

An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely in California, showing a multi-lane highway running parallel to a sandy beach. In the background, a large dam is visible across a valley. The terrain is hilly and appears to be in a recovery phase after a natural disaster, with some construction activity visible near the beach.

# AFTER THE FIRE

RECOVER. REBUILD. REIMAGINE.™

**2025 Year in Review**  
**The Cycle of Paying It Forward**

# 2025 Showing Up

When survivors support survivors, recovery accelerates and resilience multiplies.



From the first days of the Los Angeles fires to our return to Maui, we worked shoulder-to-shoulder with survivors and local leaders to make sure no community recovered alone.

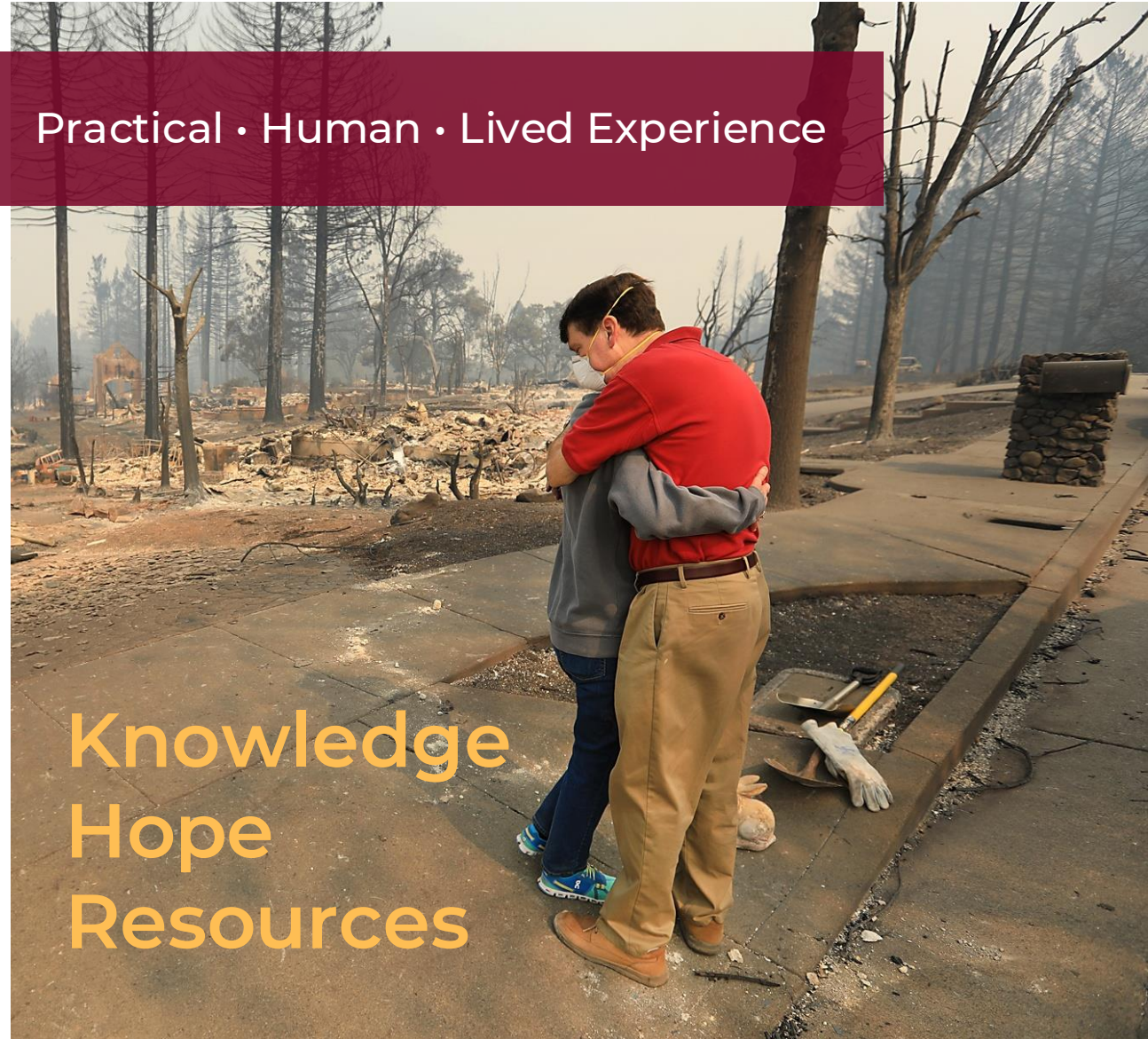
# A Simple Cycle

Communities impacted by wildfire deserve support that is practical, human, and rooted in lived experience. We connect survivors to survivors, so knowledge, hope, and resources keep moving forward.

