

MEMBER PROFILE:
THE CUSTOMER IS
ALWAYS RIGHT

18 NEW CEU
COURSES
UNVEILED IN 2019

WHAT WE EXPECT FOR
ELECTRONIC SECURITY
INDUSTRY IN 2019

2019 ESA
ANNUAL
REPORT
p.28


SECURITY NATION

JAN/FEB
2019

ESA Members Rebuild

**HOME,
HOPE**

in Puerto Rico



On September 18, 2017, tropical storm Maria upgraded to a Category 5 hurricane just before it made landfall in Dominica. Days later, on September 20, the hurricane retained maximum winds of 175 mph as it struck Puerto Rico. Hurricane Maria is now the worst natural disaster to hit Dominica and Puerto Rico. It devastated numerous communities, leaving \$92 billion worth of damage in its wake.

One week after the storm, roughly 60,000 homes had blue tarps covering their roofs because of the storm's intense damage. Now, a year later, that number has only decreased to 56,000 homes.

Over 250,000 people left the unincorporated U.S. territory to escape the dangerous storm and have yet had the opportunity to return. Puerto Rico as a whole struggled during the devastation of Hurricane Maria, and unfortunately, is still suffering.

Rolando Cruz is a pastor for Vida Nueva church in Puerto Rico. He and his congregation partnered with Forward Edge, a non-profit relief and development organization, in February of 2018. Through this partnership, Forward Edge would send teams to the island in order to assist in roof work and other repairs, guided by Cruz and his members. It was through this partnership that Cruz connected with Tom Nolan and Mission 500.

The two organizations came together to organize a mission trip to Ponce, Puerto Rico, set for the fall of 2018.

Mission 500, a nonprofit organization that works closely with the electronic security industry to serve the needs of children living in severe poverty across the United States, announced the service trip in the summer of 2018 with a goal of raising \$10,000.

“This hurricane was like nothing we’ve ever seen before,” says Cruz. “My community still suffers the consequences of the storm.”

For five days this past fall, 22 electronic security industry professionals were in Ponce with the goal of helping repair the home of a local family in need. The family consisted of a husband and wife, Jose and Carmen Vega, and their kids: two boys and one girl.

A pastor at a church in Ponce, reached out to Rolando, because the aid he was providing the family just wasn’t enough. Prior to the hurricane, Jose had lost his job. A few months later in preparation for the storm, Jose was readying their home for the disaster when he suffered a ruptured hernia. Carmen was taking care of him, her three children and their home by herself.

When the team first arrived in Ponce, they were shocked at the circumstances this family lived in.

“This experience wasn’t for the faint of heart, says George Fletcher, Mission 500 Advisory Board Member. “A lot of questions start to come into your mind like ‘how are they feeding themselves?’ and ‘how are they providing for their kids?’”

Forward Edge International gave the group a budget to repair the roof, windows and the back wall, and with only four days — time was not on their side. At least that’s what they initially thought.

Each morning the group met as a team to discuss the day’s tasks and get a plan in place. Upon arrival at the house every day, they would all immediately begin to start working. At night, they would debrief after dinner and discuss what was working and what needed to be adjusted.

“Because of the format that we created, we were quickly able to build a rapport with one another and mesh as a team,” says Eric Hattey, National Business Development Manager at Brinks Home Security. “We were able to remove the roof, rebuild the trusses and put on a new roof in a little over a day.”

The roof was completed midway through the second day. With so much time left in their trip, the group decided they needed to do more, even though their assignment was



done. The group was able to pool resources and funds together to go far beyond what they had initially intended.

“With a little over two days left in the trip, we all agreed there was more that we could do to help this family,” says Jason Lutz, Strategic National Account Manager at Resideo and ESA’s Associate Member Representative. “We are in a great industry, it was the least we could do for that family.”

Collectively, they were able to fix a hole in the home caused by a fallen tree, add new windows, fix plumbing and redo the flooring and the steps leading up to the family’s home.

The family was also still without electricity. Their only source of electricity was from using an extension cord that reached to a building down the road. The team was also able to fix the wiring for the electricity, making it ready for the power to be turned back on that upcoming Monday.

Naturally, all these projects required tools and materials. The money raised for the trip was used to purchase the tools, materials and other supplies.

