Voices from the Gulf Coast

LEADERSHIP 18 2006 GULF COAST LISTENING INITIATIVE

August 2006

A Message from Leadership 18 Convening Chair, John R. Seffrin, Ph.D.

On behalf of Leadership 18, I am pleased to submit the following report, Voices from the Gulf Coast. The new mission of Leadership 18 is:

To provide a forum of a select group of the largest human development non-profit CEOs to improve strategic leadership and action and inspire collective action to improve people's lives and the conditions in which they live.

As its first major project for this newly directed group, Leadership 18 created the Gulf Coast Initiative. In so doing, the member organizations made a commitment to devote a diverse array of resources to lead and leverage other assets for the long-term rebuilding efforts. Through this initiative, Leadership 18 is focused on human development. This unprecedented collaboration among the nation's leading social service organizations seeks to work in conjunction with government, business and other community stakeholders to restore communities and rebuild lives.

Leadership 18 began its work on the Gulf Coast Initiative by commissioning a study of the short and long-term needs of communities and community members affected most by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. To collect data for this study, we didn't review spreadsheets or study statistics – we led discussions. We asked questions. And more importantly, we listened. We listened to conversations and we listened to concerns. We went straight to the people who were directly impacted by the events of last August and September and we listened to what they had to say about their struggles and their needs. We heard their stories of the relief, recovery and rebuilding. We listened to the voices of the Gulf Coast.

We present here the findings and recommendations of this research, with our continued commitment not only to our own work, but to seeking and securing commitments of time, talent and treasure from all stakeholders, in order to ensure that the resources that we are all investing are used in a coordinated effort to maximize the rebuilding and redevelopment of the Gulf Coast. By doing this, we can rebuild a better state of human existence, together.

John R. Seffrin, Ph.D. Convening Chair Leadership 18

Chief Executive Officer American Cancer Society Atlanta, Georgia

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BACKGROUND ON LEADERSHIP 18 GULF COAST INITIATIVE

Leadership 18 is a coalition of America's largest, best known and most-widely respected charitable organizations. These organizations have come together to collectively address critical issues facing American society.

Looking back on the visible affects of last season's hurricanes, there is a greater understanding of how the absence of financial wellbeing contributes to issues related to housing, healthcare, mental health services, employment, child care and education among others. In and of themselves, these conditions often become unmanageable challenges that erode family stability and cohesion. However, in light of the hurricane devastation, particularly as it relates to the compounding effect these natural disasters have had on urban areas already challenged by inherent poverty and eroding social conditions, Leadership 18 has committed to empower local communities from the ground up and energize local organizations to rebuild and redevelop the Gulf Coast area – in particular the city of New Orleans – as a model of successful and prosperous urban living in America.

Now What?

As David Brooks of the *New York Times* stated, "Hurricane Katrina has given us an amazing chance to do something serious about urban poverty. That's because Katrina was a natural disaster that interrupted a social disaster...It has created as close to a blank slate as we get in human affairs, and given us a chance to rebuild a city that wasn't working."

Frankly, he's right. A great opportunity has been presented to us not just to rebuild the previous social structure of some of our nation's poorest states, but to make it better. And if we can capitalize on this opportunity by providing healthy, self-sustaining and economically vibrant communities, then we will have gained more than any hurricane could ever take away.

In order to rebuild a better state of human existence and create a new dynamic among those rebuilding the Gulf Coast states, Leadership 18 recommends the efforts be focused specifically on four key areas, each of which is meant to *put people first*: The four key areas are:

- 1. Ensuring the viability of our neighborhoods by providing affordable mixed income housing, basic services such as banks and grocery stores, pleasant and mixed-use surroundings and readily-accessible health care services and mental health services including doctors, clinics and hospitals.
- 2. <u>Providing for the development and education of our children</u> with adequate childcare and early learning opportunities, mentoring of teens, sufficient academic support, guidance on lifestyle choices and quality after school programs.
- 3. Encouraging the self-sufficiency of our citizens with job training, the creation of jobs that pay enough to sustain a family, home ownership, higher education assistance, small business development and family asset accumulation through a series of coordinated programs as well as tax incentives and grants.
- 4. Empowering local leadership and community involvement by recruiting, training and supporting community groups, business and faith-based leaders and committed individuals who care about and will work toward ensuring the future of their communities.

LEADERSHIP 18 MEMBERSHIP

Leadership 18 is a coalition of America's largest, best known and most-widely respected charitable organizations. These organizations have come together to collectively address critical issues facing American society. The mission of Leadership 18 is:

"To provide a forum of a select group of the largest human development non-profit CEOs to improve strategic leadership and action and inspire collective action to improve people's lives and the conditions in which they live."

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The 2006 Gulf Coast Listening Initiative, conducted by Kelton Research Firm, was commissioned by Leadership 18 for the purpose of directly engaging citizens living in the Gulf who have been impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The survey research was done to help determine what their most pressing needs are, how they have tried to rebuild their lives and what their short and long term challenges are in trying to do so.

The first phase of the 2006 Gulf Coast Listening Initiative was conducted during the week of June 5-9, 2006 in the communities of Montgomery, Mobile, Gulfport and Jackson. The second phase was conducted during the week of June 19-23, 2006 in the communities of Houston, Alexandria, Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

At Leadership 18's request, Kelton Research conducted Town Hall-style group discussions, followed by both individual and small group interviews. Participants in each session were also asked to complete a short survey outlining their current needs and efforts in obtaining hurricane recovery related assistance.

Participants were recruited through a variety of means, including:

- Direct invitations through local Leadership 18 organizations
- Community outreach through various non-profits, hurricane recovery centers, churches and faith-based organizations
- Publicity campaigns, including press releases, and announcements in newspapers and websites, and on television and radio stations
- Direct invitations to evacuees at FEMA trailer parks and local residents in Montgomery, Mobile (Bayou La Batre), Gulfport, Jackson, Houston, Alexandria, Baton Rouge and New Orleans

Participants in this project included those directly impacted by the hurricanes who had either evacuated their home cities or those who remained through the storms, as well as case workers from various organizations who had met with and assisted countless victims over the past ten months.

Leadership 18 thanks Kelton Research and the principals on this project:

- Tom Bernthal
- Gareth Schweitzer
- Richelle Lyon
- Vashte Johnson

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What follows is a general overview of the research compiled for this report. The complete report follows with more detail and further explanation of the findings.

It is important to note that the information in this report is reflective, for the most part, of the opinions of individuals who still have substantial needs. It is also not scientific, necessarily, but rather a compilation of people's perceptions grounded in the hard reality of what they have had to endure. Many Gulf Coast residents have been able to get back on their feet, through a combination of outside assistance and self-determination. Those who chose to participate in this research – which was largely self-selecting – are those still utilizing the services of case workers, living in FEMA trailers, and still looking for assistance.

OVERVIEW OF NEEDS

Information.

Communication systems between service providers and evacuees in need are unavailable or underutilized. There is a significant lack of knowledge in affected communities regarding available programs and assistance.

Housing.

Housing is unavailable or extraordinarily expensive. The majority of displaced residents are still living in temporary housing with no foreseeable future for permanent, low-income housing.

• Employment.

A majority of evacuees report working outside of their trained profession earning significantly lower salaries. Many who accept these lower paying jobs still aren't able to make ends meet, but no longer qualify for the aid they need to get back on their feet.

Childcare.

Without the foundation of previously established communities, many are without the network on which they once relied for childcare. They are unable to leave children behind to look for work, or are unable to afford childcare once they find work.

• Transportation.

Evacuees cannot afford to replace lost cars or gas to operate those that weren't lost. Public transportation often doesn't operate in the areas where FEMA trailers are located.

Clothing and Household Items.

After leaving with little more than the clothes on their backs, evacuees still have not been able to replace their wardrobes and household goods. They struggle to find jobs without being able to look presentable in interviews.

· Health Care.

Both physical and mental health issues remain significant problems for evacuees. The lack of insurance, health care facilities and patient records make it difficult to seek and receive appropriate medical care. There is a tremendous need for counseling, particularly for children, because of the uncertainty and monumental loss many evacuees and survivors are facing.

Specialized Needs.

Case workers are overwhelmed and need support; senior citizens have special circumstances that require specialized physical and mental care; parents of children with special needs find it even more difficult than before to find the services they need; and families with missing family members struggle with their inability to find loved ones.

SURVEY RESULTS

Participants from eight communities were interviewed one-on-one, in focus groups and in town hall meetings averaging 90 -100 people. Information was also collected in surveys, with an overview of the results for all eight communities reflected in the following table:

		Average	Montgomery	Mobile	Gulfport	Jackson	Houston	Alexandria	Baton Rouge	New Orleans
Are You Currently Employed?	Yes	40%	53%	46%	69%	25%	37%	26%	33%	31%
	No	60%	47%	54%	31%	75%	63%	74%	67%	69%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had Before the Hurricane?	Yes	32%	25%	29%	53%	20%	32%	13%	41%	44%
	No	68%	75%	71%	47%	80%	68%	88%	59%	56%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Permanent	28%	22%	40%	35%	39%	33%	32%	5%	17%
	Temporary	72%	78%	60%	65%	61%	67%	68%	95%	83%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	68%	90%	42%	19%	99%	95%	100%	80%	22%
	No	32%	10%	58%	81%	1%	5%	0%	20%	78%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	Yes	40%	20%	30%	52%	33%	19%	31%	57%	79%
	No	60%	80%	70%	48%	67%	81%	69%	43%	21%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	Yes	44%	50%	57%	61%	24%	37%	35%	41%	49%
	No	56%	50%	43%	39%	76%	63%	65%	59%	51%
- If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in that Home?	Yes	16%	0%	41%	33%	8%	11%	13%	3%	20%
	No	84%	100%	59%	67%	92%	89%	87%	97%	80%
- If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	Yes	52%	67%	35%	81%	36%	31%	39%	58%	69%
	No	48%	33%	65%	19%	64%	69%	61%	42%	31%

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

· Community Building.

