

Press Kit

This press kit is provided for media and contains Contact Information, About Humanity Road, Technology and Innovation Milestones, Leadership Biographies, Recent News Coverages, Stakeholder Reviews and a recent Press Release.

Media Contact Information

Interested in doing a story on our work? Humanity Road is an award winning and innovative Public Charity digital disaster response organization. Our innovative approach has changed the field of emergency response. We are happy to talk with the media about the inspiring work done by Humanity Road and its volunteers. If you are a member of the media and have questions or for requests for information or to schedule an interview, call 800-931-1951 (inside the United States) or email press@humanityroad.org. Inquiries may be mailed directly to Cat Graham, Humanity Road Inc., 230 Washington Street, Boydton, VA 23917

Statistics

- Over 4,000 websites link to Humanity Road situation reports.
- Since 2010 the team has sorted through over 50 million tweets while monitoring disaster
- 10,000 Twitter followers and 5,000 Facebook supporters
- Over a million visitors to the website
- Featured in USA Today, CNN, NBC and National Geographic Magazine
- Fully transparent, and audited, every donated dollar goes to disaster response

The following quotes are provided for use by media

"Everyone should be able to call for help and somebody should hear that call".

– Christine Thompson, President

"There are many ways you can help from home online. Today's technology empowers us to make a difference in the world, crossing social, political, distance, and language barriers to help those when they need it most."

– Catherine Graham, Chief Operations Officer

Connect

Connect with us online in Social Media.

Twitter <http://twitter.com/humanityroad.org>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Humanity-Road-111949498829253/>

Instagram https://www.instagram.com/humanity_road/

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/HumanityRoad?feature=watch>

LinkedIn https://www.linkedin.com/company/humanity-road?trk=company_name



About Humanity Road

Humanity Road was founded in 2010 by Chris Thompson and Cat Graham, twin sisters who created the organization to connect people, animals and emergency officials with help and resources when disaster strikes. Humanity Road pioneered the new generation of humanitarian relief through social listening. And built a process focused on early adoption and improvement in response to sudden onset disaster.

Humanity Road is an award winning top rated nonprofit, recognized at the White House by the Department of Homeland Security for its contribution to disaster response and recognized by the United Nations as one of the top 100 innovative humanitarian aid organizations in the world.

The organization is an experienced subcontractor and has been designated as a subject matter expert in the use of social media during disaster by the Office of Naval Research. With 14 years of experience in research and development and 7 years operational experience for 1,100 urgent events using social media and emerging technology during disaster to identify, communicate and resolve urgent needs. The organization has been directly responsible for the rescue of hundreds of people and provision of aid for tens of thousands impacted by disaster. With successful operational experience collaborating during disaster with civilian, military, for profit and nonprofit organizations.

- **Nepal 7.9 Magnitude Earthquake** – Activated six times for five separate missions. (1 Local NGO Kathmandu Living Labs, UNOCHA, 3 International NGOS, and Stranded Hikers) disaster response activities began on April 25th and ended on June 12th. A total of 12 situation reports were also produced.
- **Philippines Super Typhoon Haiyan** - Activated five times with four separate agencies for the same disaster (UNOCHA, AmeriCares, a large aid provider and a small nonprofit communications provider). Performed data-mining of emerging urgent needs. Social media intelligence provided helped tens of thousands receive aid. One instance alone resulted in the direct rescue of 111 people from one location. More than 10,000 received air drop of food/water and situational information on emerging medical teams enhanced the capabilities for a medical supplies provider to fulfill urgent medical supplies needs.
- **USA Super Storm Sandy** - Activated by Maryland State Emergency Management to perform data mining and social media intelligence to identify potential emerging urgent needs. And was also activated by a local New York community and deployed communications solution for a spontaneous community command center that served 48,000 and was using social media to support communication of needs.
- **Disaster Preparedness Exercises** At the request of U.S. Pacific Command, participated in RIMPAC and Pacific Endeavor, Participated in Camp Roberts, X24 and X24 Europe and the cross border Canadian-USA Exercise CAUSE. Collaborated on exercise scenario development with DoD, DHS, PACOM, EUCOM, NORTHCOM, and Ft. Lauderdale Port Authority for WMD exercise. Humanity Road has been recognized for its participation in disaster preparedness exercises in the United States, Canada, Cambodia, Singapore, the Philippines and Nepal.

