

FACT SHEET: WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Conference on Highlights Key Role of Nonprofits in Disaster Relief and Preparedness

Today, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives launched a two-day Gulf Coast Conference on Disaster Relief and Preparedness in New Orleans. Joined by Major General Doug O'Dell, Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding, and cross-sector leaders, the conference highlighted ways the President's vision for the Faith-Based and Community Initiative is engaged across the region through innovative public-private partnerships with nonprofit organizations to rebuild Gulf Coast communities. Recognizing National Hurricane Preparedness Week, the conference also explored effective models for engaging the nonprofit sector in preparation for future disasters.

Faith-Based And Community Organizations Are Vital Partners In Disaster Preparation, Response and Recovery.

Disaster preparation, response and recovery is most effective through collaboration of every sector—Federal, state and local government, corporations, foundations and faith-based and community nonprofits.

Recognizing the importance of faith-based and other community nonprofits in the wake of disasters, Federal, state and local governments are more effectively incorporating these frontline allies into disaster response planning and preparedness efforts. Non-government organizations are now engaged as key players in preparedness planning to ensure their effective utilization with recovery and rebuilding efforts in the event of future disasters.

- **The National Response Framework (NRF), the nation's guide for domestic disaster response, has been strengthened to incorporate nonprofit organizations and volunteers.** Recognizing that government is most effective in collaboration with the nonprofit sector, the NRF designates a central role to faith-based and community organizations and ensures more coordinated efforts and effective utilization of volunteers. Additionally, states are increasingly incorporating faith-based and community organizations as key allies in disaster preparation, response, and recovery efforts.
- **Recognizing the significant role of volunteers in the response and recovery efforts following Hurricane Katrina, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) expanded its strategic focus to include disaster preparedness and response as one of five issue areas.** CNCS trained state CNCS commission directors to more fully integrate volunteers and nonprofit organizations into state and local disaster preparedness efforts.
- **Under President Bush's leadership, Citizen Corps was created to engage volunteer activities to help communities prepare for disasters through multi-sector engagement.** Since the launch of the initiative, nearly \$150 million has been distributed to States and territories to build community preparedness. Extending the President's vision for a culture of volunteer service, Citizen Corps currently operates 2,343 local Councils, which serve nearly 224 million people, or 78% of the total U.S. population.

The Compassion And Generosity Of The American People Is Reinforced In The Wake of Disaster.

Record-setting giving and countless acts of compassion following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita reflect America's tradition of generosity and sense of responsibility to care for our neighbors in need. The American people have given more than \$3.5 billion to aid citizens impacted by the Hurricanes through individual gifts and corporate and philanthropic donations. According to the U.S. Chamber Business Civic Leadership Center, America's corporate giving topped \$1 billion for the first time following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

- **Recognizing the volume and diversity of organizations operative in Gulf Coast recovery efforts, President Bush tapped former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton to raise funds for organizations like clinics providing medical care and houses of worship damaged by the hurricane along the Gulf Coast.** The Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund raised a total of \$130.6 million and awarded over 1,260 grants to faith-based and community organizations to help meet critical community needs throughout the affected region.

- **Volunteers are vital to response and recovery following any large-scale disaster.** Faith-based and community organizations effectively harness Americans' willingness to serve their neighbors in need. Following Katrina, the American people responded not only with financial contributions, but with overwhelming giving of their time, labor and skills.
- **In the two years following Hurricane Katrina, more than 1.1 million Americans have volunteered in the wake of the Gulf Coast hurricanes, providing more than 14 million hours of service in what has been the largest volunteer response to a disaster in the nation's history.** The number of volunteers in the second year of Katrina recovery exceeded the historic number of volunteers in the recovery's first year – CNCS reports that 600,000 Americans volunteered to help rebuild the Gulf in the second year following Hurricane Katrina, up from the historic number of more than 550,000 in the year after the hurricane struck. Americans continue to give of their time and talents to help with recovery and rebuilding efforts today.
 - Since Hurricane Katrina, over 93,000 participants in CNCS programs have given more than 3.5 million hours of service and managed 262,000 volunteers. CNCS has provided more than \$130 million to the Gulf Coast in response to Katrina.
- **USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network, the nation's largest clearinghouse of service opportunities, is connecting volunteers with nonprofit organizations to serve their neighbors in need.** From the six months prior to Hurricane Katrina to the six months immediately after, the number of volunteer searches performed on the website went from just over 100,000 to more than 550,000, or 3,066 per day.

