's free, it's a good way to get in and test the water and see if it's the right group. You can meet the people, you can see the way that organizations are structured, you can see firsthand what we do, and you can see the reward that you get from doing the kind of work that we all do. That would be good I think, that would be some good sound advice to folks thinking about an area like this for a career.

Jonathan (24:44-28:07): So another part of my life I work and just hang out with a lot of high school kids with Young Life, and this is a conversation I think I have a lot with a lot of my high school friends is, what do you want to do with your time? I think your time and that was one thing that I learned that I wish I would have learned earlier in life, and just how valuable my time is. That's the one thing that I can't get more of and it's finite and it's a resource but think about your life right now, take a minute I know you're sitting there watching this video might be bored out of your mind, I'm sorry we'll see if we can make it a little bit more exciting, but you have 168 hours in any given week. Let's say that you sleep eight hours a night, that might be more/might be less that's 56 hours sleeping each week you're in school for 30 to 35 hours right now, it's probably virtual so who knows you might be doing less because you're just a whiz and just cranking that stuff out. That leaves you with about 82 hours every single week of your own time that what do you do with it and how do you feel about it. Did you just sit on your phone on Tik-Tok? Just crushing it for hours? Do you sit in front of the Xbox playing video games? I'm not saying that these are bad things, but they've got to be done in moderation and you have a lot of time and a lot of opportunities to do good in the world to make a change, to make a difference, one quote that I've heard that has always stuck with me is this: "If it's not you, then who? If it's not you that is going to do something to make a change and to make a difference, then who is going to be it? That was a question when they asked me if I wanted to work for Shoes for the Shoeless, my thought was—I don't know, it's a non-profit there's not a lot of money in the nonprofit world, I'm not going to make a great living, but then that one quote just pop back in my head. If it's not you, then who? I was like oh, like my heart starts tingling. I'm like, I guess it's got to be me right? That's kind of the spirit kind of leading you into that, and I'd say there's going to be things in your life that are going to cause great pause and cause you to want to sit there and sit back for a second and say, what I really feel something burning inside of me that I have to do this for a lot of people they will feel that and they will run a hundred miles away in the opposite direction because that's scary and they don't want to deal with that but for you, I would say lean into that hard and start challenging that and you might surprise yourself. Something might happen where you say what I have to do that, something in me that I have to do with this time. I have ability in my life I have to use it, I have to go serve with this organization. Don't shy away from that.

Lindsey (28:07-28:36): This is really good stuff, I'm encouraged, I hope you students are who are watching this, it's cool to bring people together who care about this stuff and I hope you're encouraged too, but before we sign off and stop the recording—**Jerry, Bill, Jonathan, do you have any lasting thoughts of encouragement to these students or anything else you want to say about disaster relief?**

Bill (28:36-29:27): Take a trip. Get involved. If you've never been overseas, I would say go one time, go see what's there so when you come back you'll give away everything you have because you know you then you don't need any of it. It seems like that. If you can't go overseas and there's counties, and there are states, that can give you the same thing. If you can't find them, let us know, I mean I can take you to downtown Cincinnati and blow your socks off. Then I'll send you over to Jonathan, so I would just say that go somewhere see what blessings you have and then realize that you can give something back. That's all I'd say, just get involved somewhere, anywhere and just see what happens.

Jerry (29:27-30:42): I think that is smart for now, when everybody's young, to be able to do what they can do and just see the world a bit and to kind of get in it. It may not always be clear exactly where you want to go with the career or what direction you want to head in but there's a saying that "passion loves company" and for Bill, for Jonathan, I can just tell—this the first time we've all met each other and we are passionate about what we do. I don't know if you're getting the vibe but we could all three get along and figure out how to help somebody very quickly. There is an incredible pride you take in being able to do that. To have focus, so that would be my advice is just passion does love company and if you do find a group of people that you can work with the same focus and idea it's an incredible way to spend your career.

Jonathan (30:42-31:15): I want to just end with the idea—a lot of people think that kids don't have the ability to make lasting change and impact and you guys do. You guys are world-changers whether you realize it or not, someday you will realize that you have the ability to change the world around us. Don't take that lightly, you guys are amazing.

Lindsey (31:15-31:49): Jerry, Bill, Jonathan thank you. I'm going to go ahead and stop the recording, but thank you students so much for watching. I hope you learned something about disaster relief and remember that this is just the beginning. You can keep looking into this cause look into these organizations look into all the organizations that do this kind of work and I hope that this inspired you and showed you the importance of this class. Thank you for watching!