



Everything New Orleans

Groups help Lakeview family Woman fights cancer; home, job lost to storm

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Judy Dave is quick to point out that everybody has their own Katrina stories and struggles.

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"That storm cut through everybody," said Dave, who, with her husband, Vimal, were forced from their Lakeview home and currently reside in Gretna. "Class, race, you name it, it cut through it."

But unlike most, Judy Dave has had to deal with the loss of her home and job while battling an aggressive form of cancer.

Nearly a year prior to Katrina, she was diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer. After an emergency mastectomy, she has endured nine chemotherapy treatments, 33 radiation treatments and countless tests and trips to the doctor. For the past year, she's juggled the treatments while also dealing with Katrina's aftermath.

Following Katrina, Judy Dave was laid-off from her job as a radiological technician, and Vimal Dave lost virtually all of his culinary business in the storm. Since then, the Daves have found themselves dependent on financial assistance from the Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans and living on less than \$1,000 a month, barely enough to cover Judy's medications and health insurance premiums.

But with CAGNO's resources severely tested post-Katrina, the organization, on behalf of the Daves, responded to a request for proposals from the Faith's Hope Foundation for money aimed specifically at those in need in the storm's wake.

"We went out to the Katrina area, to the nonprofits, saying that if you have someone who really needs help, fill out a request for proposal form and we're going to help them generously," said Marcus Greene, founder and executive director of the California-based Faith's Hope.

After hearing about Judy and Vimal Dave's amazing endurance, Faith's Hope responded with a check for \$6,500, which the Daves received Aug. 22 at CAGNO's Elmwood offices.

"It's just going to help so much," Judy Dave said. "It's going to help us with the non-medical things, like for our rent, utilities, the car insurance to be able to drive to my doctors and everything else."

The financial assistance is coming "just at the right time," Vimal said, "and it's been a blessing to us."

Greene and his wife, Tanya, began Faith's Hope in 2002 after spending months in the hospital with their newborn daughter, Faith. "We met several families who were going through similar things as we were, that were losing everything," said Marcus Greene, "so we decided to look around to see if there was an organization that could help these families as well as us, and there were none."

To date, Faith's Hope has worked with more than 100 families, temporarily paying rent, mortgages, car payments and utilities. The foundation also provides assistance in locating employment and some counseling, as well as links to local churches to provide families with additional support.

For information on the Faith's Hope Foundation, visit www.faithshopefoundation.org, or call (714) 871-HOPE.

To learn more about CAGNO, visit www.cagno.org.