



Serve to Remember. Remember to Serve.
A Call to Service to Commemorate Katrina and 9/11

Tips and Tools for Promoting Volunteering and Service

Hurricane Katrina revealed nature at its worst, destroying everything in its path along 90 miles of America's historic Gulf Coast. The breaching of the levees in New Orleans simultaneously created a national tragedy of epic proportions. And Hurricanes Rita and Wilma stretched the limits of our nation's already overtaxed ability to respond effectively—and also tested the emotional and spiritual fortitude of the survivors.

But like the horrors of September 11, 2001, the hurricanes of 2005 also showed America at its best. Even before the storm made landfall, Americans opened their hearts—and their wallets—to help their fellow Americans in need. America's armies of compassion—individuals, church groups, schools, and nonprofit groups large and small—sprang to action, raising funds, conducting clothing and food drives, and organizing a myriad of other efforts to help. National service programs – Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America – played a key role in responding to these tragedies and will be involved in Gulf Coast recovery for the long haul.

The one-year anniversary of Katrina on August 29th and five-year anniversary of September 11th provide volunteer and service organizations with a unique opportunity to reignite America's volunteer spirit. Through media outreach and messaging around already planned events, you can:

- Remind individuals in your state or community of their compassionate response after both Katrina and 9/11;
- Emphasize the continued need for volunteers in rebuilding the Gulf Coast;
- Emphasize the need for volunteers in your own community; and
- Spotlight the contributions of your volunteers and partners in response to Katrina and 9/11.

This guide contains messages, ideas, and templates to assist you in your local outreach efforts around, ***“Serve to Remember. Remember to Serve.”*** For general tips on working with the media, download our national service guide at http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/Media_Guide.pdf.

Key Messages

The following are key messages for use in media interviews or any materials you create as part of your efforts.

1. Volunteers have played a major role and done amazing things in the aftermaths of both 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina.
 - The events of 9/11 sparked a unity across the United States and a reignited commitment by Americans to help their neighbors and communities.
 - More than 540,000 Americans have volunteered in the Gulf Coast this past year with millions more giving their time and money from their own communities. Volunteers have become the backbone of the rebuilding efforts across the Gulf Coast.
 - More than X# of individuals have contributed to recovery efforts through our organization.
2. There is still a tremendous need for volunteers in the Gulf Coast that will continue to exist for years to come to complete the rebuilding efforts.

3. “Serve to Remember. Remember to Serve.” Pay tribute to the amazing humanity shown in the days following Hurricane Katrina and 9/11 by volunteering in the Gulf Coast or in your own community.
 - Visit www.volunteer.gov, the largest database of volunteer activities across the United States with a section dedicated solely to the Gulf Coast, to find the right opportunity for you.

Local Angles

While considering these broad messages, your state or local media will likely be most interested in local angles. Some local angles could include:

- Stories of volunteers from your state or organization who have made service trips to the Gulf;
- Statistics on the contributions your organizations and volunteers in your state or organization have made to Gulf Coast recovery;
- Feature a family or individual who was displaced from Katrina and has been given a fresh start in your community thanks to assistance from your organization; or
- Identify national service participants who were moved to join AmeriCorps or Senior Corps because of Katrina or 9/11.

Media Outreach

Consider the most time-effective way for using the anniversary of Katrina and 9/11 to secure media coverage. We recognize that all of you are extremely busy. Here are a few considerations for maximizing this opportunity depending on your time and other resources:

Determine and Secure Spokespeople

Consult with your state service commission, state Corporation office, state education agency service-learning liaison and other volunteer leaders in your state. Consider the types of people that the media may want to speak with to fully develop their story. Find an outstanding volunteer who has contributed in a significant way to Gulf Coast recovery or was moved by the events of Katrina and September 11th to make a significant commitment to service and volunteering.

Consider all sorts of people within your state who can speak enthusiastically about your programs. Volunteers, public officials, community leaders, and others who have seen the benefits our programs provide first hand will be among the most valuable third party spokespeople. If you are able to engage these people beforehand, it will make it easier for media to cover the story and help you ensure that the story being told is helpful in fulfilling your mission.

Organize a Press Conference, Service Project, Or Recognition Ceremony

While it is short notice, you may decide to organize a press conference or media event. What may be even easier is to dedicate an already-planned event or service activity to the anniversaries. Across the nation, hundreds of service projects and activities will be taking place as part of this “Serve to Remember. Remember to Serve.” campaign. Send out a press release that ties your event to what’s happening nationally. Make sure that at the event that any speeches or remarks include the key messages around the anniversaries. If there are volunteers or service recipients who have a personal connection to Katrina or 9/11, make sure they are on hand to be spokespeople.

Produce and Distribute a Press Release

Utilizing the same type of spokespeople as for the press conference or service project, work to develop a press release, media list, and plan for reaching out to media. We have provided a boilerplate “swiss cheese” press release for your use (at the end of this document).