Memberships

- FEMA Tech Corps
- Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) Homeland Security Science and Technology Advisory Committee (HSSTAC) Social Media Working Group for Emergency Services and Disaster Management (SMWGESDM)
- Digital Humanitarian Network (DHN)
- Virginia Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VA VOAD)
- Great Nonprofits Top Disaster Response Nonprofit 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016

Cage Code 6MYC6

NAICS Codes 624230 - Emergency and Other Relief Services
541511 - Custom Computer Programming Services

Technology and Innovation Milestones

Humanity Road leverages social media to monitor and provide aid information to the public impacted by disaster. Industry leader for their mission specific reports that include early indications based on social media for aid agencies responding to disaster. The organization is based in Virginia and provides disaster response support worldwide through a distributed volunteer workforce. Humanity Road launched the first digital social media operations center for disaster response. The organization also engages in technology experiments and disaster preparedness exercises and training to improve situational awareness, community resilience and speed the chain of care.

Ongoing - Serves as an industry expert in developing local, national and multinational interoperability and information assurance exercises that help improve information management, coordination and collaboration. 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 at Pacific Endeavor, an exercise with over 20 nations in the Pacific Rim.

Ongoing - The absence of information can be a cry for help - we assess big data to quickly reach those who are isolated by disaster impacts. We monitor for communications gaps and to identify of underserved populations.

Ongoing - Serving on the Department of Homeland security Virtual Social Media Working group we helped publish industry guidelines for social media emergency management.

Milestone Highlights

- Named in the top 100 Innovative Humanitarian Aid Organizations at the World Humanitarian Summit
- Leave no one behind - deployed a new communications strategy for vulnerable populations
- Serves in global leadership role for innovation teams including Digital Humanitarian Network
Published early impacts map based on social media used by UNOCHA and local gov.
- Invited participant to White House Innovation for Disaster Response & Recovery Demo Day
- In collaboration with Statistics without Borders we published "A Guide to Social Media Emergency Management Analytics" (PDF is available by request or [online](#))
- Developed first of its kind role playing and training aid that quickly creates tabletop scenarios
- In 2010, formally organized as the first international digital disaster response organization.

Leadership Biographies



Christine Thompson, Co-Founder and President of Humanity Road
Ms. Thompson has 28 years of experience establishing, leading and managing large multifunctional teams in the communications industry deploying award winning products such as FiOS Internet, Data and TV. Nationally Ms. Thompson has served as a Co-Chair for the Department of Homeland Security Virtual Social Media Working Group, on the FEMA Innovation team, and on the VOAD Operation Dragonfire working team. Internationally Ms. Thompson established and led the Digital Humanitarian Network governance steering committee and on the Nepal Digital Humanitarian Coordinator committee.

Thompson is passionate about encouraging everyone to engage in their local communities preparedness planning. She is has served her community locally as co-founder of Town of Boydton Virginia Local Emergency Planning Committee, on the local fire department ladies auxiliary and the board of directors for South Central Virginia Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster.



Catherine Graham, Co-Founder and Chief Operations Officer Humanity Road.
Graham is an expert in the use of social media by Emergency Management (#SMEM) and in the development of social media injects and elements for disaster preparedness exercises. She has participated in the development of humanitarian disaster response exercises inside the United States and internationally for Samoa, New Zealand, Philippines, Nepal, RIMPAC, United States European Command, Pacific Command, and Department of Defense with Joint Chiefs of Staff. Ms. Graham has served as coordinator for the Digital Humanitarian Network. She serves on the Department of Homeland Security Virtual Social Media Working Group and leads the FEMA Tech Corps engagement for Humanity Road. She is a frequent guest lecturer for university

international studies programs and serves on the UNOCHA Information Management Working Group (IMWG). Ms. Graham is a career disaster responder, starting with American Red Cross as a Disaster Action Team lead where she supported numerous responses including Hurricane Katrina and the Haiti earthquake. Graham developed and deployed the first Internet café for the Joint Resource Recovery Center in Georgia, assisting thousands of displaced residents after Hurricane Katrina. In 2012 Graham deployed a citizen command center in Rockaway New York that supported 40,000 after Superstorm Sandy. A strong proponent of “Leave No One Behind”, Graham led the development of the Disabilities, Accessibility, Functional Needs group within Humanity Road to support disaster preparedness and resilience for vulnerable populations.

