



***Media Press Release – January 2, 2013***

**WI Sheriffs Involved in Hurricane Relief**

Normally when you think about law enforcement professionals responding to provide disaster assistance, you think of Sheriffs sending personnel and equipment. But that was not the case with Hurricane Sandy following its devastating impact on the east coast of the United States. Several Wisconsin Sheriffs and many of their employees and department supporters looked into their hearts and dipped into their wallets to send more than \$36,000 to four Sheriffs employees in Union County New Jersey.

The state-wide disaster relief effort, called Sheriffs Adopting Sheriffs, was organized and coordinated by the Badger State Sheriffs' Association (BSSA). The project is designed to help Sheriffs deputies and their families who have been personally impacted by a natural or manmade disaster. The relief project was authorized by BSSA President, Sheriff Steve Michek of Iowa County following continued national news coverage of the many hurricane victims who were reportedly not receiving disaster assistance from other state or federal agencies.

When these types of major disasters occur, says Sheriff Michek, there are many victims and people who suffer major losses. However, too often lost in the mix of these disasters is the fact that emergency responders themselves suffer personal and family losses while still being expected to go to work, do their jobs, and continue to serve others. Our Sheriffs Adopting Sheriffs project, said Michek, is designed to bring a little financial relief to those Sheriffs employees who leave their families and go to work every day to help others.

Following the ongoing news coverage of Hurricane Sandy relief effort difficulties, BSSA Executive Director Dean C. Meyer, who developed and coordinated this project, sent Sheriffs Adopting Sheriffs project information to the New Jersey State Sheriffs' Association. That information eventually made its way to Union County Sheriff Ralph Froehlich. Sheriff Froehlich responded in a letter to Meyer documenting the personal loss suffered by four of his Sheriffs Officers. Meyer then shared Sheriff Froehlich's letter with each Wisconsin Sheriff.

The response was amazing, said Meyer. In just over six weeks, 54 of Wisconsin's Sheriffs, their employees and local supporters raised just over \$36,300. That money was divided by four and each Union County Sheriffs employee was sent a check in the amount of \$9,074. Sheriff Froehlich was to present each of his employees their checks when they return to work on January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The Rusk County Sheriff's Office participated in the project and raised \$900 to send to the Union County Sheriffs employees in New Jersey. Sheriff David Kaminski was supportive of this relief project because he still remembers how many people from around the country helped in Rusk County when a tornado struck on Labor Day in 2002.