

ABSTRACT: Voices from the Gulf Coast: Leadership 18 Listening Initiative

In 2006, Leadership 18 commissioned a comprehensive study to understand the short and long-term needs of communities devastated by Hurricane Katrina. This initiative, titled "Voices from the Gulf Coast," involved direct engagement with affected citizens through town hall discussions, individual interviews, and surveys across eight communities (Montgomery, Mobile, Gulfport, Jackson, Houston, Alexandria, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans).

The research highlighted critical issues including housing shortages, unemployment, childcare challenges, and lack of access to healthcare and mental health services. A key finding was the significant disconnect between aid providers and those in need, underscoring the necessity for improved communication and outreach strategies. The report also emphasized the importance of community building, education, and empowering local leadership to foster self-sufficiency.

Key recommendations included ensuring neighborhood viability through affordable housing and basic services, supporting child development with quality childcare and education, encouraging self-sufficiency via job training and accessible transportation, and empowering local leaders through community involvement. This initiative provided actionable insights for policymakers and non-profit organizations aiming to support the long-term recovery of the Gulf Coast region.

Kelton Research principals on this project:

- Tom Bernthal
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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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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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

Montgomery:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Representative</u>
American Cancer Society	Jamie Donaldson
Family Guidance Center (Alliance for Children & Families)	Walter White
Goodwill	Scott Daniels
River Region United Way	Cecil Robins
Salvation Army	Charlie Colvin & Hank Schmitt
United Cerebral Palsy	Major Darrell Kingsbury
	Tyisha Phillips

Mobile:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Representative</u>
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:

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

Jackson:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Representative</u>
Catholic Charities	Theresa Prejean, Donna Gunn, Linda Raff
Lutheran-Episcopal Services in Mississippi	Karen Quay
United Way of the Capital Area	Julie Propst

Houston:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Representative</u>
Houston Area Urban League	Representatives/Office of Sylvia Brooks: Corliss Adams, Senta Eastern, Johnny Henry, Dwayne Johnston, Overtyn Stewart, Johnny Taylor, Eugene Waddis
United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast	Anna Babin, Jeff Stys, Linda O'Black

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

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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