Providing both short- and long-term financial solutions will enable survivors and evacuees to get back into permanent housing, enabling the rebuilding of neighborhoods as well as the invaluable networks residents need in so many ways.

Education.

Providing day care and after school programs will benefit communities in immeasurable ways. Children will have the learning opportunities they need for academic development and mental health, while parents will be able to return to work confident in the safety and development of their children.

Self Sufficiency.

Transportation, job training, communications systems and counseling are essential and integral to rebuilding lives and establishing independence.

• Leadership.

Compiling available resources - whether programs, people or ideas - will strengthen the commitment of individuals and communities to the rebuilding efforts.

Given the circumstances and unusually widespread scope of this disaster – and the fact that thousands of Americans have been forced to relocate, and completely abandon their former homes and communities – simply offering services, or employing traditional methods of outreach, may not suffice. Rather, this situation may necessitate going directly to evacuees in order to perform assessments and enrollment in programs. This could also serve as an opportunity to conduct job fairs and employment training, support groups and other types of mental health counseling on-site, where it's most needed.

The social service sector, in partnership with local government, in all of these communities faced a challenge of unprecedented scope and devastation. Leadership in local communities responding to those who had been displaced went across geographic bounds and organizational interests so that lives could be saved and made whole again. While there are many lessons learned, these communities all have demonstrated heroic efforts to meet challenges the scale of which the nation has never seen.

RESEARCH REPORT

As the nation marks the one-year anniversary of the largest and most costly natural disaster in our nation's history, a significant number of those most severely affected by the hurricanes of 2005 are still struggling to rebuild their lives. The homes, careers, and familial and neighborhood networks that were the byproduct of many generations on the Gulf Coast have been irrevocably destroyed for many area residents. Reconstructing that broad community foundation is therefore a process heavily reliant on bricks, mortar and money – but also on community building, education, job placement, day care, mental health assistance and other seminal elements that allow individuals to put down roots in new areas.

It's important to note that almost none of these needs exist in a vacuum. Every time a single mother is unable to find childcare, for example, it directly affects her ability look for gainful employment or pay utility bills on time, and it decreases the chance she'll be able to afford more permanent housing. For simplicity's sake, we address many of these issues individually, but do so with the preface that they are entirely interconnected and impinge on each survivor's ability to improve their lives in other areas.

One suggestion that arose among survivors and providers was the need for more "360 degree support" to enable survivors to return to a cycle of normalcy. Rental assistance, gas vouchers, gift cards – they are all helpful, but they all run out. As we heard repeatedly, survivors who lose their temporary FEMA housing before being placed in a job end up back at square one – and any job training they may have received is rendered useless.

Rather than piecemeal solutions, the long-term approach should be to invest the resources necessary to help individuals on myriad fronts – allowing all the varying aid pieces to come together at once. This includes permanent housing, childcare, job training, job placement, transportation, and medical care. If those pieces can be brought together and coordinated, it will greatly increase the chances that those survivors will be able to get back on their feet.

AVAILABILITY OF AID AND INFORMATION

Despite the outpouring of aid and the ongoing efforts of numerous relief agencies, these communities would benefit from stronger and more direct communication between direct service providers and the large segment of evacuees still in critical need of recovery assistance. In general, attendees from each of the Listening Sessions were only aware of services offered through FEMA and The Red Cross, and occasionally Catholic Charities and The Salvation Army.

The irony is that many organizations are struggling to find participants to available programs, while evacuees perceive that relief agencies aren't reaching out to them – that they're expected to find these service providers themselves. Even those with knowledge or awareness of organizations and/or programs may not have direct access to them due to a lack of transportation, telephones or internet service. This is especially true within communities where evacuees are widely dispersed and located in FEMA housing in remote areas, with limited access to public transportation or even the most basic services such as grocery or convenience stores.

In Their Own Words

"They need to do more outreach in certain places."

"You have to really, really need it to get help. Do I have to be at a mental health shelter to get some help?"

"If the newspaper could print a section once or twice per week, you could just grab it on Wednesday or Sunday and get all the information you need."

"Set up tables at the places people go – like the supermarket, or Wal-Mart! Even if you're new to the area, you go to these places so would know about services."

> "How can we get to the Job Center? We have no transportation! Explain that to me, please!"

SPECIFIC NEEDS

What are Your 3 Greatest Hurricane Recovery Related Needs?	Percent
Housing/Shelter	50%
Finances	43%
Job	23%
Clothing	22%
Household Items	20%
Car/Transportation	17%
Food	16%
Medical/Healthcare	13%
Rental Assistance	7%
Utility Assistance	6%

^{*} Participants were asked about their three greatest needs – not every respondent, however, actually entered three responses.

HOUSING

Across the Gulf Coast, the long-term housing situation for many residents remains in a state of crisis. More than half of all research participants are currently living in shelters, FEMA trailers or other government provided housing (40%), or with family, friends, or host families (14%). Still others are living at church facilities, senior centers or habitat housing. A few participants reported that they were homeless or living in tents; even those who have found an apartment are often paying exorbitant rents on greatly reduced or non-existent salaries.

In Their Own Words

"Our greatest need is for low-income housing and no one is listening!!"

"It's hard to start over when you've lost everything. I'm not asking for someone to take care of me forever. I just need a home, and a bit of security, so I can get back on my feet."

"Rent was always my biggest expense. It's twice as much now – I earn less – you do the math. It just doesn't add up."

- <u>Gulfport, Mobile and New Orleans:</u> Vast property damage has greatly reduced the pool of available housing; rents in some locations have risen 3 times above their previous market value as a result. Long-term leases are virtually impossible to obtain as landlords rent month to month, enabling frequent rent hikes based on market fluctuations.
- Montgomery, Alexandria: Although Montgomery and Alexandria have much smaller evacuee communities, many survivors in these cities remain in FEMA trailers, subsidized housing far removed from the general population, or reside in non-weatherized or non-insulated homes, leading to astronomical and untenable utility bills. Some families in Montgomery have taken in ten or more relatives who evacuated because of the hurricanes, stretching their resources extremely thin.
- Jackson, Houston and Baton Rouge: A shortage of affordable housing exists in Jackson and Houston as well, in addition to a concern among many residents about the safety of the neighborhoods they can afford. People in communities with a significant influx of evacuees spoke of discrimination against New Orleans evacuees, not only from potential employers but from landlords as well. This was based, according to evacuees, on a perception within evacuee communities that many New Orleans natives were stereotyped as criminals, or that their stay in those areas would turn out to be temporary. In Baton Rouge, the huge influx of evacuees has overwhelmed the available housing supply and most have little to no access to public transportation as they are on the outskirts of town.

Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?		Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?		
Yes	68%	Yes 43%		
No	32%	No	57%	
If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?		If Yes, Were You Able To Remain Living In That Home?		
Yes	40%	Yes 18%		
No	60%	No	82%	
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?		If You Were Not Able To Remain Living In Your Home, Are You Planning On Rebuilding?		
Permanent	29%	Yes	50%	
Temporary	71%	No	50%	

Homeowners: About half of the evacuees who owned homes before Katrina expressed an intention to rebuild, but many are struggling with a lack of funding for repairs as well as shortages in qualified, affordable labor. Some are languishing on waiting lists for volunteer builders; still others have fallen victim to fraudulent contractors and shoddy, incomplete workmanship. A significant number are in disputes with insurance companies regarding wind versus water damage. Even some policies that have been paid are insufficient to cover the cost of reconstruction or demolition, and in some cases are barely enough to cover building supplies – without labor. Homes that are still left standing are largely uninhabitable due to shattered windows, and high levels of mold and debris.

FEMA Trailers: Evacuees currently living in FEMA trailers and other types of government subsidized housing are aware of looming cut-off dates at the 18-month point. These impending cut-offs are made even more intimidating by the inconsistent information that a large number of research participants said they get from FEMA regarding their actual exit dates, adding to the unease. There's additional concern now that hurricane season is upon us again that these trailers are ill equipped to withstand heavy winds. For many families, 6 months or more in a trailer – sometimes holding a family of six – has driven family tensions and stresses to the snapping point.

Renters: Rents have doubled and almost tripled in some areas (such as Mobile, Gulfport and New Orleans) and it has become increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a rental lease for more than a month to month basis because, in the view of one evacuee, "then the landlords won't be able to raise the rent every month." Evacuees in host communities are often not able to contact references, obtain prior landlord verification, or secure a lease without proof of income.

EMPLOYMENT

Widespread job loss and a widely dispersed labor force are obvious, pervasive problems. A majority of the evacuees interviewed are currently working in significantly lower-paying positions outside of their trained professions. Additionally, entire industries have been partially or entirely wiped out – such as the Gulfport/Biloxi casinos and the shrimp and oyster industry in Bayou La Batre, Alabama. Common employment issues included:

- A Larger Working Class. Many evacuees who worked professional jobs before the hurricanes as teachers, nurses, and government or university employees are now working minimum wage jobs as sales clerks or fast food cashiers. In the case of nurses and teachers, for example, retraining and recertification across state lines are lengthy processes that are further complicated by a need to maintain their home state identification and a desire to return home frequently to begin to rebuild a previously existing home.
- Identification and Residence. According to research participants, obtaining a job is further complicated by the fact that employers in Texas and Alabama often require applicants to have local identification, yet evacuees must retain their Louisiana IDs to get aid. In addition, landlords are hesitant to rent to the unemployed, yet it's hard to get a job without a permanent mailing address or telephone number.
- The Income/Aid Dilemma. Survivors in every community voiced frustration that complex systems make it more difficult to qualify for aid once you've found work, no matter how low paying that job might be. This led to reluctance on the part of some evacuees to take that type of work, while in essence punishing individuals who do take those jobs. Evacuees have also encountered hiring discrimination, and are particularly prone to becoming targets of opportunity for employers. One case manager relayed a story of an evacuee in Houston applying for a \$10 per hour job, which suddenly became a \$7 per hour job, once the employer realized the applicant was from New Orleans.
- Separated by the Storm. A number of evacuees told stories of separated families, often necessitated by employment or reconstruction. One woman told us her husband was living in his car in New Orleans, trying to keep his job and begin working on their home, while she lived in Baton Rouge with their children.

