

## HARTER SECREST & EMERY MAKES RED CROSS DONATION

### \$21,850 check presented for Puerto Rico hurricane relief

By **BENNETT LOUDON**  
Daily Record Staff

Rayza Santiago, an associate attorney at Harter Secrest & Emery LLP, and legal secretary Diana Mackey have many relatives in Puerto Rico struggling in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

"I think they're in pretty bad shape, but I think they're OK. That's just kind of how we roll. We're pretty strong people," Santiago said.

Mackey said her stepfather's sister called to say they had run out of food.

"They're still going through a lot of hardship," Mackey said.

After fellow employees found out about the circumstances their co-workers' families were facing, they raised more than \$10,000, which was matched by the firm and a \$21,850 check was presented Tuesday morning to the American Red Cross, Greater Rochester Chapter, to support relief efforts.

"It is impossible for us to even begin to imagine what those in Puerto Rico are dealing with, and have been dealing with every day since the storm tore into their lives," said Craig S. Wittlin, Harter Secrest managing partner.

"They have an incredibly long road ahead of them. More than anything, we want them to know that our thoughts, hearts and prayers are with them," he said.

Mackey said most of her family, on her father's side, is in Puerto Rico.

"Luckily they're still home, their homes were not destroyed, but there's still no water, no electricity," Mackey said.



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**Craig S. Wittlin, left, managing partner of Harter Secrest & Emery LLP, and Diana Clarkson, a senior associate at the firm and chair of the Rochester chapter of the American Red Cross, on Tuesday presented a \$21,850 check to Red Cross Executive Director Jim Love.**

But Mackey said her relatives are planning to stay put.

"They're going to hunker down and stay there, and hopefully things will get better," Mackey said.

Santiago's father and three younger siblings, along with her grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, all live near San Juan. Their homes were not seriously damaged, but they don't have power and cellphone service is spotty.

But they're better off than folks living farther away from the city where supplies aren't getting to them as quickly, she said.

Santiago's brother is living temporarily with an aunt in New Jersey so that he can

continue school.

Jim Love, executive director of the Rochester chapter of the Red Cross, said there are about 800 Red Cross volunteers in Puerto Rico, including five from the Rochester area.

"They're experienced volunteers that we're sending down," Love said.

They are on what he called "hardship deployment." Volunteers are sleeping on the floors of shelters and churches, he said.

"We've had a lot of new volunteers that have come to the Red Cross that want to go to Puerto Rico. We're now in the middle of training them," said Love, who expects the Red Cross will be working in Puerto Rico for about a year.