



# Jewelers of America press release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **JA PLANS NETWORK TO ASSIST JEWELERS RECOVERING FROM HURRICANE KATRINA**

**NEW YORK CITY** — In response to the destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina, Jewelers of America has announced the formation of a Recovery Network, designed to address the specific needs of retail jewelers as they work to recover from this disaster. JA's Recovery Network is a peer-to-peer support and mentoring service for retail jewelers who are seeking advice, experience sharing, or a sympathetic ear as they work to recover and rebuild.

According to JA Chairman John Cohen of Greensboro, NC-based Caryle & Co., now is the best time to launch this effort. "While there is little we can do right now in terms of direct support, having this network in place as our colleagues in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama get back on their feet will be a big help and a tremendous resource just when it is needed most," says Cohen.

Working closely with its regional affiliates, JA will maintain a database of members and others who are willing to offer support and advice in specific areas of business recovery. JA will receive requests for assistance and make referrals. Network members will offer insight and advice based on their own experiences or expertise for no fee.

"Our intent is to build a permanent resource that retail jewelers can rely on both now and in the future when faced with natural disasters or other catastrophes," says JA President and CEO Matthew Runci. He notes that JA is hoping to reach beyond its membership for building this network. "The jewelry industry is well-known for its culture of support and for rallying to the cause. The JA Recovery Network builds on this spirit to provide direct help to retailers in need," Runci says.

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JA is inviting association members and others in the jewelry industry who have experience with rebuilding or recovering after a fire, flood, or other disaster to join its Recovery Network. Volunteers select the specific areas of support under which they wish to be listed; these areas include rebuilding/reconstruction management, employment support, housing/temporary lodging, and financing/cash flow. JA will not pre-screen or qualify volunteers.

For more information, contact JA Member Services by phone (800-223-0673), fax (646-658-0256), or e-mail ([members@jewelofam.org](mailto:members@jewelofam.org)).

*Jewelers of America is the national trade association for retail jewelers.  
With more than 11,000 members, JA also works locally through its 40 state and regional affiliates.  
JA advocates high social, ethical, and environmental standards, promotes professional  
business and leadership skills, and enhances its members' profitability by  
offering education, certification, marketing and cost-saving programs.*

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