In Their Own Words

"It's a chicken and egg thing. How do you get a job when you don't have a stable place to live? But no one will let me rent until I can show I have a job."

"How can you take a job, and know whether it will be enough, when your rent is raised every month?"

CHILDCARE

Childcare is a prominent obstacle to incorporating evacuees and survivors back into the workforce. For many, especially single mothers living in FEMA trailers, it's virtually impossible to look for work with small children left at home. The family and neighborhood networks that often cared for children before the storm don't exist anymore. For those who are working, minimum wage jobs simply do not cover the cost of childcare, and relatively few are aware of free or low-cost options that might be available. What's more, the summer months mean children are no longer in school for part of the day and are in need of constant supervision. That's extremely difficult for working parents – and for the children – many of whom have little or no organized activities in the summer months.

Interestingly, there seems to be free or low-cost childcare available in many communities – but few people know about it, or how to access it. This speaks to a larger overall issue of information dissemination. In many communities, evacuees and survivors are still having difficulties simply finding out about available resources.

TRANSPORTATION

Many research participants lost automobiles in the storms, and evacuated from the coast by bus. Still others who made it out in their own cars now face financial problems and can't pay for routine maintenance, repairs, and most importantly, gas. Many evacuees from New Orleans had constant access to reliable means of public transportation, and therefore literally never drove cars. Now, they don't have cars or don't drive and many – especially in places like Montgomery and Alexandria – are feeling paralyzed by their inability to get around. Evacuees residing on the outskirts of town in FEMA trailers and subsidized housing in Houston and Baton Rouge voiced the same concerns. Not only does this limit their ability to both look for jobs and arrive reliably on time once they do find work, it cuts many evacuees off from the rest of the population – making it difficult to foster the sense of belonging necessary to put down roots in a new community.

CLOTHING AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

82% of evacuees interviewed were forced to leave their homes due to storm damage, and many escaped with little more than the clothes on their backs. As a resident of Gulfport noted, "I evacuated to Atlanta for three days to be safe from the storm. Now I've been living in the same three outfits for the past ten months." A number of evacuees conveyed the importance of having decent clothes in order to be presentable – and taken seriously – in job interviews.

But this wasn't limited to clothing – evacuees are in need of household items and furniture as well. Residents in Baton Rouge and Jackson who had already decided not to return to New Orleans were having extensive difficulties furnishing their new residences with the basic necessities of a functional home.

Agency work and individual donations appear to be making inroads here, however. Catholic Charities and The Salvation Army were cited repeatedly as excellent resources for new clothes. Numerous attendees also noted that local churches had done wonders to help them set up new accommodations with basic necessities.

MEDICAL TREATMENT

A significant number of survivors and evacuees lost their health insurance policies along with their jobs, and no longer have access to primary care physicians. In the communities of Gulfport and New Orleans, many hospitals and health care facilities have closed. This has led to a vast increase in emergency room traffic. In New Orleans, evacuees recounted waits at hospitals and clinics of up to 24 hours. There was discussion in Gulfport that even before the hurricanes doctors were leaving the area, and afterwards, the situation has become much worse. Clinics that were operating with 3-4 physicians may now have only one doctor on staff. Importantly, many survivors – especially in New Orleans – were completely unaware of other clinics that were available, such as Operation Blessing. So instead of spreading the populace around the available facilities, most are seeking care at the same two or three facilities.

Other issues include ongoing difficulty in obtaining records necessary to verify medical histories, treatments and prescriptions. After the storm, some diabetic survivors went weeks without insulin shots, while those with handicaps, and other types of disabilities, are still struggling to replace vital medical equipment. Evacuees from New Orleans report difficulty due to significant differences in the Medicare system in their new home states.

High levels of mold have created respiratory problems resulting in long-term health concerns, and the need for medical treatment as well as immediate assistance in cleanup.

In Their Own Words

"I've had a lot of trouble filling my prescriptions. They can't reach my doctor in New Orleans. They told me I need to find a new referral here, so I can get them filled, but it's costs so much!"

MENTAL HEALTH AND COUNSELING

Stress, anxiety, depression and symptoms related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder are commonplace. Many need counseling, but don't know where to go. Living apart and being disconnected from the general population – whether physical (such as living in a trailer park on the outskirts of town without a car or telephone) or psychological (such as encountering discrimination and bias against evacuees, a sentiment particularly strong in Houston, Alexandria and Baton Rouge) – has contributed to a general sense of hopelessness and of feeling forgotten. It's also left some survivors feeling as though they will not be able to overcome what are often perceived as insurmountable obstacles. Ten months after the storms, there's a pervasive sense of inertia, especially in FEMA trailer parks.

Individuals and families are coping not only with the deaths of family members and friends as a result of the hurricanes (some of which were witnessed firsthand) but also the stress and uncertainty related to separation from their loved ones. As one participant stated, "I am in Baton Rouge because I was in the right lane and not the left as we left town. You had no choice. You just were forced in one direction or another and now that's where we live."

Evacuee parents consistently felt that the special needs of their children were largely overlooked by local school systems. Some teachers and administrators are not sensitive to the fact that many children have been exposed to horrific images of death and destruction and traumatized by the loss of friends and relatives. These children are having difficulty concentrating in school and in some cases are being bullied by other students – and are in need of consistent counseling.

In Their Own Words

"I've been assessed to death – what I need is help with my rent and utilities. We're on the edge and on the point of breaking."

"I keep getting dropped from programs even after I've applied and been accepted."

"I can't get help with child care because it's been too long – people say, 'You should be on your feet by now."

"People are still suffering and not enough is being done."

CASE WORKERS

Case workers, many of whom are also survivors and evacuees, are also in need of counseling and support. Many have been pushed to their limits working countless hours to care for others, and are succumbing to depression and stress in addition to feelings of powerlessness in coping with both their personal struggles and the needs of their clients. As one evacuee stated, "Even the helpers need help."

Evacuees are also frustrated regarding the level of case management and assessment to which they've been subjected. Participants noted they've been "over-assessed" without tangible results. Some are being managed through multiple organizations, and filling out the same forms repeatedly without gaining access to aid. Others have applied for assistance, and been accepted to programs, only to be dropped – without sufficient explanation. This has led some to believe the aid organizations won't help them – so they've simply stopped asking or looking for assistance.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Special services are needed for senior citizens living within affected areas. Though some have been assisted through the Veteran's Administration and are connected to hospice and elder care facilities, others have found it impossible to pay for housing and medication. They are also in need of assistance with mental health. Many have lost family members, and are struggling with the fact that the fabric of their lives has changed. The older they are, the more difficult that circumstance can be.

MISSING PERSONS

Lastly, a significant number of evacuees still don't know where family members and loved ones are and would benefit from being put in contact with existing agencies already offering assistance in this area.

"They just put us on a bus, and we wound up in Baton Rouge. We don't know where half our family is."

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Lack of knowledge regarding available resources is a constant obstacle in the reconstruction effort. An unintended byproduct of the 2006 Gulf Coast Listening Initiative was that a significant number of survivors and evacuees have been put in touch with agencies they didn't know existed beforehand, which serves to highlight how pervasive this lack of awareness actually is. Services like 2-1-1 – a resource hotline with information on a broad range of service organizations – can be extremely effective, provided it works serviceably the first time someone calls.

In Their Own Words

"I know assistance is out there, but I don't know how to find it. Even the service providers don't always know."

"You get the run around...numbers are disconnected. The 2-1-1 system works sometimes, but it isn't updated enough. "

"We're going to the right agencies...but we don't see you working together to help us...you don't share information."

"The biggest problem is there's no central source of information. Things change over time and you get passed from agency to agency. They all have different rules and work against each other."

"If there were a clearing house where all the information could be gathered, I could bring whatever documents I do have and apply for all the necessary services at once. What we need is a one-stop shop."

Providing education on the proper usage of the (800) number used to access the 2-1-1 system (such as the cards distributed by ViaLink and the Crisis Intervention Center) would assist in alleviating this confusion. These cards were handed out at the Listening Sessions in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and were well-received by evacuees – but giving these out in FEMA trailer parks and other affected areas would certainly be of benefit.

RECOMMENDATIONS: SHORT AND LONG TERM

Ensuring the viability of neighborhoods

Long-Term:

- Continue expansion and development of C.A.N. (Coordinated Assistance Network) and
 informational hotlines, such as the 2-1-1 system, in order to assist evacuees, relief agencies
 and direct service providers with information regarding directories of available programs,
 enrollment eligibility, and databases of aid received. This would be especially helpful if
 combined with government agencies and other non-profits.
- Supplement existing informational hotlines with access to legal assistance regarding mortgages, insurance policies, contract and labor disputes, understanding local building and permit processes, and applying for loan and grants.
- Construct mixed-income housing and provide access to low-interest housing and small business loans.
- Reconstruct readily accessible health care services, medical and dental facilities and mental health care clinics, and provide incentives for health care providers to return.