Getting materials was a huge challenge while they were in Ponce. After Hurricane Maria, the cost of materials went up 40%, so buying at fair prices was extremely difficult.

Pricing wasn’t the only issue with getting materials. Availability of these materials was a challenge, as well. With a high demand, they found themselves having to go to other towns to get specific supplies.

With limited tools and power on the job site, it was a juggling act making sure that drills were rotating around, and batteries were constantly charged.

Transportation was just as much of a challenge for them. Cruz was able to borrow a pick-up truck from his carpenter when it was available and working. When they weren’t using the pick-up truck, the group used the Vida Nueva church bus.

“We gained so much, and it transcended the competitive lines and barriers that are sometimes created in our industry.”

George Fletcher, Mission 500
Advisory Board Member



Although the family only spoke Spanish, the group was able to form a bond with Jose, Carmen and the kids, that transcended the language barriers. A few members of the group who were fluent in Spanish were helpful in translating and communicating with them as well.

On the last day of the trip, some of the group members took all of the clothes the family owned and had them laundered and filled their refrigerator and pantry with food.

The industry professionals agree that there was a definite bond shared with the family, including those professionals who brought their children along on the trip. Having the kids there allowed for Jose and Carmen's children to have fun and interact with people closer to their age.

Alan Forman, president of Altronix, an ESA Silver Executive Strategic Partner, brought his son, Phillippe, and Jason Lutz brought his daughter Gwynn and his wife Stephanie.

The kids made a connection with one another. Gwynn brought art supplies on the trip and painted with the family's daughter, and Phillippe and Kyle kicked around a soccer ball and tossed a football around with the boys.

“My daughter really connected during the experience — she didn't even have her phone on her, she left it in her backpack,” says Lutz. “As a dad, it's a proud moment to see your child recognizing the value in helping those less fortunate than herself— definitely something I hope I can instill in her by being an example.”

Not only were all of these individuals able to come together to help out a family in need, but it became an experience that has connected the industry group. Most have stated that they didn't know each other before this trip but have now established lasting connections.

“It can be a challenge to get a bunch of strangers together to work as a team effectively in such a short time,” says Fletcher. “But we gained so much, and it transcended the competitive lines and barriers that are sometimes created in our industry.”

The professionals worked almost seamlessly together towards a common cause. All that attended gained something from the experience and left Ponce with a sense of fulfillment — a renewed appreciation of humanity.

“Every single person we spoke to on our way home asked us what we were doing here, and when we told them the purpose of the trip, they extended so much gratitude to us,” says Alan Forman. “These are people we didn't even help directly, but because we helped someone in their community, they were extremely appreciative.”

Working so well in fact, their initial fundraising goal for the trip was \$10,000, and they were able to raise \$12,000. All funds were used to help Jose and Carmen and their family, who were visibly overjoyed with gratitude.

“We are blessed and very fortunate,” says Lutz. “Being able to be an example to our children and even to the people in the industry that we work in every single day, is truly priceless.”

With so much devastation going on in the world: school shootings, devastations and natural disasters, coming together as an industry in a way that surpasses the Monday-Friday, 9-to-5, demonstrates what it means to be a #PassionateSecurity professional.

“Even with a billion dollars, you can't fix all inequality,” says Forman. “But an opportunity like this is a great place to start.” 🙏

ESA Members Who Participated in the Mission 500 Trip:

Marianne Chew

Event Manager
Hikvision USA

Martha Entwistle

Senior Manager Strategic
Communications
Hikvision USA

Alan Forman

President
Altronix, a Silver ESA Executive Strategic
Partner

Eric Hattey

National Sales Manager
Brinks Home Security

Jason Lutz

Strategic National Account Manager &
Industry Relations
Resideo, a Platinum ESA Executive
Strategic Partner

Shane Nikov

Director of Sales
Hikvision USA

Nick Pintaro

Program Manager — Key Accounts
Axis Communications, a Gold ESA
Executive Strategic Partner

Daniel Plaza

Sales Representative
Aiphone Corporation

Jackie Pruter

Marketing Communications Specialist
Brinks Home Security

Matthew Rios

Regional Sales Manager
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Sarahi Sanpedro

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