



Cranemasters Hurricane Heroes

Winter 2024 | Mark Coressel

Hurricane Helene was larger than all but two other Gulf storms since 1988. And, it was the third deadliest hurricane of the 21st century, after hurricanes Katrina (2005) and Maria (2017). Cranemasters is proud of our participation in the recovery efforts in Helene's aftermath. But, three of our own who were deployed as part of those efforts went above and beyond the call of duty.



Wilson Molina, Michael Marques, and Jay McDermott were sent to North Carolina to help get rail lines operational after the storm. The hours were long and exhausting. But, when Helene knocked out power and water to the Holiday Inn East in Asheville, Wilson, Michael, and Jay made themselves available to help the staff and guests.

They were so helpful that several guests and staff contacted Cranemasters to sing their praises. **Here's how one person described what the guys did for them:**

"I can tell you that after guests were evacuated on Saturday afternoon, your team was able to help the hotel staff pump water from the pool to the 3rd floor (to flush toilets for 300+ guests).

The sump pump did not have enough pressure to get water to the 4th floor. They figured it out – pump to a tub on the 3rd floor, then pump to the 4th floor. They manned a bucket brigade to clear toilets on four floors of the hotel.

We were on the 4th floor, which had no power. To access rooms, you needed a staff member with a key to escort you every time you needed to go to your room. On Saturday, these good men helped the remaining staff and families move from the upper floors to the lower floors.

There was no power, no elevator, and no carts. They ran up and down the stairs, hand-carrying all our belongings.

You are well represented by these men.

They did not have to put their hands or backs to work. They volunteered, doing dirty work, to help others they did not know. They set a great example by their work and by their willing hearts.

I don't know how to honor them for their service. There are no grades, stars, or merit badges (though we might have to come up with one).

Please share my thanks with them."

Patty Scoggins was one of the hotel's stranded guests. She wrote in to say this about the men:

"Just wanted to reach out and let you know what kind of people you employ.

I was recently stranded in Asheville, NC, due to Hurricane Helene. I was put up in the Holiday Inn. I had the pleasure of meeting three of your employees: Wilson, Michael, and Jay.

They went above and beyond what anyone could have expected. They were in a bad situation, stuck in a hotel for days with no outside contact, electricity, or water, and then they volunteered.

There were over 300 people on four floors. They showed up to help move people from the upper floors to the lower floors, carrying suitcases, bags, animals, and sometimes children. After that, they lugged buckets, sometimes 5-gallon buckets, up four flights of stairs to make sure toilets could flush.

I don't have the words to express my appreciation for what they did for us. And always.... ALWAYS with a laugh and a smile. I just wanted to pass this along so you also understood that these are three AMAZING men."

We couldn't be more proud of Wilson, Michael, and Jay.

Wilson has been with Cranemasters since 2006 and is a Supervisor. Michael joined Cranemasters in 2022 as an Operator, and Jay worked for Cranemasters in 2024 as a Laborer. All three are based in our Taneytown, Maryland, location.

On behalf of the entire Cranemasters team, we'd like to thank them for their extraordinary efforts in helping those in need.

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