Ensuring A Hopeful Future Starts With Strong Schools And Quality Educational Options For Families.

To aid more than 1,100 public, private and parochial schools that closed and displaced 370,000 students following Hurricane Katrina, the President responded quickly, working with Congress to provide almost \$2 billion to reopen schools. As a result of Federal and local investment, the vast majority of schools are reopened, including many hopeful new charter schools operated by nonprofit organizations. In fact, approximately 42% of the New Orleans schools are charters – the highest percentage of any U.S. city.

To provide families with educational options following the damage of Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana has expanded the number and quality of charter schools, with approximately \$45 million in Federal support. Education leaders in New Orleans and throughout the state continue to rebuild a broken education infrastructure, prioritizing the academic success of students to ensure that no child – regardless of race, income or zip code – is left behind. Faith-based and community organizations play a key role in supporting Charter Schools and other public and private education efforts.

Federal Investment In Faith-Based And Community Nonprofits Aided Frontline Efforts To Rebuild The Gulf Coast.

In 2006 alone, the Federal government awarded more than 2,100 direct, competitive grants to faith-based and other nonprofit organizations in Gulf Coast states totaling over \$1.8 billion. Of these funds, Louisiana's nonprofits won 314 competitive Federal grants totaling nearly \$200 million.

Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at Federal agencies engaged in efforts to build partnerships with nonprofits aiding with Gulf Coast recovery and strengthen their efforts to help Americans in need. Examples of these innovative Federal collaborations with grassroots nonprofits include:

- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:** Since 2003, approximately \$28 million has been awarded in the Gulf Coast region to support the President's Mentoring Children of Prisoners program that pairs children of incarcerated individuals with caring mentors. HHS also awarded \$550 million in Social Service Block Grants to respond to the human services and mental health needs of individuals in the affected region.

- **Corporation for National and Community Service**: More than 2,900 AmeriCorps NCCC members have contributed more than 1.4 million hours assisting more than 2.9 million people through Gulf Coast service projects since September 2005, in coordination with faith-based and community organizations such as the Salvation Army and Red Cross, in addition to the various state service commissions.
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs/U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**: A collaborative program between these two agencies, HUD-VA Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH), provides vouchers for permanent housing for homeless veterans and their families. In FY 2008 and FY 2009, a total of 20,000 HUD-VASH vouchers will be available for homeless veterans and their families nationwide, with a significant number allocated to the Gulf Coast.
- **U.S. Department of Commerce**: The Economic Development Administration (EDA) has awarded 56 investments totaling over \$32 million to the Gulf Coast region since Hurricane Katrina. EDA and its partners estimate that these investments will generate more than \$854 million in private capital investment and will create over 3,100 jobs.
- **U.S. Department of Labor**: More than \$283.7 million has been awarded in National Emergency Grants to support the creation of temporary jobs and future job training for individuals engaged in hurricane recovery work, as well as nearly \$56 million in competitive grants to more than 100 faith-based and community organizations along the Gulf Coast for employment-related and supportive services.
- **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**: In addition to over \$19 billion invested in the hurricane-affected region through Supplemental Gulf Coast Disaster Assistance, the agency's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives produced and released 47,000 copies of a disaster relief toolkit with information on Federal programs and nonprofits that assist disaster victims.
- **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**: Agency research indicates that faith-based and community organizations were active in every geographic region affected by the hurricanes of 2005 and were the focal point for response for many communities to provide food, shelter and other immediate needs of displaced Americans.
- **Small Business Administration** Following the Hurricanes of 2005, the SBA approved more than 160,000 disaster loans totaling almost \$11 billion, including disaster loans to 873 nonprofit organizations totaling over \$357 million.
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture**: Faith-based and community groups like the Salvation Army and Baptist Men played a key role in helping the USDA deliver 22 million pounds of food throughout the Gulf states valued at \$27 million. Additionally, in the two years after the hurricane, USDA Rural Development provided \$39.3 million in direct loans and grants to fund the building of hospitals, fire stations, and community centers in the hurricane-affected region.