Research and create a list of local reporters whose news beats cover your state’s areas of interest – philanthropy, government, business, social issues, nonprofits, as well feature reporters. A simple way to do this is to note the names of reporters when you read, see or hear a story that covers any of these areas. For example, if reporters in your state covered the recent release of the “Volunteering in America”

report, you might want to reach out to those folks about this story. You can also call your local media outlets, or use media reference guides from your local library. Make sure your contact information (name and title) is complete and accurate.

Make follow up calls to the media and share with them your story ideas and ask them if they'd like to interview any of the spokespeople.

Corporation Headquarters will be conducting outreach to national media. It will be your local knowledge, experience and spokespeople that will make this story interesting to state and local newspapers and media. We encourage you to be proactive in providing the state perspective.

Write a Letter to the Editor or Op-ed

Letters to the editor are one of the most read sections of a newspaper, and they often are easy to get placed – making them a perfect venue for your national service message. Remember to keep it short (150-200 words) and refer to an already published story on Katrina or 9/11. Be sure to reference some of the key messages provided above. Op-eds are more time consuming but also give you more column space to get your message out. Make sure your op-ed is timely, well-written, and takes a particular point of view. This is your chance to tell your story in your own words. One way to write such a column is to mention the accomplishments connected to the hurricanes—donations of food, water, clothing and supplies from people in your community, the hours of work performed by volunteers, etc.—but focus on the impact that the service had on individuals, on both the giving and receiving ends.

Need Assistance? Please contact the Office of Public Affairs:

- Siobhan Dugan at sdugan@cns.gov or (202) 606-6707
- Shannon Maynard at smaynard@cns.gov or (202) 606-6713
- Sandy Scott at sscott@cns.gov or (202) 606-6724

The Power of Help and Hope After Katrina By the Numbers: Volunteers in the Gulf

547,826 Americans..... Estimated number of individuals who have volunteered in Gulf

18.2 million 18-28 year olds ... Donated or volunteered to Katrina relief and recovery

51,178,222 lbs. of food Or about 131,000 meals a day or 47,815,000 meals total distributed through Catholic Charities of New Orleans-operated Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana

5,668,226 hot meals Served by Salvation Army volunteers

330,000 hours of service..... Provided for Katrina relief through the Volunteer Centers of the Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network

220,000 volunteers Supplied by the Red Cross alone to Gulf relief and recovery

18,725 displaced people Supported by Travelers Aid volunteers

10,000+ college students Sacrificed Spring Break to volunteer in Gulf region

1,900 pets Rescued and cared for by Noah's Wish volunteers

777 homes Gutted by Hands On Network volunteers

350 "built in a box" houses Sent to the Gulf by Habitat for Humanity volunteers

280 families Received long-term housing from Nazarene Compassionate Ministries

100 playgrounds KaBOOM! volunteers have committed to build in the Gulf

375,000 mentors..... Needed to provide positive support to "Katrina's Kids" – the approximately 400,000 children who survived the storm

100,000 more volunteers Needed to support the Miss. Gulf coast's current recovery efforts

Thousands of homes..... Still needing to be gutted or cleared of debris

These facts and figures attempt to capture the incredible outpouring of compassion by our nation's volunteers in the year since Katrina struck. They represent "best estimates" based on self-reported data gathered by the Corporation for National and Community Service from a group of volunteer-driven organizations in an effort to understand the overall volunteer contributions to the relief and recovery efforts.

The numbers reported do not account for possible duplication (the same individual serving through multiple organizations or projects); nevertheless, this estimate is conservative because no one has yet surveyed or captured many of the sources of volunteers, and across the country, the outpouring of generosity has been nearly universal.

To find volunteer opportunities in the Gulf Coast or ways to help from home, visit www.volunteer.gov and conduct a volunteer search using the "Hurricane Relief/Recovery" search category.

Research on Disasters' Effects on Americans' Civic Behaviors

Youth and Young Adults Step Up and Respond to Katrina

- A Harris Interactive survey in September 14-20, 2005, found that 42% of young people between the ages of 8 and 18 donated money to relief efforts for the victims of Hurricane Katrina, while 32% donated supplies and 18% collected donations for relief efforts. (Martin, S. (2005). "Young People Dealing with a Real-Life Series of Unfortunate Events." *Trends and Tudes*. Harris Interactive.
- More than 18 million young adults between the ages of 18 and 28 contributed to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. According to the Transitions to Adulthood Survey, conducted in November and December of 2005, 40% of young adults donated money, 23% donated food, clothing, or other materials, 15% collected donations, and 5% provided direct services, such as assisting with the cleanup or helping displaced families. (National Youth Leadership Council. (2005). *Transitions to Adulthood*. Minneapolis, MN.)
- Campus Compact reports that more than 250 of its member colleges and universities across the country have participated in relief efforts, including assistance with cleanup, collection of donations, and assistance to displaced students and families.
- According to Youth Helping America, a series of research reports conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service, indicates that the of youth volunteering is robust – with 55% of youth participating in volunteer activities each year.

