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<p>Danielle Charmicael, SJSU Student '08</p>	<p>We are here today to announce the beginning of a student-led social movement that has the potential to meaningfully impact the Gulf Coast region and reach across America.</p> <p>On January 15, 2007, in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday and his vision of a just society, we will begin our work in the Gulf Coast region focusing our attention on New Orleans.</p> <p>At that time, college students from all over America will travel to Mississippi and Louisiana to listen to Gulf Coast residents stories about the shameful social and living conditions.</p> <p>In the afternoon, we will go "door to door and store to store", whatever it takes to encourage people to contact their Congress members, Senators, and the President to immediately develop legislation based on the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project proposal.</p> <p>In honor of our elders who participated in Mississippi Summer in 1964, where 800 students from around the country came to Mississippi to register African American voters who were being denied this constitutional right, we are calling this movement, Louisiana Winter.</p> <p>The goals of Louisiana Winter are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to return the nation's attention to the Gulf Coast 2. to have students witness first-hand the social suffering that is occurring 3. and to promote the immediate passage of federal legislation to implement the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project <p>If passed by Congress, the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project would hire 100,000 local residents to rebuild the areas of the Gulf Coast ruined by Katrina. The residents will repair and rebuild their houses, schools, levees, parks, and other civic buildings.</p> <p>At the this time, we would like to introduce the esteemed President of San José State University, Don Kassing.</p>
<p>Seychelle Martinez, SJSU Student '06</p>	<p>When the devastating effects of Katrina were at their worst and 80% of New Orleans was underwater, the immediate needs for survival of 1.3 million people throughout the Gulf Coast were not fully met. Then in the aftermath, as the shadow of 1,836 lost lives fell on the hearts and plights of millions of evacuees, and 372,000 Gulf coast children found themselves without schools, the needs for care and recovery were not still fully met.</p> <p>Now, 16 months later as 80% of first responders are without homes, working 14 hr shifts, and 235,000 evacuees remain displaced the</p>



	<p>need for restoration and recovery of the Gulf Coast Communities are not being fully met.</p> <p>From every hardship comes the opportunity to create something beautiful and the DIRE need to rebuild the Gulf Coast stronger than it ever was before is challenging the unity, compassion, strength of our nation. As students, citizens and people of this country this is our chance to rise in solidarity and build the "beloved community."</p>
<p>Rochelle Smarr, SJSU Student '08</p>	<p>As Danielle said earlier, the idea of the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project is to hire 100,000 Gulf Coast residents to rebuild New Orleans and the surrounding region. The residents, who will be given subsidized tickets back to their neighborhoods, and then rebuild and repair houses, schools, levees, parks, and other civic buildings.</p> <p>We feel that it may be necessary to create a new regional agency<similar to the Tennessee Valley Authority--to oversee the implementation of the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project. This regional agency might include community-based organizations from the Gulf Coast, as well as other regional partners (e.g., politicians, school officials, and engineers).</p> <p>The Gulf Coast Civic Works Project will accomplish 4 things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · provide our citizens with living wage jobs, · make housing available for themselves and their communities, · restore a sense of personal empowerment and hope, · restore faith among our citizenry of the government's ability to respond to the needs of its people through a public-private partnership. <p>Based on a ratio of labor to materials of 80-20, which was used under the Civil Works Administration of 1933-1934, and a wage rate of \$12 per hour, we estimate the total cost of the project to be \$3.125 billion. The projected cost of wages is \$2.5 billion, while the cost of materials is \$625 million.</p> <p>We also want to explore a funding plan that would be a public-private partnership, where money comes from federal and state governments (e.g., Louisiana Recovery Authority), as well as from insurance companies.</p>
<p>Scott Myers-Lipton, Associate Professor, SJSU Sociology Department</p>	<p>On election night, 5 and 1/2 weeks ago, on the day our the citizens exercised their constitutional right and responsibility to vote, a group of 40 SJSU students held a "sleep out" on campus to highlight the fact that Santa Clara County--home to Cisco, Adobe, and many other wealthy high-tech corporations--had become the Northern California county with the highest homeless population.</p>



A recently released report stated that on any given night, over 7,600 people did not have a place to call home in Silicon Valley. As a part of that student action on election night, we watched Spike Lee's documentary: "When the Levee's Broke: A Four-Part Requiem."