News Coverage

Recent media coverage about Humanity Road. For more visit <http://humanityroad.org/news>

April 19, 2016 ([Blog](#)) [Ecuador after the quake - what now?](#) - Research Gate

Excerpt: “Sanderson: *It’s very early on, and news of coordination of relief efforts is emerging. Experienced organizations such as [Humanity Road](#) are already providing useful information.*”

Link: <https://www.researchgate.net/blog/post/ecuador-after-the-quake-what-now>

Apr 16 2016 ([Book](#)) [The Consequences of Global Disasters](#) - Anthony Elliott and Eric L. Hsu

Excerpt: “*This movement toward online community groups processing information has grown out from crowdsourcing into more codified stable digital humanitarian groups such as Humanity Road,...*”

Link:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=lnz7CwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Apr 4 2016 ([News](#)) [Digital Disaster Response](#) – Philanthropy Journal News

Excerpt: “*We are in the most technologically advanced moment in history and at the same time are witnessing an era of unprecedented disasters. This combination creates a unique opportunity to improve the delivery of aid. Harnessing this technology to connect the empowered public is a monster task, but this was the basis for the foundation of Humanity Road.*”

Link: <http://pj.news.chass.ncsu.edu/2016/04/04/digital-disaster-response/>

Mar 8 2016 ([Article](#)) [Digital Humanitarians](#) – Domestic Preparedness Magazine

Excerpt: “*[Humanity Road](#) is a volunteer-driven digital humanitarian organization that helped sift through the flood of disaster data that came pouring through as Superstorm Sandy tore apart the shores in the Northeast. The information volunteers collected provided valuable and actionable situational awareness information for local, state, and federal partners, including the Maryland State Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the New York City Mayor’s office.*”

Link: http://www.domesticpreparedness.com/Industry/Case_Study/Digital_Humanitarians/

Reviews

Recent reviews from stakeholders and clients of Humanity Road. For more information and online reviews visit <http://greatnonprofits.org/humanity-road> .

“I run a small non-for-profit tech company in Kathmandu. My team worked closely with Humanity Road after the earthquake in Nepal, particularly to operate quakemap.org that my team deployed right after the earthquake. Humanity Road helped us to collect, verify, and process reports coming to the Quakemap platform. Quakemap was used as one of the key information sources in Nepal’s earthquake disaster response and relief work...”

- Nama Budhathoki, Kathmandu Living Labs

“I lead a team of engineers in an international consortium (70 companies/government agencies across 17 countries) to implement secure interoperability (cybersecurity for cloud networks). Humanity Road has been extremely helpful in focusing our efforts for disaster response and helping us to understand use cases through their real world experience.” - [GreatNonprofits reviewer](#)

“Without the quick and timely assistance from HR, we wouldn’t have been able to provide NWS Norman with near real-time results as to reach and geographic location of its Twitter Tornado Drill.”

— John Butler, Team Leader, City of Altus (OK) Emergency Management Agency

“Looking at the nascent organization’s impact, and building off Hess and Ostrom’s concept of a “knowledge commons,” we view Humanity Road acting—in both their educational role and through their consistent work to shape the information space after disaster events into a usable resource—as stewards of the commons.”

– Dr. Kate Starbird, Assistant Professor, Washington State University

“Humanity Road volunteers played a key role in communicating the initial outbreak and subsequent spread of the 2010 cholera epidemic in Haiti. Their effort was essential in informing government agencies and non-profit organization about disease risk and available resource.”

– Dr. John Brownstein, Harvard Medical School and founder of <http://healthmap.org>

“Humanity Road volunteers are on the leading, bleeding edge of the future of emergency communications. They are pioneers in the development of an interactive global village with the kind of knowledge and experience that we need to understand humanitarian crisis in the world today.”

–Dr. Rebecca Goolsby, Ph.D. Program Officer, Office of Naval Research

I’m a medical doctor and I lead disaster response teams. I’ve led teams for the US Navy, FEMA, the Roddenberry Foundation, and others in Iraq, Afghanistan, Katrina, Port-au-Prince, Banda Aceh, Tacloban, Kathmandu, Izmit, and more. ... I consider Humanity Road an integral asset for us during responses and I seek them out before I go anywhere. One of the most valuable attributes any of us can ask for is professional reliability and Humanity Road is there, every time. Speaking for my own teams, remembering far-away nights in the dark linked only by satellite phone, [The Humanity Road] volunteers have our deep thanks.

