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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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(October 22, 2018) Irondale, AL - In the days since Hurricane Michael, we've all seen the utter devastation the storm left in its wake. Corporate America Credit Union, like so many others, knew how critical it would be to help the credit unions impacted in any way possible. Cash is king as recovery efforts continue for those families without housing, transportation, water, clothing and many other essentials. CACU has created a special loan program for these credit unions as they work to meet their members' ongoing needs in and around the communities they serve.

In the meantime, two CACU employees who live in Florida have been the boots on the ground, staying in touch with credit unions and working to meet the needs of their staff. Making numerous trips back and forth to aid those affected has been their mission over the last week, and this experience is something these two won't soon forget.

Gisli Magnusson and Tanya DeVlieger traveled to Panama City and the surrounding areas soon after the storm hit in a joint relief effort with the Southeast Disaster Coordinating Council. The duo loaded a U-Haul with a barrage of items: generators, gas cans, blankets, flashlights, batteries, clothes, toiletries, water and tarps. Magnusson, who has lived in Florida for 45 years, says the sights were truly overwhelming as they drove deeper into the impacted communities. "The pictures and videos you see on the news and social media truly can't describe the magnitude of the destruction. Complete devastation. Cars turned on their sides, a train blown off the track and overturned, trees snapped in half and electrical poles and wires lying in the streets."

What the team wasn't prepared for were the scenes in and around the credit unions they visit so often. For DeVlieger, the scenes at one credit union in particular are etched in her mind. "The building at Bay Credit Union had flooded during the storm so when we walked on the carpet, water gushed under our feet. I don't think there was one ceiling tile that was intact; security cameras were hanging from the rafters by wires. Drive-thru units were GONE. They were blown off the drive-thru islands and just gone, who knows where... Everywhere you looked there was destruction - business signs blown over, roofs demolished, insulation scattered like popcorn in the wind."

Over the last week, Magnusson and DeVlieger have visited Tyndall FCU, Bay CU, Innovations FCU, Panhandle Educators FCU, Calhoun Liberty Employees CU and Emerald Coast FCU to deliver supplies and visit with staff to determine what else could be done to help. If you've worked with credit unions for any time, you know this is the spirit of our industry - people helping people; credit unions helping credit unions. This, Magnusson says, isn't just a slogan - he saw it in action. "I am proud to have been able to play a small part in this effort. Working alongside the League of Southeastern Credit Unions, other credit unions and other corporate credit unions, we were there for one purpose - to help our fellow credit unions so they could continue to serve."

DeVlieger says each drive back home is difficult as she and Magnusson both just wish they could do more... knowing it could be months, even years, before any sense of normalcy is restored. "It never feels like we can do enough. My heart aches for these communities and our credit union family. It is a long hard day driving over and delivering supplies, but it pales in comparison to what those impacted are going through. I'll gladly do it again and again as long as it's needed."

As the days pass and more relief efforts continue, many want to know how they can help. CACU is making monetary donations directly to credit unions whose staff members have been personally affected by the storm. The Southeastern Credit Union Foundation is accepting donations to help credit unions, staff, and board members in need. More information can be found on the LSCU's website [here](#). The National Credit Union Foundation has also opened CUAid to receive disaster relief funds to assist credit union people affected by Hurricane Michael. Donations can be made through the NCUF's CUAid program [here](#).

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***About Corporate America Credit Union***

Founded in 1982 and based in Irondale, Alabama, Corporate America Credit Union is a dedicated, not-for-profit financial cooperative governed by a board of directors elected from and by our member-owner credit unions. Corporate America serves nearly 500 credit unions across the nation and seeks to add value to member credit unions by providing access to a comprehensive list of products and services including investments, liquidity solutions, and correspondent services such as ACH, item processing, and remote deposit capture. Our priority is serving the needs of our member-owners to help ensure their future success. For more information, call (800) 292-6242 or visit [www.corpam.org](http://www.corpam.org).