

# Iowan pilots take initiative, fly Helene relief donations south

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## Ankeny Regional Airport pilots step in to deliver supplies to Hurricane Helene victims

Six Iowa pilots have taken matters into their own hands the past week by collecting donations and delivering supplies to those impacted by Hurricane Helene.



Author: Dana Searles



ANKENY, Iowa — The Ankeny Regional Airport became a hub for donations towards Hurricane Helene relief after multiple Iowa pilots wanted to offer their help.

Six pilots from the airport have made the flight to the east coast to serve those impacted by Helene.

Dave Kalwishky was just one of the pilots from the airport to make the flight, and as an FBO (Fixed Base Operator) manager at the airport, he is proud to see everyone stepping up.

"It was just incredible, the teamwork and just how everybody comes together and makes it all happen," Kalwishky said.

This all sparked after Chris Brault and his family posted to Facebook looking for donations after he decided he would take the trip to offer help.

"Honestly, ours was just a drop in the bucket to what was happening, and we knew that," said Chris Brault, an Iowa pilot. "But when you have thousands of people contributing drops, it adds up, and so that's all we can do, is just do our part."

The outpouring of support the pilots saw when they landed was hard to describe. It was an all hands-on deck operation with people from all across the country coming to lend a hand.

"The hangar that's behind us, there was a hanger that size that didn't have any airplanes in it, but it looked like you were walking through a Costco or a Sam's Club, just row after row after row of stacks," Kalwishky said.

Now 2,500 miles and five days later, the pilots are reflecting on the mission.

"I talked with Dave and Dave said, 'Chris, I knew pilots would jump in to help, but literally,' he says. It brought tears to my eyes this week, the outpouring of support, so that's special," Brault said.

The Brault's said they are planning to wait and see what happens with Hurricane Milton and are considering bringing resources there as well.