Short-Term:

- Readjust cut-off dates for FEMA-funded housing assistance.
- Simplify the need for FEMA recertification every 30 days.
- **Homeowners** Increase supplemental funding for building materials, volunteer labor, repair and cleanup in order to provide immediate relief.
- Renters Provide financial assistance with rent and utility bills. Assist in locating long-term housing by creating a central location with listings of available rental properties and access to phone/internet service in order to obtain necessary documentation, references and prior landlord verification, preferably in areas with easy access to public transportation.
- **FEMA trailer inhabitants** Provide safe, secure housing during the current hurricane season.
- Provide financial assistance with utilities, and decrease energy costs by weatherizing inhabited structures.
- Coordinate with direct service agencies to provide basic, tangible needs such as household items, clothing and furniture (beds and bedding).

Providing for the development and education of children

Long-Term:

- Develop quality daycare and after-school programs for children including tutoring, early learning opportunities, academic support, and mentoring.
- Reach out to children isolated from their peers by providing them with opportunities to participate in organized activities such as sports and scouting.

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Short-Term:

- Provide affordable, quality day care and after-school programs so parents may return to work.
- Provide sensitivity training for teachers dealing with traumatized children.

Encouraging the self-sufficiency of the citizens of the area

Long-Term:

- Establish job centers to assist with computer access, employment, resume writing, retraining, recertification and continuing adult education preferably in areas with easy access to public transportation.
- Foster small business development, and job creation, by developing tax incentives, and coordinated programs for loans and grants (including assistance with the application process).
- Establish affordable, accessible and reliable means of public transportation.

Short-Term:

- Set up job counseling and recovery assistance "fairs" at trailer parks and in evacuee neighborhoods.
- Provide evacuees with counseling and treatment for symptoms related to PTSD.
- Provide access to messaging boards, job listings, computers, telephones and internet service, and clothing for interviews.
- Assist in relocating college-educated evacuees from communities where there is a lack of
 professional jobs, to areas where they may obtain employment that pays enough to sustain a
 family.

Empowering local leadership and involving the community

Long-Term:

- Recruiting, training, supporting community groups, business and faith-based leaders and committed individuals who will work toward ensuring the future of their communities.
- Consider programs for longer-term help such as "evacuation vacations" where families and individuals can get together for a weekend, network, and exchange resources and ideas.
- Expand program for volunteers, i.e. sponsoring host families so they may "adopt" an evacuee family, or help clean debris and rebuild There are plenty of people out there who still want to get involved in the recovery process.
- Help evacuees locate lost family members and friends.

Short-Term:

 Provide case workers with sensitivity training, and counseling/treatment for symptoms related to PTSD.

MONTGOMERY



The Montgomery Listening Session was conducted on Tuesday, June 6, 2006 at the Red Cross Center on Woods Crossing Drive. Most evacuees who attended were from the communities of Bayou La Batre, Biloxi, Gulfport, Pascagoula and New Orleans, but also included representatives from the Salvation Army, Goodwill, The Red Cross, EMA of Atoga County, VOAD, The Family Guidance Center of Alabama and Project Rebound.

The evacuee community in Montgomery is relatively small, especially in relation to the size of the city - and there didn't appear to be the severe shortage of resources that exist in many of the other communities. Instead, central to the Montgomery town hall discussion was that there appeared to be a disconnect between service providers and evacuees – the latter consistently stating that they'd fruitlessly searched for help, the former expressing frustration over an inability to connect with survivors. This commonly heard theme speaks to a need for new methods of outreach and information services.

According to one attendee, "The schools and churches are a good place of contact. We had a complete shelter set up at one church, with no FEMA assistance at all – It was all volunteers." Even so, "Not everybody has children and although people are talking about churches, not everyone goes. We still need food, gas and shelter." Other survivors expressed irritation that service providers weren't coming to them, instead waiting until evacuees reached out to the organizations.



Housing: Most of the evacuees interviewed in Montgomery felt welcomed by the community at large and weren't planning on an immediate return home. Others are desirous of a return, but recognize that you can't return when there's nowhere to live. One man expressed anger over the fact that city leaders in New Orleans are encouraging people to return when "there's nothing left for me to go back to."

A number of research participants continue to face a perpetual state of uncertainty regarding their status in FEMA/subsidized housing due to 30 day recertification requirements. One evacuee conveyed that he was initially offered a one-year stay at subsidized apartment, but after three months his housing and food stamps were terminated. Others told stories of simultaneously paying mortgage on a home in New Orleans and rent on a property in Alabama – while commuting back and forth on the weekends trying to rebuild.

Some homeowners lack the funds to rebuild, while others cannot find construction workers to clear away debris and repair walls with "mold all the way up to the ceilings." Although some had flood insurance, it was "barely enough to buy supplies and do the work ourselves." One evacuee, a woman from New Orleans now living in Montgomery, had been told to come to Alabama because she'd have a better chance of getting assistance there.

Employment: Although jobs are available in Montgomery, many evacuees have found the

decline in employment status and standard of living to be among the most difficult aspects of relocation. College graduates, who previously held professional positions, are having extensive difficulties finding comparable employment. Some have been passed over for jobs because their prospective employers cannot verify references and employment histories.

✓ **Job training and assistance** centers are a primary need. Integration into a new community is substantially dependent on consistent employment and the ability to make the most out of existing professional skills.



✓ Weekly newspaper updates would prove extremely useful as a resource for survivors on job opportunities, aid possibilities, and community events.

In Their Own Words

"People don't want to hire me. I made more before and they can't pay me that much now. They can't check my references."

"There are more jobs back at home because there aren't as many people there. Some of them have more opportunity than we have here."

"It's hard to hold a job if you can't get settled."

"It's almost like you have to settle for whatever you can get, not what you're worth.

I would love to find a job that would pay what I'm worth but it's hard."

Transportation: Evacuees from New Orleans in particular are experiencing difficulty adjusting to the public transportation system in Montgomery, in part because they're living far from the city center. "It takes money to get a job and it's really hard – clothing, gas, transportation, we're used to buses running every day, day and night. I have to take a cab and that takes a lot of money."

✓ **Supporting ride share and volunteer driver** programs would allow evacuees to get to both job interviews and to work once hired. In addition, gas vouchers are extremely helpful in increasing the mobility of the evacuee population.

Mental Health: People are starting to experience symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and need counseling, but don't know where to go. Some said they would attend a support group if offered. No one anticipated recovery being such a long-term process. So many people are affected and need a way to network. Some of the direct service providers need "sensitivity training because we need empathy not just professional assistance."

A lot of senior citizens are having difficulty adjusting to change. According to one evacuee, "It seems that the older the person is, the more difficult it is to accept the fact that life will never be the same again." Although there was not a great deal of representation from the older segment, these people need to be heard. People's lives are not what they once were. "It's not logistics they need – It's rebuilding the fabric of your life and your community – it's the fabric of life."

✓ Community events and outreach are extremely important factors for incorporating evacuees into new communities. Many still feel extremely cut off from Montgomery as a whole. These events would allow survivors to meet local residents, as well as connect with individuals in similar situations. This research process demonstrated that, on many occasions, the best resource is other evacuees who've been through the same process.

MOBILE

The Mobile Listening Session was conducted on Wednesday, June 7, 2006 at the Senior Citizens' Services Center on Dauphin Road. This session was primarily attended by evacuees from Mobile, Jackson County, MS and New Orleans, many of whom are currently living in FEMA trailer parks in Bayou La Batre.

Mobile has a substantial number of both evacuees and local residents directly affected by the storm. For the coastal areas on the Bayou – including Dauphine Island and Bayou La Batre – the widespread poverty that existed before the storm has been greatly exacerbated by the destruction of the shrimp and oyster industries, in addition to widespread property damage. A significant number of town hall attendees are living in FEMA trailers or other temporary accommodations.



The inability of many Bayou La Batre residents to make it to the town hall in Mobile speaks volumes about the widespread lack of transportation and money for gasoline. For an additional group of participants whose homes weren't destroyed, their residences are simply unlivable due to mold and damage. Yet some residents were living in mold-infested homes with damaged roofs anyway simply because they didn't have anywhere else to go.

Housing: Discussion of the current Mobile housing situation drew anger from some participants and tears from others. Citizens living in FEMA trailers as of June were extremely concerned about their safety in the event of another hurricane. Housing options other than trailers are extremely limited given that, as one participant mentioned "a lot of places are unlivable, and the rents are too high anyway."

The Mobile town hall meeting was among the most emotional. Many participants were extremely upset about the perceived slow pace of recovery efforts. Numerous attendees are on disability or other fixed incomes, and have been particularly hard hit by increasing rents. As one attendee stated, "It's like the homeowners are saying 'Alright, Here's my chance to make some money now." Despite these difficulties, most evacuees – especially from New Orleans – have no intention of leaving the area, because the situation in Mobile is still perceived as better than what would await them at home. As one man explained, "The media is not telling you the truth. They're not honest about the state of New Orleans. It's very political. The property rates have risen so high, it's cheaper to stay here than go back and pay double for something smaller than what you had before."

In Their Own Words

"We've gone to all the agencies, including SBA and applied for aid but they keep denying us. We lost everything – everything – including all of our health insurance and savings, yet our case is still under review. We're 6 of us, stuck in a trailer. We've gone everywhere and we still can't get help. We used to work 18 hours a day to take care of ourselves and we've never asked for help before. I don't know what we're going to do!"



