

Summary Report from the Gulf Coast Relief Funding Panel Conference Call November 3, 2005

Present: Eunice Benton, Rev. Steve J. Crump, Dr. Rebecca Cureau, Atema Eclai, Joe Sullivan, Rev. Jacqueline Luck, Rev. Meg Riley

1. Roster Change:
 - A. Joe Sullivan, new panel member, introduced himself. Joe is President of Southwest District. He replaces Anne Heller on the panel.
2. Various Business:
 - A. The Panel discussed operations as we move forward into the next stage with working groups. The working groups will make recommendations to us about how funds are best spent, though we may make a few interim grants ourselves as those groups get up and moving.
 - B. The Panel discussed record keeping systems. The UUA finance department, in cooperation with the staff in the Stewardship and Development staff group, is meticulously recording every dollar that comes in, along with any notations made by donors. We are currently in receipt of contributions in excess of \$3.1 million.
 - C. Eunice Benton reported on the details of our congregation in Mobile, Alabama. They have more damage than initially estimated, but their insurance appears to be sufficient.
Vote à The Panel agreed unanimously to include Alabama with Mississippi in what is now the Mississippi/Alabama Working Group.
 - D. Meg mentioned that she had spoken twice with Mary Higgins, District Executive of Florida District, and that damages to UU congregations in that district appear to be minimal.
 - E. The Panel discussed details of fund distribution concluding that no restrictions or rules would be placed on distribution by geographic area or state.
 - F. The Panel received and approved a proposal for just under \$100,000 from Steve Crump (to come from funds for community relief work) to hire a community minister and an intern at the Baton Rouge UU congregation for one year. The Panel had a few questions and concerns about the job descriptions, timeline, and other particular aspects of the budget which will be resolved ASAP by the Baton Rouge team.
 - G. Martha Thompson of the UU Service Committee told us that she is moving ahead with the first community grants, as approved at our last meeting, but they are not 100% finalized yet. She will alert us when all the details have been addressed and arrangements completed.
 - H. We were excited to learn that the names of all panelists participating on the New Orleans working group were finalized, and that it will be convening soon under the leadership of Rev. Burton Carley.
3. The next conference call of the Gulf Coast Relief Funding Panel will be Wednesday, November 15, 2005.