The social suffering highlighted in this film demanded a response, and the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project was born.

After working out the details of the project, and getting some initial positive feedback from community organizations in the Gulf Coast, 5 students and I decided to travel to New Orleans in January to share the details of the project with Gulf Coast residents.

Then, 15 days ago, I was in conversation with a student about how we could uplink photos of our trip onto our web site, so that other students across the nation could follow our progress in the Gulf Coast.

And then the idea came: instead of bringing photos of the Gulf Coast to the students, why not bring the students to the Gulf Coast so they could see for themselves the social suffering, and to promote the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project. And thus, the idea for Louisiana Winter came into being.

In 2 short weeks, after the development of the Louisiana Winter, we have 87 students from 15 colleges and universities registered to go to Louisiana!

These universities include:

Bard College
California State University, Fullerton
College of Marin, CA
Mills College, Oakland, CA
Marlboro College
MS Gulf Coast Community College
Spelman College
Stanford University
SUNY Stony Brook University
Texas Southern University
Tulane University
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Missouri, St. Louis
Warren Wilson College

And our own beloved- San José State University!

And WE have just begun!

Today, we officially put out a national call to students to join us for Louisiana Winter! With our students are on the move, towns and



cities across the Gulf Coast have reached out, and have invited these students to their communities.

Currently, these cities include:

Bay St. Louis
Biloxi
D'Iberville
Gautier
Gulfport
Long Beach
PascaGoula
Pass Christian
Ocean Springs
Waveland

The Louisiana Winter students will visit each of these cities, and many more. In mid-January, the students will be placed in teams of 20-40 students. Each morning, the students will travel to a different town. The day will start off with community members telling the students about the social conditions of pre-Katrina and post- Katrina

Then in the afternoon, the students will be handing out flyers about the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project and in the evening, we will have a town hall meeting to hear directly from the residents about their ideas for the project, as well as what other parts need to be included in draft legislation.

And I am pleased to announce today, that we are in discussion about the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project with the Office of Congressman Benny Thompson, who is the incoming Chair of the Homeland Security Committee, along with other congressional leaders from Mississippi and Louisiana.

Congressman Thompson is seriously examining the Civic Works program as a model to rebuild the communities of the Gulf Coast.

In addition to the students and communities, we have also begun to build organizational partnerships.

Today, at this exact time, in New Orleans in front of the Federal Building, the NAACP Gulf Coast Advocacy Center, which is a part of the nation's oldest civil rights organization, is sponsoring a simultaneous press conference to announce "Louisiana Winter."

And in Gulfport, Mississippi, faculty and students at MS Gulf Coast Community College are sponsoring a 3rd simultaneous press conference.

So ladies and gentlemen, let the great work begin!



<p>Godfrey Ramos, SJSU Student '07</p>	<p>"The reason why I am participating in Louisiana Winter is because I feel that it is my responsibility, not only as a student, but as an active member of society, to promote change and hope to the residents living in the Gulf Coast. It has almost been a year-and-a-half since our brothers and sisters living in Louisiana were affected by Hurricane Katrina. At the beginning, there were benefit shows, concerts, and countless charitable events that assisted these residents. Unfortunately, as all of these events quickly disappear, social suffering still remains.</p> <p>The residents of the Gulf Coast need their communities back. They need their lives back. I stand here, humbly, asking all of you to support every single student here, as well as across the nation, in our efforts of promoting social change and hope in the Gulf Coast. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. believed:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">If you have never found something so dear and so precious to you that you will die for it, then you aren't fit to live. You may be thirty-eight years old, as I happen to be, and one day some great principle, some great opportunity stands before you and calls upon you to stand up for some great issue, some great cause. And you refused to do it because you want to live longer. You're afraid that you will lose your job, or you are afraid that you will be criticized or that you will lose your popularity, or you're afraid that somebody will stab you or shoot at you or bomb your house. So you refuse to take the stand. Well, you may go on and live until you are ninety, but you are just as dead at thirty-eight as you would be at ninety. And the cessation of breathing in your life is but the belated announced of an earlier death of the spirit. You died when you refused to stand up for right.</p> <p>Justice is my reason for living. Thank you.</p>
<p>Danny Boyd, SJSU Student '07</p>	<p>Coming...</p>
<p>Victoria Chavez, SJSU Student '08</p>	<p>I have seen images of the Gulf Coast in its current state and it breaks my heart.</p> <p>I have seen cars upside down in the middle of what was once someone's living room.</p> <p>I have seen children going hungry.</p> <p>I have seen families torn apart.</p> <p>I have seen the elderly in need of medication dying.</p> <p>I have seen bodies being found daily with no one able to identify them.</p>