**This is paying it forward in action.**



Practical · Human · Lived Experience



Knowledge  
Hope  
Resources

# SBP Recovery Fellowship Partnership

In 2025, SBP placed a **Recovery Fellow** with After the Fire USA to provide direct capacity-building assistance, connect local leaders to funders and resources, simplify federal recovery jargon, and develop tools to allow communities to lead their own recovery with sustained support from public and private partners.



**The partnership bridges complex federal recovery systems and grassroots action**

**Empowering** local leaders with targeted capacity-building

**Providing** technical assistance

**Developing** partnerships to transform their organizations into sustainable drivers of community recovery

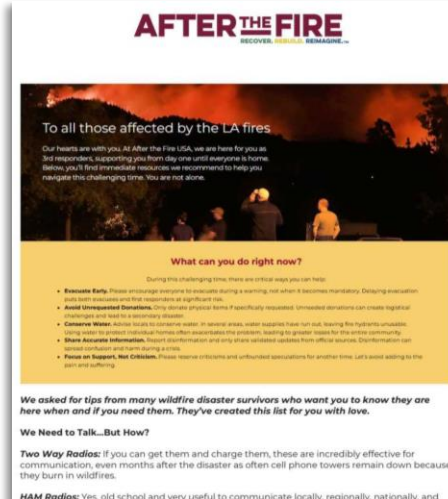


# The Year's Defining Moment — Los Angeles Fires

Listen then deploy fast via our Community-to-Community Program

Conducted over 1,000 meetings and engagements with public officials, community groups, funders, and residents to align efforts, surface real-time needs, and introduce best practices from other wildfire recoveries.

Hosted 30+ public and private webinars featuring subject matter experts from our network, providing actionable guidance, real-time navigation support, and trauma-informed approaches for leaders and residents.



Deployed nine in-person delegations, bringing 40 fire survivors, technical experts, and community leaders from previous disasters to Los Angeles to build direct relationships with local leaders.

Developed 10 guidance documents published on critical recovery issues, including smoke damage, housing, trauma, and advocacy tools.

# The Year's Defining Moment — Los Angeles Fires

**Listen then deploy fast** via our Community-to-Community Program

**Helped build and coach two major block captain networks** in the Palisades and Altadena. These survivor-led networks now serve as trusted two-way communication systems for neighborhood needs, verified information, and advocacy.



**Led 4 large-scale Funders Briefings** hosted by top LA philanthropic organizations and served as advisors to align recovery investments with survivor-led priorities.



**Provided ongoing guidance across the recovery landscape**, from neighborhood leaders and clergy to NGOs, academics, and elected officials.

**Translated complex systems into usable pathways** for residents, including disaster finance, policy shifts, and rebuilding barriers.



# Community-to-Community Program In Action

Survivors helping survivors is a proven recovery strategy



Connecting wildfire-impacted people with others who understand the road ahead because they've walked it.

Deploying in-person delegations that brought wildfire experts directly into community spaces.



Webinars that shared practical and adaptable recovery solutions.



Ongoing peer support rooted in empathy, trust, and lived expertise.



# On-going Maui Support

Check in on rebuilding progress and honor the relationships formed



**A visit rooted in respect, continuity, and understanding; recovery is a long-term journey.**

Meeting with local NGOs, county partners, and community leaders to understand current progress, identify ongoing gaps, and connect Maui to additional resources and peer recovery lessons from other communities.

Touring impacted areas including the burn scar and harbor, checked in on Kula's rebuild progress, and discussed ongoing environmental challenges.



# Bringing Maui to LA via Community-to-Community

As Maui approached their two-year recovery mark, Mayor Richard Bissen and members of his executive team traveled to LA to learn and to stand in solidarity with a community just beginning its own long recovery journey.



They offered a hand to those at the start of recovery, listened closely to LA's needs, and shared the spirit of Aloha as a model for compassionate, collaborative rebuilding.

# LA Leaders Visit Santa Rosa

Joined by partners from The Change Reaction, FireAid, Direct Relief, and Altadena Builds Back Foundation, we hosted LA leaders for a tour of key recovery sites and conversations about what long-term rebuilding looks like years after disaster.



**Coffey Park, Mark West Estates, and Fountaingrove** — neighborhoods forever changed by fire and now symbols of resilience and community leadership.

