



*The Spirit of Service*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **BAPS Care International Donates \$10,000 To Student Victims of Hurricane Katrina**

**September 26, 2005 - Baton Rouge, LA:** In the immediate aftermath of hurricane Katrina thousands of students have been relocated away from the Gulf Coast. With many schools and colleges shut, the impact on students has been severe. Many are on limited financial resources and need to get their college careers back on track as soon as possible. Recognizing the severity that some of these students face, BAPS Care International has immediately provided \$10,000 in financial aid, and also dispatched a team of volunteers to see how best to help them.

"Some 3000 students have been relocated to Baton Rouge from New Orleans and will continue their studies at the Louisiana State University", commented BAPS Care International President Nilkanth Patel, "in the current situation many have no means of supporting themselves. To ease the burden for some of these students we have provided immediate financial aid, plus clothes, bed spreads, and kitchen utensils to the students".

With the Louisiana State University having to cope with thousands of extra students who have literally lost everything, the help offered by BAPS Care International was very welcome. "BAPS Care International has been a pioneering group that has made so many contributions in Louisiana during the Katrina disaster", said Vice Chancellor of Louisiana State University, Frank Hartley, "we really thank them for their help".

"We are grateful to BAPS Care International for helping us" said, Ms Anuhya Reddy Cheruku a displaced student due to Hurricane Katrina. BAPS Care International's relief efforts were launched in the immediate aftermath of hurricane Katrina, BAPS Care International centers in the states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Atlanta rapidly organized teams for relief activity along the Gulf Coast. Armed with food, water and emergency supplies, the first of these teams arrived in Kenner, a city just 15 miles north of New Orleans.

Even though Kenner had been badly hit, with homes destroyed and power lines down, outside relief aid only reached the city with the arrival of BAPS Care volunteers. "BAPS has come in and fed a lot of folks, we certainly deeply appreciate that" stated the Mayor of Kenner, "you have been a lifeline".

Having arrived 3 days before any other relief agency, the speed with which BAPS Care launched its relief efforts down in Kenner were also appreciated by other relief agencies. "This is amazing" said a Red Cross volunteer, "you guys got here down really fast, you are feeding lines and lines of people".

For the residents of Kenner, with no water or electricity, and the restoration of basic infrastructure weeks away, the provision of hot meals was most welcome. As they queued up in the stifling heat for food and water, a common sentiment expressed to BAPS Care volunteers manning the relief kitchen has been, "You are doing a really good job, you are bringing hot food to people who have no other way of getting it right now".

Additional BAPS Care volunteers also arrived from Houston and Dallas to help with the much needed food distribution in Kenner. They teamed up with staff from the Mayor's office and also the Fire Department to distribute food provided by Wal-Mart. With the volume of food that had to be distributed the Fire Chief of Kenner was grateful for the BAPS Care presence. "You guys got here before FEMA and the Red Cross", he exclaimed.

Some of the BAPS Care volunteers active in the relief effort along the Gulf Coast were themselves victims of the hurricane. "My house has been completely destroyed by the storm", said Dr. Ajay Patel an Electronics Engineer from Gulf Port, Mississippi. "I survived those 135 miles an hour winds and I feel very lucky and fortunate. That is why I am here now with my BAPS Care colleagues to help and serve other victims of the hurricane. I know what they have been through and the help they need".

To make online donations for BAPS Care International's relief efforts, please visit [www.bapsicare.org](http://www.bapsicare.org). To donate by phone, call 1-888-CARE or (732) 777-1414. You can also mail checks to "BAPS Care International – Katrina Relief Fund" 81 Suttons Lane Suite 103, Piscataway, NJ 08854.