Homeowners face another set of challenges, like the widow from South Mobile County who continues to pay her mortgage and insurance every month, even though the rate has allegedly increased 300%. The walls in her home are black with mold, and "the ceilings and roof are wide open." She has yet to receive payment on her policy for cleanup, and now suffers from serious respiratory problems. She was

unable to procure a FEMA trailer, and will now wait out the current hurricane season in her badly damaged home.

✓ Some of the individuals most in need live 20-25 miles outside of Mobile, and have had relatively little, if any, contact with aid organizations. Individuals in the FEMA parks in Bayou La Batre, for example, are extremely isolated and cut of from service organizations in Mobile. In these areas, it's vital to be more proactive in reaching out to them − many survivors have no means of transportation whatsoever or the means to pay for gas. Many of these areas were very poor before the hurricane − now, a major outreach effort is needed to provide very basic services. One small, local, church run food bank was feeding over 200 families a day, while also recognizing there were many more people in need whom they weren't able to reach.

Employment: Although there are jobs are available in Mobile, participants noted that what's out there now pays mostly minimum wage with no benefits. Many individuals previously employed in the seafood industry are struggling to survive, including one family of four who came from Dauphine Island. The father, once a commercial crabber, now earns \$9 per hour – no longer enough to support his family. He's heart-broken because he can no longer afford to send his daughter to college.

Within the Bayou La Batre area is also a population of Vietnamese fishermen who speak little or no English. A translator explained their plight: "They work in oystering and when it's good they have a little bit of money but when it's bad they have no money and now they're just kind of bumming off their friends. They don't know what to do."

One young woman, whose husband was self-employed before Katrina, but who became disabled after falling off a ladder, has repeatedly been denied assistance by HUD because her family has no prior history of welfare. They, along with their 4 children, were moved into the FEMA park in Bayou La Batre after the apartment they were living in was torn down.

Transportation: Many evacuees in the most serious need of assistance are located in FEMA trailers parks far from the center of town, and cannot afford to pay for gas or transportation even if they were able to secure employment.

✓ There is very little, if any, work available on the outskirts of Mobile, especially on the Bayou. Nor for the most part do survivors living there have a means to get to Mobile to look for work. Many of these individuals need to be reached



out to and provided with rental assistance, so that potentially they can relocate to areas where more employment opportunity exists.

Medical Treatment: In addition to concerns regarding mold, evacuees are experiencing ongoing difficulties receiving basic medical treatment or prescriptions. This is especially true for diabetics whose insulin costs up to \$100 per month. One woman claimed she was unable to regularly test her blood sugar or take insulin for months after Katrina. And those in the outlying communities have little access to Mobile's medical facilities.

GULFPORT



The Gulfport Listening Session was conducted on Thursday, June 8, 2006 at Montana's Restaurant on Airport Road. Attendees included affected citizens from the communities of Gulfport and Biloxi, and representatives from local relief agencies including United Way of South Mississippi, Goodwill, Lutheran Episcopal Disaster Response and Mississippi Home Again.

Given the impact of Katrina on the community, Gulfport faces unique challenges. The breadth of destruction is immense, and the housing shortage is massive. Rent on available properties has risen drastically as landlords

translate the scarcity of available property into skyrocketing monthly rates. The cost of living has therefore gone up drastically, meaning low wage employees – or those not working at all – pour literally every dollar they have into rent. The major problems here are tangible and widespread, and require significant resources to rebuild property, restore jobs, and get the community as a whole functioning normally again.

Housing: Widespread property destruction has left few affordable housing options for area residents. According to attendees it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a lease, as landlords prefer to reserve the right to raise rent on a month by month basis. As one woman stated, "They're charging \$1,000 a month for a 3 room trailer. That's what you call price gouging!" Those fortunate enough to have secured a FEMA trailer have another worry – their safety during the new hurricane season. A great deal of property that wasn't destroyed has suffered significant damage – and senior citizens in particular need help to rid their homes of mold.

One couple recounted that they were on the verge of having saved enough to buy a piece of property to move their large mobile home permanently when the storm struck – and destroyed it. "We're now in a FEMA trailer on my parent's property," the woman explained. "I'm a case manager with a local agency, yet I'm trying to get my own case manager, too. No one will help because we don't own property, so I have to be my own advocate." Multiple attendees voiced this last complaint – that those who own property got help first, while those who weren't homeowners received little or no assistance.

In Their Own Words

"Before the storm my income was low. Now my net worth has gone from possible to impossible."

"I didn't get anything from my insurance company. I'm left with a slab and no house. My house just came off the blocks. The water was all the way up to my waist."

"We were living 2 blocks from the beach in Biloxi, and our home was totally destroyed. Two steps and a flowerpot were left, that's it. We're in a FEMA trailer now. I sleep on the couch, but we have no electricity and my wife is 8 months pregnant. All I can find is a minimum wage job, but my family still needs gas, food, and water. Even so, our biggest issue is paying rent."

Those who did own land or homes voiced frustration about the building permit application process and lengthy waiting periods. According to one research participant, one neighborhood is charging \$1,000 for a building permit, along with a mandatory 3-month waiting period. If they start without a permit, they risk a fine.

A case worker from the Lutheran Episcopal Disaster Response agency brought a ray of hope to some homeowners with the information that a reclassification of flood zones has begun, and many who were previously unable to receive flood grants may now be eligible to apply.

✓ Renters in Gulfport perceive that they've gotten the short end of the stick when it comes to relief aid – and that only homeowners have received significant help from the government. Without rent control, there's widespread need for financial assistance to mitigate the cost of higher rents in combination with lower salaries.



Employment: Destruction of the tourism and gaming industries has been a significant economic blow to the area. As one man explained, "I was working at the Hard Rock Casino but after the hurricane it's all gone and I'm totally wiped out. They won't give me assistance because I didn't own any property."

✓ As the casinos reopen, some are getting back on their feet, but unemployment still remains high. The reconstruction effort has led to some increase in local jobs, but additional funding for reconstruction would help rectify both the housing and employment shortages.

Medical Treatment: A large number of medical facilities have closed either from storm damage, or from doctors leaving the area. Even people with health insurance have had to go to emergency rooms for treatment because it's impossible to get regular appointments.

✓ **Health Clinics** to assist patients with less serious conditions would help alleviate the logiam in emergency rooms. Funding the construction – or reconstruction – of these healthcare facilities needs to be followed by an informational campaign so residents actually know they exist.

Mental Health: Of particular concern in Gulfport, and the focus of much discussion during the session, was the issue of mental health. As one case manager explained, "There are literally hundreds of stories, all so heart-breaking. It's almost impossible to find even temporary housing and people are losing hope. We're on the edge, and on the point of breaking. All we hear about is 'New Orleans, New Orleans. That doesn't help us at all."

✓ The case assessment process was the focus of numerous complaints in Gulfport, with citizens expressing that they'd "been assessed to death" and that the case work "had gone on for long enough." Virtually everyone in attendance had seen a case worker at some point, yet few felt they had received any substantial assistance to starting putting their lives back together.



The repeated assessment process has generated harsh, resentful feelings among those in need – individuals who, for the most part, seem unable to understand why it takes so much assessment to actually allocate resources. In Gulfport, most needs are still very basic.

In Their Own Words

"People have been assessed to death. I can't underscore this enough. Suicide rates and depression have gone up like 900%."

"These are the facts: The case work has been done. We need to match up the case work to the funding. We don't need more assessment. We need people to actually build and repair houses. People aren't safe in the trailers. They need homes."

"Please don't keep telling me to go places I already know aren't going to help. Tell me to go where you know I <u>can</u> get help. The runaround is exhausting."

JACKSON

The Jackson Listening Session was conducted on Friday, June 9, 2006 at the HAND's Warehouse in Ridgeline, MS. Participants included representatives from Catholic Charities and Lutheran-Episcopal Services in addition to the United Way of the Capital Area's Statewide Coordinator for Long-term Recovery for the State of Mississippi.



The community of Jackson has become a refuge for many evacuees from a variety of affected areas throughout Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana. The majority (67%) of research participants intend on remaining in Jackson, either because their homes were completely destroyed and "there is nothing left to go back to," or because they have found the city to be welcoming, and a good place to raise a family.

In Their Own Words

"What is the point of returning? More hurricanes are expected. We're tired of leaving every time there's a storm warning. It's safer to stay here."

"I'm from New Orleans, but I'm not going back. The same things happen over and over again in that city."

"There's not much left in New Orleans. There was so much lost. I'd rather just stay here, and keep my good memories."

"We were stuck in the Superdome.

I don't want to take the chance of ever ending up there again."

"I just cannot put my kids through moving, again. And, this is a better place to raise them."

Housing: Some evacuees continue to benefit from temporary rental assistance programs, or remain in FEMA trailers, but many are fearful of looming cut off dates and unsure where to turn next. Since most intend to stay, the acquisition of permanent housing is a primary concern. However, most are struggling with rental payments in addition to steep utility bills. Many are having a hard time getting a foothold.

Employment: Evacuees in Jackson are also having difficulty with the same types of issues as evacuees in other communities, i.e. difficulty obtaining reliable means of transportation or child care – which is hampering their ability to work. Many citizens who were disabled and not working before the storms have found that their government checks aren't going as far – placing them in a precarious situation. A couple of attendees would welcome the opportunity to start their own businesses, if only grants and loans were available.

- ✓ Evacuees need opportunities to network with each other. Creating opportunities for evacuees to network would allow people to form their own support and child care groups, and potentially help themselves become more independent.
- ✓ Many evacuees would also benefit from employment counseling, job boards, messaging services, and access to computers and internet.

Medical Treatment: Although medical facilities are operating, most evacuees lack health insurance or the necessary funds for treatment. Many are unable to meet basic needs such as medication or wheelchairs.

