

Volunteer of the Year – Southeast Wisconsin

Marisol Perez

Journey Disaster Response Team



Through her volunteer service, Marisol Perez has transformed the ability of the Journey Disaster Response Team to assist people in southeastern Wisconsin and across the state.

Shortly before she started volunteering, the Journey Disaster Response Team, acquired a 5,000-square-foot warehouse to better provide resources and assistance to the community. While they had expanded their space, they completely lacked an inventory system. Marisol hit the ground running by creating their new procedures. Due to her efforts, they are now functioning similarly to how a corporate warehouse would with an inventory system, proper shelving, and labeling, with extra care given to ensure they are fully aware of expiration dates and rotation needs.



These changes have significantly impacted their ability to provide food to those in need in southeastern Wisconsin. Journey Disaster Response Team currently has five monthly community food distribution drive-thru events supporting various meal programs, government agencies, nonprofits, small church pantries, and veterans. . Marisol's service makes these possible, as her roles include ordering appropriate food, creating the plan for the food boxes, and then leading the food box fulfillment efforts for distribution. Due to Marisol's leadership, they are currently distributing 18,000 pounds of food per month, which is serving roughly 1,700 individuals each month.

Her efficient organization has also made it possible for the Journey Disaster Response Team to respond to large-scale donation requests. Marisol was critical to their involvement with the Afghan Community Response Operation. She helped lead their efforts to collect, sort, and send clothing, household items and food items to support those being temporarily relocated to Ft McCoy. Marisol had a keen eye for culturally appropriate garments and took the time to make sure their volunteer team understood what was appropriate, helping ensure that individuals would be able to use the items. Through these efforts, they were able to provide large numbers of clothing items, blankets, face masks, hygiene kits, diapers and baby care items, and many other resources to support Afghan refugees staying at Fort McCoy.

Kelly Fragassi with Journey Disaster Response Teams describes that Marisol has "recruited many of our current team members and is always sharing positive feedback about all our efforts, which is an asset to our organization. She makes volunteering fun and also has an impressive ability to ensure everyone understands the impact they have made on the community."

