One Year Later
Community Organizing in New Orleans

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Key Points

• Organizing through disaster to rebuild the social infrastructure of the community as well as the physical.

• The power of marginalized communities speaking up for themselves.

• How community organizing aids in affecting widespread policy decisions.
Race, Class and Concentrated Extreme Poverty

• The Census identified 47 extreme poverty neighborhoods in New Orleans, and 38 of those neighborhoods were flooded.

• Damaged areas were 45.8 percent African American, undamaged areas only 26.4 percent. For the city of New Orleans alone, these figures were 75.0 percent and 46.2 percent, respectively.

• Around the time of Katrina, poor blacks were much less likely to have access to cars than even poor whites, 53 versus 17 percent.
Individualist versus Collective

• Individualist American Ideology
  - Source of poverty lies “within poor themselves”
  - Prevention left to Local and State Authorities
  - Federal handles Damage Control

• Collective Models
  - Hurricane Ivan, Cuba 2004
  - The Dutch Delta Project, Netherlands 1957
A Year Later and Looking Ahead

• The Rebuilding Process is Sluggish
  – Deconcentrate extreme poverty; mixed income housing

• The Levees Cannot Withstand Another Severe Storm
  – The importance of coastal restoration

• Community Participation in Decision Making
  – Rebuilding the Social Infrastructure as well as the Physical
CTWO & MAAP

• **The Center for Third World Organizing**
  – www.ctwo.org
  – 25+ year old racial justice organization focusing on training organizers of color in base building skills.
  – Not about speaking for people, its getting people to speak for themselves.

• **The Movement Activist Apprenticeship Program (MAAP)**
  – Summer program coordinated by CTWO that trains new organizers of color and places them in the field to practice their skills.
  – To this day, has successfully trained 300+ skilled organizers who continue to work in the social justice field.
N.O.P.D.
BEAT
ME
DOWN
"Drunk in Public"
What We Want
The City Council to:
- Move forward the idea of the independent board by holding a hearing in the city council this fall.
- Meeting with Naga to develop a timeline for its implementation.
- Ensuring meaningful community participation, including local groups, 
  recommendations from the community, and recommendations from the 
  Naga.
- Reallocation of funds to support local groups, particularly those that keep the city safe 
  and support local businesses.

Recommendations:
- Support local groups with funds to keep the city safe and support local businesses.
- Hold a hearing in the city council this fall to move forward the idea of the independent board.
- Develop a timeline for implementing the recommendations from the community.
New Orleans Base Building Organizations

- **Safe Streets Strong Communities**
  - www.safestreetsnola.org (coming soon)
  - Send checks made out to “JJPL” with “Safe Streets” in the memo field to:
    Safe Streets Strong Communities
    1600 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd
    New Orleans, LA 70013
  - Email: NHenderson@jjpl.org

- **New Orleans Worker Justice Coalition**
  - www.neworleansworkerjustice.org
More NOLA Base Building Orgs

- Save New Orleans East/Citizens for a Strong New Orleans East
  - www.savenuorleanseast.org

- Families and Friends of Louisiana’s Incarcerated Children (FFLIC)
  - www.fflic.org

- People’s Hurricane Relief Fund & Oversight Committee
  - www.peopleshurricane.org