Mental Health: Although recovery coordinators have attempted to assist evacuees with programs designed from a mental health perspective, including support groups and parenting groups, attendance at such meetings has reportedly been low. Case workers realized that interest in such programs remains low because many in the community are still in crisis mode, and in need of basic assistance such as food, housing and jobs.



✓ Just as many of the mental health needs are the same across these communities, so are some of the potential solutions – including increased funding for mental health counseling and a newfound outreach effort to locate evacuee children in the area, assess them for psychological problems, and obtain the therapy they require.

HOUSTON

The Houston Listening Session was conducted on Tuesday, June 20, 2006 at Ripley House on Navigation Blvd. This session was primarily attended by evacuees from New Orleans, and included case managers, who were often themselves evacuees.



Houston responded in an impressive way to the influx of thousands of evacuees to the community. The social service network working with local government had a major challenge to meet over the course of only a few days immediately following Katrina and has continued this effort in the months since.

Evacuees in Houston are facing certain issues unique to this community – not the least of which is the vast size of the city itself and the natural strain of

managing such a significant number of transplanted survivors. This makes transportation extremely difficult without a car, and can impede the development of new relationships in the community. Children are in large public schools that are sometimes ill equipped to accommodate the needs of evacuee children.

Housing: A significant number of evacuees in Houston are living in subsidized housing in high crime neighborhoods far away from family and friends. There is a pervasive sense of isolation and despair among many evacuees, even though most attendees said they wouldn't be going back to New Orleans as there is "nothing to go back to." Those still owning homes in Louisiana are struggling to hold on to their property – while paying mortgages and attempting to make repairs – all the while paying rent in Houston. For many, this has become an impossible task. Survivors in Houston are, for the most part, facing a higher cost of living and significantly higher rental rates – a very difficult situation when combined with lower-paying jobs.

In Their Own Words

"I can't save my property in Louisiana and live in Texas without enough money. My late charges in New Orleans are adding up monthly, while I'm trying to pay my bills in Houston."

✓ Obtaining safe, long-term housing is a primary issue in Houston, with rental assistance a persistent need. Access to "evacuee friendly" rental listings and computers would be extremely helpful as well. Those in subsidized housing often need assistance in obtaining their recertification.

Employment: Licensing and certification do not necessarily transfer across state lines, and many evacuees from New Orleans are struggling to find employment in their former professions. Other evacuees from New Orleans, who were previously able to survive on low-skilled jobs, with no high school diploma, say that there is a greater pool of qualified applicants in Houston, leaving them to compete against more skilled prospects for the same jobs they had in New Orleans.

In Their Own Words

"I came with my resume, but the structure here is so different. I work now for way less, even though my credentials are much more."

"Licensing rules change from state to state. I was an LPC-licensed professional counselor in Louisiana, but my credentials don't carry over to Texas. I need to find a company to intern with here, so I can retrain."

The employment/aid conundrum was extremely visible here, as many town hall attendees had to decide whether to take a low wage job only to forgo government assistance. A majority of participants claimed to have faced hiring discrimination, or having been refused employment on the basis of resident status from Louisiana – although changing resident status is another obstacle to receiving ongoing aid.

✓ Job Certification regulations are a barrier for some professionals (teachers and nurses in particular) from obtaining professional work in Houston. Regulatory changes that would allow New Orleans natives to establish residence in Texas while continuing to receive aid would be extremely helpful. Retraining and recertification assistance is also a serious need of evacuees intending to settle in Houston for the long term.



Mental Health: Evacuees from New Orleans have lost the stability and support of the social networks they had come to rely upon back home, including the ability to leave their children with trusted family members or neighbors while working. Evacuee children were on the front lines and witness to significant trauma. Their success in school will largely be determined by the level of counseling and empathy they are able to receive from teachers and mentors. Some case workers, evacuees themselves, are also struggling to provide assistance due to their own stresses and limitations, and would benefit from access to counseling and support groups.

In Their Own Words

"Kids were on the front lines. They watched people they love die. Some were on bridges for days without food and water. These kids can't stay focused on school. They're barely making it or not making it at all."

"There is no support system for case managers and their mental health needs.

A lot of them are dealing with the same issues as the people they are helping. The helpers need to be helped, too."

ALEXANDRIA

The Alexandria Listening Session was conducted on Wednesday, June 21, 2006 at the City of Alexandria Convention Hall on Third Street. This session was primarily attended by evacuees from New Orleans, with some having evacuated from Lake Charles and Leesville.

Very few town hall participants in Alexandria expressed a desire to stay, for reasons ranging from a total lack of employment opportunities to an almost total inability to get from the outskirts of town, where many FEMA trailer parks are located, to jobs in the town center. An overwhelming number of evacuees here expressed a desire to leave and many have already done so.

Housing: A significant number of evacuees in Alexandria remain in FEMA trailers and sub-par housing conditions. Those who still own homes in the New Orleans area are struggling to earn enough money to make them habitable, while simultaneously paying the mortgage back home and temporary housing in Alexandria. Many have found it nearly impossible to get extensions or assistance from mortgage and insurance companies. Others are frustrated that after working



their entire lives, they're being expected to start over again. As one man stated, "I'm 55 years old and have worked my entire life. Now they're asking me to start all over again. Why?"

✓ A state of flux exists for many evacuees here, as they don't want to stay but don't know where to go. This has led to some inertia – less activity in looking for work, and seemingly less motivation to make a decision for the future. While an inability to afford decent housing here (as in many of these communities) is a primary concern, residents are also in dire need of counseling to gain some direction regarding the years to come.

Employment: The perception among many participants is that there is an almost total lack of available professional-level jobs in Alexandria. Evacuees from New Orleans who were schoolteachers and city or university employees believe their only option in the area is in unskilled labor. Additionally, many cases of evacuee discrimination were cited, especially for evacuees from New Orleans. It is perceived that many will return home once the opportunity arises, and there is no value in hiring them for the long-term.

In Their Own Words

"Even though FEMA gave us cell phones, I can't afford to turn it on. I have no way for the Unemployment Center to call me. I don't even have any way of getting to the Job Center to see if anyone is responding to my resume."

"I can't find a full time job with benefits. I worked for the State of Louisiana for 14 years. Katrina knocked me down, and I just want to return to where I was before. I don't want to work at Burger King. I'm here permanently—I even bought a house. Please allow me to finish my retirement and regain the things I lost."

✓ Evacuees need job counseling, in addition to a supportive push by local agencies to be more aggressive in pursuing job opportunities. Many of these individuals had begun to give up hope – and weren't calling around looking for new options. Additional outreach to the remaining evacuees here is extremely important to combat this hopelessness.

Transportation: A substantial number of attendees are located in FEMA parks on the outskirts of town, with limited access to public transportation. This is not only hindering their ability to find employment, but is also a significant factor in the evacuee/provider disconnect in Alexandria.

In Their Own Words

"The biggest shortcoming we have here is transportation. Even if you find a job that pays above minimum wage, you can't get there without a car. And with no credit and no money, you can't afford to buy a car."

✓ Evacuees who are able to network may be able to help each other. Again, we found in Alexandria that even among the small evacuee population that remains, many people were meeting each other for the first time. Creating networks of survivors would allow people to help themselves. Meanwhile, programs that encourage volunteers to offer rides, or advocating for local employers to be more lenient to the transportation difficulties experienced by evacuees, would also be beneficial.

Mental Health: Like housing, mental health issues are prevalent everywhere. Evacuee children from New Orleans were on the front lines and bore witness to significant trauma. Parents in Alexandria expressed frustration at their inability to locate mental health services for children – and some felt that those who were available lacked sensitivity.

In Their Own Words

"We lost a lot and it feels like a nightmare. When am I going to wake up? My family survived somehow, but I'm becoming depressed. I don't want to be poor again."

"Our greatest need is emotional support. For awhile, I didn't even want to get out of bed. I didn't want to go on. I get so depressed sometimes, I just don't care."

"Each school should have special counselors for kids. You're going to see them acting up in school. It's going to come out—they don't know how to verbalize or express it. This was hard on them as well."

"We're used to providing for our children. Now we're trying to survive with our children."

✓ Just as many of the mental health needs are the same across these communities, so are some of the potential solutions – including increased funding for mental health counseling and a newfound outreach effort to locate evacuee children in the area, assess them for psychological problems, and obtain the therapy they require.

BATON ROUGE

The Baton Rouge Listening Session was conducted on Thursday, June 22, 2006 at the Baton Rouge Community College on Florida Blvd. This session was primarily attended by evacuees from New Orleans's lower 9th ward, affected residents of Baton Rouge, and case managers, who themselves were evacuees.

The entire face of Baton Rouge has changed as a result of Hurricane Katrina, with the city now having the largest population in the state. This has put a massive strain on resources, with evacuees struggling to find work and any affordable housing. The vast population increase has amplified competition for every available job, as well as increased rent on every available property.

Ten months after Katrina, there are still thousands upon thousands of evacuees here living in FEMA trailer parks on the outskirts of the city – and the considerable number who participated in the Town



Hall forum seemed to have little or no plan for the future. These massive trailer parks have begun to foster a real sense of desolation and hopelessness for a huge number of people who, for the time being, simply have nowhere else to go.

Housing: There are a number of massive FEMA trailer parks on the outskirts of Baton Rouge, as well as what appears to be hundreds of additional FEMA trailers scattered throughout the city. Many research participants were undecided whether to remain in Baton Rouge permanently, though they were clear about their resistance to return to New Orleans – in part because they no longer have homes to return to (many were renters) and often because they can't find work in Baton Rouge. Further complicating matters is the perception that there are no schools remaining in New Orleans or other basic infrastructure to support them and their families.

