



Inside Bona's

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BonaResponds to help family still struggling after Katrina

BonaResponds, a not-for-profit disaster-relief group based at St. Bonaventure University, has adopted a family that continues to suffer from Hurricane Katrina more than two years after the storm devastated the Gulf Coast.

The Whavers family of Pass Christian, Miss. — Jacqueline, a disabled 56-year-old, her daughter Ariana, 29, and Ariana's two children Ian, 8, and Ayden Dedeaux, 2 — have contacted BonaResponds, asking for help.

The group hopes to raise \$25,000 to help the family get back on its feet.

"I just can't seem to get ahead," Ariana said. "I have tried everything I can think of. Now I am writing you to ask for help." After losing two houses to Hurricane Katrina, the Whaverses continue to live in a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) trailer.

"I could never imagine in my wildest dreams I would be homeless, clothesless and jobless all at the same time," Ariana said. "During all of this time, my baby was 8 months old and learning to walk and talk in this little FEMA trailer."

Before Hurricane Katrina, Ariana was paying the mortgage on her mother's house, as well as renting a house for her and her two sons.

After Hurricane Katrina, the family received \$41,000 between Allstate Insurance Company and FEMA. Much of that money went to paying off the mortgage, as well as toward building one large house.

"I took the money and decided to combine my household and my mother's household into one," Ariana said.

"I felt like I was paying all the bills at two different addresses, so I should just make it one."

But because of this, many agencies refuse to help the Whaverses because their new house is too big. To make matters worse, they still owe \$24,000 on the mortgage.

The family relies on Ariana's paycheck as a casino security guard. Approximately half of her monthly pay goes toward paying off the cost of the mortgage. After those payments, the Whaverses are forced to live on \$500 a month.

"I have tried to get help from church groups and other organizations, but everyone keeps telling me they have either run out of funds to help or they question me about why the house is bigger than the house pre-Katrina," said Ariana.

Dr. Jim Mahar, founder and leader of BonaResponds and assistant professor of finance at St. Bonaventure, estimates that the house will cost between \$20,000 and \$30,000 to finish.

"We hope to raise \$25,000. When people tell me it is a lot of money, I have to correct them," said Mahar. "It is a lot of money if we were asking just one person to pay it, but if we get many people, then it is really a very little amount of money. When we are in the field working, I often remind the volunteers that 'many hands make light work.' The same is true with respect to fundraising. We all can afford to donate a dollar or two."

BonaResponds was created in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. It has taken approximately 500 volunteers to the Gulf Coast and led just as many volunteers in service projects throughout Western New York. BonaResponds aims to be a world-class organization whose mission is to help people in need, as well as to build better leaders and better communities. The group, made up of students, faculty, staff, alumni and local residents, is run completely through donations.

BonaResponds completed its sixth local service day on Sept. 8, and will return to the Gulf Coast in January.

BonaResponds welcomes new members, regardless of affiliation with St. Bonaventure. For more information about BonaResponds or helping the Whavers family, visit www.bonaresponds.org or contact BonaResponds at bonaresponds@sbu.edu.

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International student to address classmates in Recognition Ceremony

International student Augustine K. Lim will address her classmates as St. Bonaventure University recognizes graduate and undergraduate students during its December Recognition Ceremony Saturday, Dec. 15.

The ceremony begins at 6 p.m. in the University Chapel, Doyle Hall.

University president Sr. Margaret Carney, O.S.F., S.T.D, will offer a welcome to students and their families.

Lim, a native of Jakarta, Indonesia, completed the requirements for a bachelor's degree in computer science and her MBA in three and a half years, instead of the traditional five at St. Bonaventure.

In her address, Lim plans to focus on how she ended up at St. Bonaventure and her experiences throughout college. Lim was an exchange student attending high school in Maine for one year before enrolling at St. Bonaventure. She came to the United States to learn more English and see life from a different point of view.

"The United States is so open-minded. It just opened my eyes. Being here for one year in Maine made me think, 'This is nice. I have freedom of speech,'" Lim said.

She stepped foot on the campus for the first time during the fall 2004 Welcome Days, just prior to the first day of classes.

Lim travels around the United States during breaks from class, and travels home to Indonesia during the summer.

"The hardest part of leaving my family was leaving my brothers," Lim said of her two younger siblings. Sometimes I miss them, but I keep myself busy."

Active in campus organizations, Lim has served in leadership roles with the International Student Association, events coordinator of the Student Government Association, volunteer with the Bona Buddies program, and a member of numerous committees, including the Diversity Action Committee, Enrollment Committee, Yearbook Committee, and the Fr. Joe Doino, O.F.M., Awards Committee. She is also an event volunteer of the SBU Annual Programming Contest and Young Women in Technology.

Lim has also worked as a graduate assistant in the Office of International Studies and as an administrative assistant for Event Management Services at St. Bonaventure. Her additional employment includes working with the campus ticket office and Dining Services.

Last May, Lim earned three credits in St. Bonaventure's international business seminar in China. She traveled to Shanghai, Xi'an and Beijing to experience international business firsthand.

"I will dearly miss St. Bonaventure because it opened my eyes and my mind when comparing the differences of both cultures. I feel like I am part of the (SBU) family and I don't think I would have felt this way if I went somewhere else," Lim said.

She is appreciative to the campus community — and in particular Sr. Margaret, staff, faculty and students whom she has known since her freshman year — for helping her through her college years. Lim plans to get a job in the United States and hopes to someday become an American citizen.

Also during Saturday's Recognition Ceremony, Dr. Joseph E. Zimmer, associate professor of reading education, director of the M.S.Ed Literacy Programs, and director of the St. Bonaventure Reading Center, will give the faculty address.

Dr. Michael J. Fischer, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, will serve as master of ceremonies.

Dr. Peggy Y. Burke, dean of the School of Education and dean of the School of Graduate Studies, will present the graduate students. Dr. John G. Watson, dean of the School of Business, will present the undergraduate students.

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Career Center news ...

For information on how to form a job-search network and upcoming career fairs taking place off campus during winter break, check out the latest issue of Directions, the Career Center's monthly newsletter,[click here!](#)

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Newsmakers

Dr. Mark Huddle, assistant professor in the Department of History, has had his essay, "A War for Independence," nominated for a prestigious Pushcart Prize. The Pushcart Prize celebrates the best writing of the small presses. Writers who were first noticed by the Pushcart Committee include Tim O'Brien, Raymond Carver, Mona Simpson, Philip Levine and John Irving. Huddle's essay surveys the current efforts by the telecommunications industry to control the airwaves, Internet, and postal rates and the detrimental effect it has had on the independent press. For the past three years, Huddle has been the National Affairs Editor of Verbicide Magazine: A Journal of Independent Music, Art, and Culture. His essay appeared in Issue 20 of that magazine.