	<p>I have seen horrible images which haunt me, they will never leave me.</p> <p>I am going to the Gulf Coast this coming January because there has been an injustice placed upon members of this nation which needs to end.</p> <p>Why is it while WE have a home, cars, an income – Over 100,000 Gulf Coast residents do not?</p> <p>It is unfair that over 100,000 people are being denied an income and homes and have to suffer while the rest of this nation goes unaware.</p> <p>In order to pass a bill of this magnitude the nation must be united in common support.</p> <p>We can no longer stand idly around living out lives as if nothing has happened to our Country –</p> <p>There are thousands of men, women, children, and elderly who need jobs, housing, and hope.</p> <p>We call upon the government to join us in this historic effort to rebuild the gulf coast.</p> <p>It is up all Americans, and particularly the college students, to respond to our call of justice and hope.</p>
<p>Assemblywoman Sally Lieber, Speaker pro Tempore, California State Assembly</p>	<p>Today's call to action serves as a critical resurgence of attention, compassion, and resources directed toward the residents and displaced of the Gulf Coast.</p> <p>The Louisiana Winter student volunteers will bring a sense of hope and new energy to the rebuilding efforts. There is so much that remains to be done in housing, employment, health care, and education.</p> <p>Only a national effort, fueled by the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project and the employment of tens of thousands of Gulf Coast residents, can bring about the healing and reconstruction of these vital communities. I am very proud of our San Jose State students who will be participating in Louisiana Winter week.</p>
<p><u>U.S. Representative Zoe Lofgren 16th Congressional District, California</u></p>	<p>The Gulf Coast Civic Works Project is not yet a plan, it is just an idea. But it is a good idea," said Rep. Lofgren. "Working with Congressional Representatives from the Gulf Coast Region I hope that we can transform this good idea into an actual plan that may have a positive impact on rebuilding the region and building up the working families of the Gulf Coast who were frozen out of the process by prior efforts."</p>



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"The Gulf Coast Civic Works Project presents a common sense solution that's as bold and broad as the problem it's trying to solve. In addition to being more efficient than the approaches for rebuilding currently being considered, it represents an investment in the people of the Gulf--not large corporations--and most importantly, it gives survivors the power to rebuild their homes and their lives. ColorOfChange.org is proud to be a supporter of the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project."

-- **James Rucker, Director of Color Of Change**

"I was delighted to hear about Louisiana Winter. I want to thank you all for your efforts to get the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project passed. I am pleased to hear about the strong response from university students signing up to support Louisiana Winter."

-- **Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, Louisiana**

88 Students from 16 colleges and university have currently committed to attend:

Bard College
California State University, Fullerton
College of Marin, CA
Dickinson College, PA
Mills College, Oakland, CA
Marlboro College
MS Gulf Coast Community College
San José State University
Spelman College
Stanford University
SUNY Stony Brook University
Texas Southern University
Tulane University
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Missouri, St. Louis
Warren Wilson College

Preliminary list of cities that students will visit:

New Orleans
Pascagoula
Gautier
Ocean Springs
D'Iberville
Biloxi
Gulfport
Long Beach



Thursday, December 14, 2007 ☞ San Jose, CA Prepared Remarks

Bay St. Louis