# Reconnecting Across California

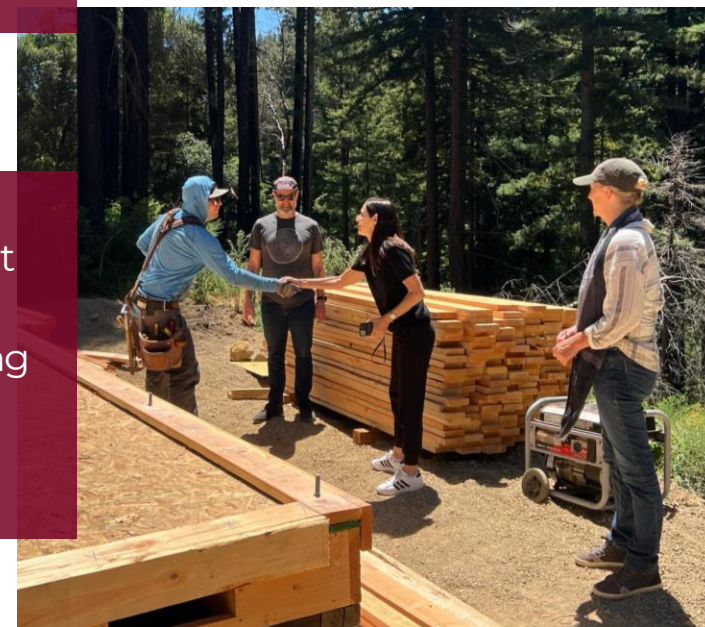
Wildfire communities still deep in recovery



The cycle of paying it forward starts with staying connected

Revisited Plumas, Santa Cruz, and Butte Counties to celebrate progress, learn what challenges remain, and carry their lessons forward to other communities.

These visits advance the urgent cause of megafire recovery by elevating survivor-led rebuilding in regional, national, and international media.



# 2026 Wildfire Leadership Summit

The Power of Ohana: Community Led Recovery in a Disrupted World

## 225 Participants

Wildfire leaders and survivors building a better recovery future



A presenting sponsor: Snapchat

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A summit lounge designed for connection and restoration

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Powerful speakers and deeply relevant panels

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A national network of leaders learning from one another

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Expanded sponsorship funds to underwrite travel and attendance for 42 leaders from the LA and Maui fires

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A front-page feature in The Washington Post, amplifying survivor stories and the recovery movement we're building



Every conversation strengthened the cycle of paying it forward



Full recordings on YouTube  
[Thought Leadership on Demand](#)

# Testimonials

**Sarah Ali, Kayne Foundation —  
LA Fires**


“After the Fire has become one of the most meaningful parts of our recovery here in Los Angeles... everyone in the After the Fire network [has been] available to answer questions, provide guidance, [and] give hugs when we needed it the most.”

**John Mills, Founder & CEO, Watch Duty**

“A heartfelt thank you to the men and women of After the Fire who support our communities after these devastating fires. From Sonoma County, where you started, to LA County, to Lahaina, you are there to support people in their times of need. Thank you.”

**Mayor Richard Bissen,  
County of Maui — Maui Fires**

“Not only did they bring with them expertise and experience, but even more valuable, they brought support and genuine encouragement... they gave us the confidence... to continue with our rebuild and our recovery.”



**Rabbi Amy Bernstein, Senior Rabbi, Kehillat Israel — LA Fires**

“You were the first people that I believed when you said, there’s life after this, because you meant it from a place of experience... having helped it happen so many times.”

**Cynthia Lallo, County of Maui — Maui Fires**

“Their ability to come alongside you and to be a thought partner in all things related to response and recovery of a wildfire... knowing where to start or where to focus effort, funding, and attention is essential.”

**Nina Revoyr, Ballmer Group — LA Fires**

“You’ve been our guide, our mentor, our tough love truth teller... You’ve given us what we’ve needed, whether that’s information or a shoulder to lean on or a gentle, sometimes not so gentle, nudge. Meeting you, the team from After the Fire, and fire survivors from other communities has been one of the unexpected blessings of this really tough year.”

# What's Next in 2026

Launching **Women in Disaster Leadership Program** to strengthen and support the leaders carrying recovery forward.

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Relaunching the **How to Disaster podcast** to share survivor-led lessons and practical recovery tools with communities everywhere.

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Continuing to **stay connected to our megafire communities**, walking alongside them for the long haul, and including them on delegations to newly fire-affected communities.

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Advocating for the **permanent exemption of taxes** on wildfire settlements, so survivors can rebuild without added financial harm.

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Strategically **scaling our Community-to-Community model** to meet the growing needs of future megafires, which are a certainty.





# Thank you for standing with wildfire survivors

Your support ensures no community  
faces recovery alone

**AFTER THE FIRE**  
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