



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STUDENTS CALL FOR NATIONAL POST-KATRINA COLLEGE SUMMIT, APRIL 9-14

SAN JOSE, CA -- Students from fifteen colleges, including Xavier, Tulane, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, San José State, Stanford, and University of Massachusetts at Amherst have put out a call to all college campuses to participate in a "National Post-Katrina College Summit" for April 9-14.

The Post-Katrina College Summit will be a nationwide, weeklong effort to raise awareness about the Gulf Coast through documentary showings, speakers, spoken word, teach-ins, rallies, petition drives, and other events. The Summit is an attempt to catapult New Orleans and the rest of the Gulf Coast back into the national consciousness and to promote federal legislation for a New Deal-style program for the Gulf Coast.

Tasha Easton, one of the student organizers from San José State University, states, "We are the richest nation in the world; yet we continue to have Americans from the Gulf Coast deprived of shelter, employment, and the faith of their government. The Post-Katrina College Summit is part of our campaign to change this."

Working together as the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project, students and faculty are calling for federal legislation to implement a civic works program in the Gulf Coast, creating 100,000 jobs for Gulf Coast residents to rebuild their communities. The cost of the program, which includes job training, is estimated to be \$4 billion.

The Gulf Coast Civic Works Project has already received support from some key allies, among which are Congressman Bennie Thompson, Chair of Homeland Security, and Cornel West, one of the country's most prominent scholars.

This last January, over 100 college students from 15 colleges and universities traveled to

New Orleans, Louisiana, and Gulf Port, Mississippi as part of "Louisiana Winter." There they met with community leaders and residents of devastated areas to discuss the idea for a civic works project, and to hear directly from the residents about what should be included in the federal legislation.

The situation in the Gulf Coast is still grim. In New Orleans, over 200,000 homes were destroyed by Katrina. To date, only several hundred families have received funds to rebuild. Insurance companies have found ways to avoid making payouts, and residents can do little more to rebuild until these insurance companies come through.

The Gulf Coast Civic Works Project invites all student organizations from around the country to participate in the Post-Katrina College Summit. In addition to participating in the summit, students can also take action by gathering petition signatures, introduce resolutions to their city councils or state legislatures, and ask presidential candidates to focus their attention on the Gulf Coast.

Interested groups can contact the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project for ideas and resources. For more information, visit www.SolvingPoverty.com

The Gulf Coast Civic Works Project is the national effort to develop federal legislation to create 100,000 jobs to rebuild the region using Gulf Coast residents.

Louisiana Winter brought together 130 students from 25 colleges to the Gulf Coast for a week-long campaign to make this vision a reality.

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