Renaissance Village Park is the largest of the parks, with 574 trailers and more than 1,600 evacuees, including 572 children. More than 500 are aged 60 or older. According to evacuees, FEMA initially told them that utilities were included for the entire 18-month period – until FEMA reversed that decision earlier this year and informed them that they would be required to pay for their own propane. In addition, the cafeteria that used to operate at Renaissance was closed because it was "underutilized" by residents who complained that the food was unsanitary.

✓ The current housing situation in Baton Rouge is untenable. If FEMA does in fact plan to evict people from trailers at the 18 month point – or even if that deadline won't be enforced – there are still literally thousands of evacuees in Baton Rouge who are lacking direction, and a plan. This situation requires a serious influx of resources almost immediately to relocate individuals currently living in parks like Renaissance – either back to New Orleans or other towns, or to more permanent housing in Baton Rouge.



Employment: For many evacuees in Baton Rouge, the numbers just don't add up when looking for work. There are too many new people looking, and too few jobs — especially professional jobs. Many evacuees from New Orleans are struggling to find employment in their former professions, both skilled and unskilled. Evacuees without high school educations are particularly vulnerable in this highly competitive environment.

There's a strong belief among many participants that some residents of the city don't want them there – and that includes employers, who also believe they aren't good hires because they could leave at any moment. There's a pervasive malaise that's set in, and many of these individuals say they've never had contact with any aid organizations.

✓ **Discrimination, tough competition and hopelessness** are making it extremely difficult for many evacuees to find work – and a great number have simply stopped looking. And there's no solution in sight for the majority of them, especially the uneducated. If they are to remain in Baton Rouge, they need access to computers skills and job training to make them competitive candidates. In the meantime, many would benefit from access to jobs on public works projects or other basic labor in order to bring in a paycheck on start them back on the path to independence. Many of these individuals are so demoralized from fruitless job searches and the demoralization that comes from existing without a paycheck, that they've removed themselves from the employment pool.

In Their Own Words

"There was a set of job skills that was useful in New Orleans.

You didn't need an official title to get a decent job.

We're away from that network now, and have to find a replacement."

"I have a family to provide for so I applied to a local auto dealership, but was told that I would be too emotional to sell a car, because I'm an evacuee. I'm not emotional. I've been in sales since I was 16, making a decent living plus benefits. I really wanted that job."

Transportation: These massive FEMA trailer parks are on the outskirts of town and very poorly serviced by public transportation. Evacuees are unable to travel to job centers and have limited access to basic services, such as grocery stores and pharmacies. Many have access only to expensive, convenience-type stores which are within walking distance. This has created a very real sense of isolation.

✓ A free or low cost bus service to connect FEMA trailer parks to the rest of the community would be an important first step in helping evacuees in Baton Rouge regain their independence and access to jobs. As of now, many individuals are living in virtual isolation. Providing evacuees with reliable, affordable means of public transportation, along with access to job counselors, would be an important and constructive step.

In Their Own Words

"In Baton Rouge, if you don't have a car, you're stuck. The trailer parks are on the outskirts of the city, where you can't connect to jobs."

"We're still dealing with issues like food and housing, and there's talk about cutting the bus line. They want us to become independent but they continue to push us back to square one."

Medical Treatment: Families and individuals with disabilities are struggling to replace medical equipment lost during the storm. One family in attendance has a 9-year old son with cerebral palsy who has gone 9 months without a functional wheelchair.

✓ While significant medical needs exist throughout the evacuee community, a real outreach to find the disabled and those most in need is a pressing necessity.



Mental Health: Overall, a growing sense of marginalization has led to increasing levels of depression, stress, and anxiety. Living apart and being disconnected from the general population – whether physical (such as living on the outskirts of town) or psychological (such as encountering discrimination and bias against evacuees) – has contributed to a general sense of hopelessness, an inability to overcome what are perceived as insurmountable obstacles, as well as feelings of being unsupported and forgotten. Those still owning homes in Louisiana are struggling to hold on to their property while trying to determine their options, and attempting to make a living in Baton Rouge.

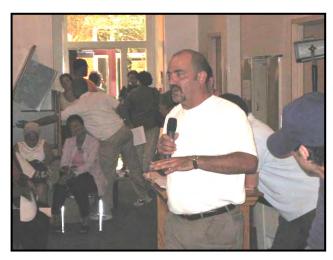
As is happening in many evacuee communities, case managers are overworked and suffering from symptoms of stress and depression themselves. As one case manager said, "There are a lot of needs. For every case manager, there are at least 1,000 people to serve. It's hard, because all you can do is help one person at a time."

NEW ORLEANS

The New Orleans Listening Session was conducted on Friday, June 23, 2006 at Covenant House on North Rampart. This session was primarily attended by displaced residents of New Orleans and evacuees from Mississippi.

In traveling throughout New Orleans, it appears there has been little reconstruction underway in the most flood ravaged areas of the city. Landlords are asking exorbitant rates for the few available rental properties, and there aren't enough supplies or workers to perform the massive reconstruction this city requires. Sadly, although many jobs are now paying substantially above minimum wage due to personnel shortages, rents have risen disproportionately to incomes, so there's still nowhere affordable to live – which in turn is preventing many people from returning to available jobs.

Many are also experiencing the same type of malaise that evacuees in other cities feel. This is adding to the slow progress in New Orleans, which has had its population – and potential labor pool – decimated by Katrina. Many who remain in the city, as well as other participants in the research who have moved elsewhere, harbor deep resentment towards the various arms of government. A perception among many residents of this town is that they want to feel a greater level of support in having their lives rebuilt from a man-made disaster for which they bear no responsibility – a point that was brought up



again and again across the course of our 8 community tour of the region.

Housing: The housing crisis – and the indecision surrounding rebuilding efforts – is the causal factor slowing recovery on a variety of other fronts. The decimation of a great deal of subsidized and rent controlled housing has left many former and current residents completely unable to afford the cost of living either in New Orleans or in evacuee cities.

Where do those who remain in New Orleans live? The lucky ones are with family, in areas that weren't damaged or are in rental property – if they can afford it. The remainder of the populace is scattered throughout FEMA trailers parks, and even abandoned buildings. A limited number of individuals have had the resources to rebuild their homes – but many property owners have FEMA trailers in their front or back yards, either trying to rebuild or hoping for assistance to do so.

At the same time, trailers cannot be placed in neighborhoods without water and power, so even though some area residents own property, in some neighborhoods (East New Orleans, for example) people have been forced into temporary shelters. As with all FEMA trailer inhabitants, there is a great deal of anxiety and uncertainty regarding alleged eviction dates. One long-time resident of New Orleans, currently working as a security guard, told the forum that she lives in an abandoned building that has neither water nor power. She tries to shower and dress at work when possible. She also told us she's talked to HUD but been unable to get assistance. Another woman told us:

"We have 3 small children and are living in a little van. I have a gas stove and a little fridge—thank God. We're not on medicine. I've been at the library everyday since we've been here, calling shelters, looking for a place for my family. The police can come and take my kids away. I don't have anything for my kids. If you don't have money, or if you're homeless—everyone turns you away."

The scarcity of housing in New Orleans had led to overwhelming feelings among renters of "price-gouging". Homeowners themselves are struggling with reimbursement from insurance companies, and many have fallen victim to fraud by unethical contractors or shoddy workmanship. It is not uncommon to hear stories of projects being abandoned before completion, once a substantial deposit has been made. This is hampering people's ability to rebuild not only their homes, but their lives.

There's also a widespread belief among current residents and evacuees, true or not, that much of New Orleans is "unlivable" due to widespread contamination and land that is "unsanitary, with no one there to perform cleanup." Others cite the fact that in many areas the water is still not safe to drink – some even fear bathing in it.

In Their Own Words

"We live in a state of constant anxiety. The property owners are just waiting for the opportunity to kick me out so they can triple the rent. It's only a matter of time. One month, the power bill is going to come and that will be it. It's like you have to choose between homelessness or electricity."

"The rent is so high! Even if you're working, it takes your whole paycheck to make rent. You have to prove you make three times the rent just to get in. It's unbelievable. We need some kind of protection."

✓ There are a substantial number of people in New Orleans looking to rebuild – they need the supplies and labor to do it. Among the biggest needs in the city is financing for reconstruction and building projects. Not just for homeowners looking to rebuild, but also to provide affordable housing for renters. Residents believe there's no one regulating contractors, which is increasing the reluctance to hire builders.

Employment: Many residents of New Orleans are struggling to find employment in their former professions. Schools are closed, the government and universities have laid off large numbers of staff, and a significant number of small businesses are no longer in operation. Low wage jobs are available, however, for those that want them – most of which are now paying a few dollars an hour above minimum wage. However, residents commented that there's a "Catch 22" – they're often cut off from assistance when they take a job, even though the wages are insufficient to cover the cost of living.

In Their Own Words

"Small businesses have a great need for assistance. The few people who <u>have</u> come back are trying to get things started by using their life savings.

They need grants to get back up and running."

"People are here who are willing to go back to work. Businesses are trying to employ people, and they can't find enough to get by. When we go to stores, we're waiting in long lines. I know that all of this also relates to the shortage in housing."

✓ **Rising rents are outpacing rising wages**. Although there is no shortage of employment in New Orleans, and even fast food restaurants have begun paying more than minimum wage, these jobs do not begin to cover the cost of housing. Looked at from another angle, however, there's a compelling reason for people to start returning here *provided that someone can help them pay rent*. This would even allow some to have a little bit of money to send to relatives who have been forced to relocate elsewhere.