Do Disasters Lead to a Greater Sense of Civic Responsibility by Americans?

- According to the Higher Education Research Institute's annual survey of college freshmen, which in 2005 was conducted shortly after Katrina struck, two-thirds, or 66%, of entering freshmen believe that it is essential or very important to help others who are in difficulty, which is the highest mark attained by any group of college freshmen in the last 25 years and a marked increase of 3.9 percentage points over the previous year.
- Volunteer.gov, an initiative of the USA Freedom Corps, is the largest searchable database of volunteer opportunities in the nation. In the six months before Hurricane Katrina, 104,444 searches were conducted for volunteer opportunities – or an average of 572 searches each day. In the six months after Katrina, the number of searches increased to 559,640 searches – or an average of 3,066 searches a day. That represents a 535% increase in the number of volunteer searches conducted since Hurricane Katrina.
- With the 9/11 tragedy, terror management analysts at the University of Texas found that in the weeks and months following the attacks, most Americans actively searched for information that would help them understand the catastrophe and make sense of a chaotic and dangerous world. In a preliminary survey of college students conducted for this project, about one third of college students interviewed by these researchers reported increased levels of civic engagement after 9/11. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/features/2005/generation/>.

Highly Educated, Religious Families Most Likely to Respond to Disasters

- A study in the fall of 2005 involving 204 adult residents of East Baton Rouge Parish found that the characteristics of those who volunteered in hurricane relief efforts are consistent with those individuals who volunteer in typical contexts – that is, those individuals who have higher levels of education, have children under 18 in the home, are members of community organizations, and/or attend religious services are more likely to have volunteered. (Michel, L.M. (2006). "Personal Responsibility and Volunteering after a Natural Disaster: The Case of Hurricane Katrina." Southern Sociological Society Conference, New Orleans, LA.)

In Times of Disaster, Informal Groups Emerge to Provide Assistance

- Field research conducted by the University of Delaware's Disaster Research Center three weeks immediately following Hurricane Katrina shows that nontraditional, prosocial behavior was the primary response to the disaster, as traditional sources of social support were overburdened or disrupted. These prosocial behaviors most commonly involved search and rescue activities and providing necessities and assistance for those individuals in need. In local neighborhoods, hospitals, and hotels, these informal groups emerged to provide improvised assistance to hurricane victims. (Rodriguez, H., Trainor, J., & Quarantelli, E.L. (2006) "Rising to the Challenges of a Catastrophe: The Emergent and Prosocial Behavior following Hurricane Katrina." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 64: 81-101.)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE

CONTACT: [YOUR MEDIA CONTACT]
PHONE NUMBERS AND EMAIL

[NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION] Volunteers Served in Hurricane's Aftermath

Volunteers Still Needed, National Service Agency Says

(Your City, State)—Volunteers serving with [YOUR ORGANIZATION] were among the more than 500,000 Americans who assisted in Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts when they traveled to [LOCATION OF PROJECT] to [ACTIVITY PERFORMED]. As a result of their service, [ACCOMPLISHMENTS, SUCH AS NUMBER OF HOUSES MUCKED OUT].

"Volunteers have been crucial to the recovery," said [YOUR SPOKESMAN], [TITLE] of [YOUR ORGANIZATION]. "In times of need, it is inspiring to see people pulling together and reaching out to help those whose lives have been turned upside down by tragedy. Our volunteers came home with a new awareness of the importance of their service, both to our community and to our country."

The need for volunteers will remain great for a number of years, according to the Corporation for National and Community Service, the national service agency, which is compiling statistics on the scope of the volunteer response to the hurricanes. On the first anniversary of the hurricane, the Corporation is encouraging continued volunteering in the Gulf Coast through a campaign, "Serve to Remember. Remember to Serve."

[INSERT A PARAGRAPH EXPLAINING THE NATURE OF YOUR TRIP, INCLUDING INFORMATION ON ANY FUTURE TRIPS PLANNED AND HOW PEOPLE CAN BECOME INVOLVED].

The trip also had an impact of the volunteers' understanding of the magnitude of the disaster. "It's almost impossible to describe the level of devastation following Hurricane Katrina," [YOUR SPOKESMAN] added. "People in the Gulf region are living under terrible circumstances. Each one of us was grateful for the chance to help them, and overwhelmed by the gratitude and kindness they showed to us."

[INSERT A PARAGRAPH WITH INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION].

The Corporation for National and Community Service improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. Each year, the Corporation provides opportunities for nearly 2 million Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America. Together with the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation is working to build a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America. For more information on the Corporation, go to <http://www.nationalservice.gov>. To find volunteer opportunities in the Gulf Coast or ways to help from home, visit www.volunteer.gov and conduct a volunteer search using the "Hurricane Relief/Recovery" search category.

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