– Dr. Eric Rasmussen, MD, MDM, FACP, Infinitum Humanitarian Systems (IHS)

Recent Press Release

Social Media Gives Early Insight into Cyclone Impacts

In a response coordinated online through the use of digital tools and teams, volunteers are monitoring social media. Information is being aggregated and reported to those who can provide aid, it's giving them early insight into the cyclone impacts

WASHINGTON - March 22, 2015 -

PRLog -- A team of digital humanitarians is listening to social media streams to save lives in Vanuatu. Tropical Cyclone Pam has impacted Vanuatu and other islands in the Pacific creating serious damage including lost homes, road damage, power and communication outages.

In a response coordinated online through the use of digital tools and teams, volunteers are monitoring social media. "Information is being aggregated and reported to those who can provide aid, it's giving them early insight into the cyclone impacts," says Humanity Road volunteer Claudia Espinosa, who is leading the project.



"We provide aid in the form of information at the onset of disasters," says Christine Thompson, President of Humanity Road, a digital disaster response team headquartered in Boydton, Virginia. "Our volunteers are trained to use techniques to monitor live social media streams as well as using cutting edge tools to collect and analyze data. These techniques and tools help us locate medical and health related information that adds value to disaster response organizations and first responders." Social Media information is useful for the public but also for aid agencies responding. Organizations like Nethope, UNOCHA, Americares, GISCorps and many others are using this data for planning response, creating maps, and staging resources.

For the past eight days Humanity Road volunteers have been monitoring for urgent needs and publishing daily reports with situational awareness about the impacts. Social media data also contains key information about who is responding. This is also a report published by the volunteers, its called our "Social Media 3W" report. A 3W report lists who is responding with what and where, it helps provide an early view of which aid responders are staging their response. Chris Thompson goes on to say, "Finding the signal in the noise is our area of expertise, we're using a tool called 'Scanigo' that helps us find and classify key messages and urgent needs in social media. The information is being collected and shared online to help the public and their families find answers as well as helping to create maps."

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (UNOCHA) has activated the Digital Humanitarian Network and as a member, Humanity Road offered the assistance of our volunteers. "We are working with partner GISCorps and providing social media information specific to health, hospitals and medical in support of the creation of an early indications map," said Claudia Espinosa. "Information on needs and impacts helps improve the flow of aid to clinics, hospitals and the public." GISCorps team is incorporating this data into maps.

Nethope is one of the organizations tapping Humanity Road's information for key response planning. "The data that Humanity Road volunteers are collecting accelerates the process for confirming agencies deploying to the disaster. It provides an early foundation for our collective work with UNOCHA's 3W report," says Joel Myhre with Nethope.

To help support response efforts, on Friday, March 20, Humanity Road activated a mutual aid request to the Montgomery County Maryland CERT team as well as tapping partner technology organization PeaceGeeks for an initiative that HR is calling "HelpVanuatu". It's a 72 hour initiative to use surge resources from two teams to assist with monitoring social media. PeaceGeeks volunteer Sebastien Lanteigne spent over nine years in Vanuatu and is assisting us in monitoring in Bislama language. Montgomery County Maryland CERT team leader Steve Peterson and his team are experienced in health and medical and have been screening messages and reports for critical health and medical needs from the public.

"Disasters are local, and we help our neighbors, even if that neighbor is 6,000 miles away," says Chris Thompson. "No matter where you are we are here to help when disaster strikes, and Montgomery County Maryland CERT and this partnership are helping their neighbor – in Vanuatu."

About Humanity Road

We are a top rated nonprofit charity providing support to the public and aid agencies during sudden onset disaster. We monitor social media to save lives and close the black hole of communications during natural disaster. For more information about Humanity Road visit <http://humanityroad.org>

About Montgomery County CERT - The Montgomery County, MD Community Emergency Response Team is a team of county residents trained in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. The Montgomery County CERT has over 500+ members and its program is managed by the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

About Scanigo - Scanigo is a social media analytics toolkit developed by Progeny Systems in collaboration with Humanity Road to quickly filter social media into actionable information in support of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR) events, designed to meet respective analysis workflow processes and timelines.

About Peace Geeks - PeaceGeeks is a non-profit organization that leverages skilled volunteers and ICT to empower at-risk communities in developing and conflict-affected areas. With 500+ applicants, we support locally-based initiative through web and mobile development, crisis mapping, GIS, social media and communications strategy, and more to support grassroots non-profits, refugees and communities displaced by conflict and natural disasters.

Contact

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