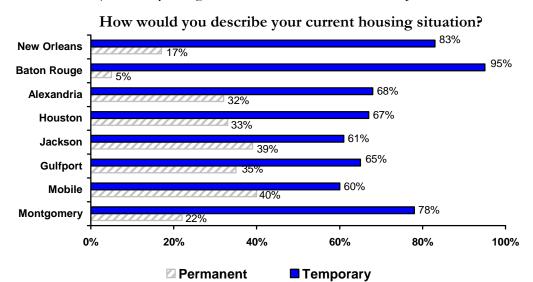
Medical Treatment: There's an overwhelming dependence on the few big name hospitals in town, such as Tulane and Charity hospital – leading to emergency room waits of up to 24 hours. There are numerous smaller clinics in operation, however virtually no one present at the town hall session was aware of them. Information resources are badly needed to spread the word through campaigns on radio and TV in order to create more awareness of services.

APPENDIX I

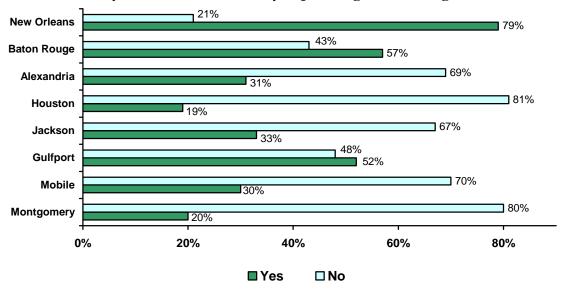
Quantitative Data

Participants in each session were asked to complete a short survey describing their current situation, and efforts in obtaining hurricane recovery related assistance. Results are summarized in the charts below.

Overall, 71% of the evacuees interviewed are living in temporary housing and 60% have no intention of returning to their home communities. The intent to remain in host cities is strongest in Houston (81%) and Montgomery (80%), while the opposite is true for evacuees (from other cities) currently living in New Orleans, 79% of whom plan to return home.



If you are an evacuee, are you planning on returning home?



Participants also answered demographic questions on race, homeownership and employment status. These results are summarized in the tables below.

What is Your	Race/Ethnicity	?			
City	African- American	Asian	Caucasian	Hispanic/ Latino	Other
Montgomery	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%
Mobile	46%	7%	46%	0%	0%
Gulfport	43%	0%	57%	0%	0%
Jackson	96%	1%	3%	0%	0%
Houston	93%	2%	2%	3%	0%
Alexandria	69%	0%	28%	3%	0%
Baton Rouge	79%	0%	15%	0%	6%
New Orleans	60%	0%	21%	2%	17%

Montgomery:

Are You Currently Employed?	Yes	53%
Are fou Cuffently Employed:	No	47%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had	Yes	25%
Before the Hurricane?	No	75%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Permanent	22%
	Temporary	78%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	90%
	No	10%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	Yes	20%
– If ites, Are fou Flamming On Returning 10 four nometown:	No	80%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	Yes	50%
Did Tou Own a Home Defore the Hufficane:	No	50%
├ If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in That Home?	Yes	0%
	No	100%
- If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	Yes	67%
	No	33%

Mobile:

Are You Currently Employed?	Yes	46%
Are rou Currency Employeu.	No	54%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had	Yes	29%
Before the Hurricane?	No	71%
How Would Von Describe Vone Compant Housing Situation?	Permanent	40%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Temporary	60%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	42%
	No	58%
	Yes	30%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	No	70%
	Yes	57%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	No	43%
├ If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in That Home?	Yes	41%
	No	59%
	Yes	35%
- If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	No	65%

Gulfport:

Are You Currently Employed?	Yes	69%
Are fou Currently Employed:	No	31%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had	Yes	53%
Before the Hurricane?	No	47%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Permanent	35%
now would fou Describe four Current nousing Situation:	Temporary	65%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	19%
Did Tou Evacuate To Tims City As A Result Of The Hufficanes.	No	81%
TOY A X DI . O D TO X II	Yes	52%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	No	48%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	Yes	61%
	No	39%
- If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in That Home?	Yes	33%
	No	67%
– If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	Yes	81%
	No	19%

Jackson:

Are You Currently Employed?	Yes	25%
Are Tou Currently Employeu.	No	75%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had	Yes	20%
Before the Hurricane?	No	80%
	Permanent	39%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Temporary	61%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	99%
	No	1%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	Yes	33%
- If 1es, Are 1ou Flamming On Returning 10 1our Hometown:	No	67%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	Yes	24%
Did 1 od Own a nome before the nutricane:	No	76%
- If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in That Home?	Yes	8%
	No	92%
- If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	Yes	36%
	No	64%

Houston:

Ana Van Cunnanthi Emplayad?	Yes	37%
Are You Currently Employed?	No	63%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had	Yes	32%
Before the Hurricane?	No	68%
H. W. LLV. D. C. C. All. C. C. A. C.	Permanent	33%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Temporary	67%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	95%
	No	5%
1657 A 57 DI + O D 4 + D 57 TI 4 0	Yes	19%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	No	81%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	Yes	37%
Did Tou Own a Home Defore the Hufficane.	No	63%
- If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in That Home?	Yes	11%
	No	89%
– If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	Yes	31%
	No	69%

Alexandria:

Are You Currently Employed?	Yes	26%
Are fou Currently Employeu:	No	74%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had	Yes	13%
Before the Hurricane?	No	88%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Permanent	32%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Temporary	68%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	100%
	No	0%
TOY A X DI C O D C C TO X AT A 9	Yes	31%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	No	69%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	Yes	35%
Did Tou Own a Home Defore the Hufficane:	No	65%
- If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in That Home?	Yes	13%
	No	87%
- If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	Yes	39%
	No	61%

Baton Rouge:

	Yes	33%
Are You Currently Employed?	No	67%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had	Yes	41%
Before the Hurricane?	No	59%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Permanent	5%
	Temporary	95%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	80%
	No	20%
	Yes	57%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	No	43%
D'IV O H DE II H : 9	Yes	41%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	No	59%
16 Von Ware Von Able 4a Donnein I initially That Harry	Yes	3%
- If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in That Home?	No	97%
– If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	Yes	58%
	No	42%

New Orleans:

Are You Currently Employed?	Yes	31%
Are fou Cuffently Employeu:	No	69%
Is This Job in the Same Profession as the One You Had	Yes	44%
Before the Hurricane?	No	56%
How Would You Describe Your Current Housing Situation?	Permanent	17%
now would for Describe four Cuffent Housing Situation:	Temporary	83%
Did You Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hurricanes?	Yes	22%
Did Tou Evacuate To This City As A Result Of The Hufficanes:	No	78%
TAY A W DI A O D A A D W W A O	Yes	79%
- If Yes, Are You Planning On Returning To Your Hometown?	No	21%
Did You Own a Home Before the Hurricane?	Yes	49%
Did Tou Own a frome Defore the Hufficane:	No	51%
- If Yes, Were You Able to Remain Living in That Home?	Yes	20%
	No	80%
- If No, Are You Planning To Rebuild?	Yes	69%
	No	31%

Methodological Notes: Results are based on qualitative data from focus groups conducted by Kelton Research between the dates of June 6 and June 23, 2006 in the communities of Montgomery, Mobile, Gulfport, Jackson, Houston, Alexandria, Baton Rouge and New Orleans. The variation in this data is affected by the number of interviews and the level of percentages expressing the results.

APPENDIX II

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

Leadership 18 thanks the following individuals and organizations for their participation in the local town hall meetings.

Montgomery:

Organization Representative American Cancer Society Jamie Donaldson Family Guidance Center (Alliance Walter White Scott Daniels for Children & Families) Cecil Robins Goodwill

Charlie Colvin & Hank Schmitt River Region United Way Salvation Army Major Darrell Kingsbury

United Cerebral Palsy Tyisha Phillips

Mobile:

Organization Representative Catholic Social Services of Baldwin County Michelle Prockup Goodwill Frank Harkins

Midsouth American Cancer Society Representative/Office of Kimberly Williams

United Way of Southwest Alabama Angelo Miller & Lynne Lancaster

Gulfport:

Organization Representative Goodwill Jim Collins Mental Health Association of Mississippi Brandi Clarke Donna Alexander United Way of South Mississippi

Jackson:

Organization Representative

Theresa Prejean, Donna Gunn, Linda Raff Catholic Charities

Lutheran-Episcopal Services in Mississippi Karen Quay

United Way of the Capital Area Julie Propst

Houston:

Organization Representative

Representatives/Office of Sylvia Brooks: Houston Area Urban League

Corliss Adams, Senta Eastern, Johnny

Henry, Dwayne Johnston, Overtyen Stewart,

Johnny Taylor, Eugene Waddis United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast Anna Babin, Jeff Stys, Linda O'Black

APPENDIX II (Continued)

Alexandria:

Organization

United Way of Central Louisiana United Way of Central Louisiana

Hurricane Recovery Center

Representative

David Britt, Jennifer Flynn

Lawanda Smith, Christy Blackstone

Baton Rouge:

Organization

Capital Area United Way

Catholic Charities

Catholic Community Services

Mental Health Association Salvation Army

YMCA

Representative

Georgeann Chaffee

Case workers

Tyra Peller

Representative/Office of Yakima Black

Major Mark Satterlee

Representative/Office of Bob Jacobs

New Orleans:

Organization

Catholic Charities Salvation Army

United Way for the Greater

New Orleans Area

Representative

Erica Anderson

Major Meljanes

Al Sassone

For more information about
Leadership 18 and the Gulf Coast Initiative, please visit
http://national.unitedway.org/partners/l18.cfm

You may also send questions or comments or concerns via email to Leadership18@unitedway.org