



Action of the Month: Gulf Coast Recovery

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“ . . . Overall, six in 10 New Orleans residents say they do not think the rebuilding of New Orleans is a priority for Congress and the president, and even more (65 percent) say they think ‘most Americans have forgotten about the challenges facing New Orleans.’ ” — News Release from the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 08/10/08

“I am determined that Unitarians shall continue to lead progressive activities in New Orleans as they have for the last 175 years. ”

—Avis Moore, member of Greater New Orleans Unitarian Universalists

The tragic loss of life and property sustained by the Gulf Coast region in August and September of 2005 was as much a product of institutionalized racism, economic prejudice, and corporate greed as it was a product of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. During the four years that have passed since the disaster, racism and political corruption have continued to blight the Gulf Coast's recovery. Our Unitarian Universalist principles which compel us to promote justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, also compel us to work for justice alongside communities affected by the storms.



Take Action: In May, Rep. Lofgren introduced the **Gulf Coast Civic Works Act, H.R. 2269**, into Congress. This bill would create 100,000 prevailing wage jobs and training opportunities for local and displaced gulf Coast workers to restore infrastructure and the coastal environment with green building technologies.

Here are a few ways you can build support for H.R. 2269:

- **Send an email** through a UUA online action campaign at <http://tinyurl.com/mkkatk>
- Download a **printable letter & petition sheet to collect congregational signatures** to mail to your representative at <http://tinyurl.com/nz2527>
- **Sign up for Gulf Coast Updates**, a joint project of Greater New Orleans Unitarian Universalists (GNOUU), New Orleans Rebirth Volunteer Center, Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA), and Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), to receive bimonthly emails with updates and action alerts. Subscribe at <http://tinyurl.com/nryvbs>
- **Learn more** about the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act at <http://www.solvingpoverty.com/>

Congregational Success: For the past three years, members of All Souls Church, Unitarian, have traveled to New Orleans to volunteer with local organizations, including the Center for Ethical Living and Social Justice Renewal (www.celsjr.org), housed in the first UU Church of New Orleans. This spring, All Souls members who had volunteered in New Orleans held an event to engage others in ongoing activities to support rebuilding. After former trip participants shared stories and photos, the entire group discussed ways that congregation members could support Gulf Coast recovery from their own city. Suggestions included taking part in legislative advocacy, educational programming, planning for more trips, fundraising and support, and building a partnership between congregational youth and students attending a school in the Lower Ninth Ward. The evening ended with a session of letter writing in support of the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act, H.R. 2269.

For more information or to share stories and photos of your Gulf Coast advocacy work, write to la_racialjustice@uua.org.

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