

**Gulf Coast Fund for Community Renewal and Ecological Health BP Oil Drilling Disaster
Emergency Grants For the June 15, 2010 Grant Cycle Total Distributed: \$41,600**

1. Alliance Institute

Organization Name: Alliance Institute

Amount: \$7,000

For: BP Oil Drilling Disaster

Health Assessment and Evacuation Plan Development

2. Isle de Jean Charles Band of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw

Organization Name: **Isle de Jean Charles Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw, Inc.**

Amount: **\$7000.00**

For: Economic Development initiatives

3. Literacy Alliance of Greater New Orleans

Organization Name: **Literacy Alliance of Greater New Orleans**

Amount: **\$3,000**

Summary of Request: As part of our mission to increase adult literacy, we advocate to government, nonprofit and private organizations the need for Plain Language in the creation of communication materials on disaster recovery for the general public. Post-Katrina, we have worked with many organizations on this including the Road Home, the New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center, and the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana to make sure their documents and materials are readable, preferably at a 6th grade level. We would use the funding to offer free editing services to organizations working with affected communities (\$1,000), offer Plain Language training workshops to engaged organizations (\$1,000) so they would be able to continue do this work themselves, and increase awareness of the need for Plain Language (\$1,000) through advertising and travel to affected communities.

4. Louisiana Oystermen Association Organization

Name: Louisiana Oystermen Association

Amount: \$7,000.00

Summary of Request: The Louisiana Oyster Association is requesting funds to support out advocacy work to get four claims for Local Fishermen in Plaquemines Parish. Your funding will allow us to continue to travel to Washington D.C. to lobby for our claims. We have testified in Congress before the House Judicial Committee, and Energy Subcommittee in St. Bernard Parish. We have traveled to Chicago to meet with Rev. Jackson. We are very thankful for the technical assistance of the Zion Travelers Cooperative Center, Louisiana Justice Institute, advocates for Environmental and Human Rights, the Congressional Black Caucus, Oxfam America, Rev, Jesse L. Jackson, and the Hip Hop Caucus. We hope you fund our organization so we can continue to advocate for fisherman and Maritime workers.

5. Mennonite Disaster Service

Organization Name: Mennonite Disaster Service (EIN 23-2713127) a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Amount: \$6,600

Summary of Request: Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) is a faith based agency that has been a physical presence in the Port Sulphur (Plaquemines Parish) area of Louisiana since early 2006 as a direct response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We have worked with the community to help bring families back home. Our focus has been repairing and rebuilding houses for homeowners who, on their own, would not have been able to come back. MDS supplies volunteer labor to repair and rebuild these homes. We will continue to work with Plaquemines Parish long term recovery committee and other partnering agencies to assess the needs and coordinate recovery for these homeowners. MDS is completely dependent on its vast pool of volunteers throughout Canada and the U.S. to supply the labor to rebuild these homes. We locally house, feed, provide skilled leadership, tools, equipment, and vehicles to support these volunteers. Much of MDS' work is performed in two seasons – winter/spring and fall. Summer becomes a time for regrouping and prepping for the upcoming season. Our volunteers fall off dramatically when the weather warms up in the 'north country' and our project in Port Sulphur currently lies dormant. Over the past two weeks Mennonite Disaster Service has conducted two listening tours of Plaquemines Parish. We have talked and listened to local officials, homeowners we have served, church leaders, and others we have gotten to know over the past four years to find out how MDS could best help out in the midst of this ongoing oil disaster. As we listened to the voices of these local people, we heard them asking MDS to support them

by continuing to do what we do best—rebuild housing. We can be a listening, supportive presence in Port Sulphur during a time of great uncertainty and environmental catastrophe by continuing to work at the rebuilding effort there.

MDS will be reopening the Port Sulphur project this coming week and hopes to keep it open through the entire summer. Long term volunteer leadership has been secured to manage the short term volunteers as together they:

- Work on disaster-affected housing for residents
- Learn about the people and the way of life of the fishers, shrimpers, and residents affected by the oil spill
- Understand how the oil spill is affecting residents along the Gulf
- Relay this information and share these stories with their own communities.

The grant of \$6,600 will cover the cost of transporting eight long term volunteer leaders from their home communities to Port Sulphur where they will manage the construction process of homes for disaster survivors, manage the six to ten short term volunteers who will come each week, and, along with all of our volunteers, assume the role of listening advocates for the community of Plaquemines Parish.

6. Mississippi Center for Justice

Organization Name: Mississippi Center for Justice

Amount: \$7,000

Summary of Request: *MCJ's Response to the Oil Drilling Disaster to Date*

In the wake of the catastrophic BP oil rig explosion on April 20, 2010, followed by an unprecedented and ongoing environmental disaster, MCJ immediately began to assemble the legal resources needed to respond to the vast range of legal needs facing impacted individuals and communities. These legal needs include BP claims processes, the Vessels of Opportunity Program for fishermen (and the language access challenge associated with that program), safety and health concerns with clean up workers, and lost revenues and livelihoods for small business owners and their employees who rely on tourism to survive. From the outset, MCJ attorneys participated in community meetings,

including those focused on the Vietnamese community, to listen and learn about the types of problems these residents were encountering, and to assess what kind of legal resources would be most helpful. MCJ also began planning a series of community legal clinics, which will include a clinic for Vietnamese community members in Biloxi on June 25th.

In addition, MCJ launched a web-based communications initiative designed to monitor governmental action and the flow of federal and state funds. In addition to these Mississippi-focused activities, MCJ's President, Martha Bergmark, convened a regional group of public interest lawyers from Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida on May 27th to begin to develop a regional advocacy strategy. The group created work groups for collaborative efforts to secure the necessary funding, pro bono legal support, training, and communications capacity to create a legal infrastructure across the region to respond to this environmental and human disaster. Over 25 lawyers are participating in this group, which met again on June 10th to advance agendas for each work group. To support MCJ's Mississippi-focused advocacy, as well as regional coordination efforts, MCJ has advertised for an experienced environmental attorney to join the Biloxi coast office staff to lead an oil disaster project team, even though funding to support the position has not yet been secured.

How MCJ Will Use Emergency Funds

MCJ will use these funds to support the following activities:

- 4) Working with grass roots partners to organize and convene impacted communities to continue to assess their legal needs and develop community lawyering responses.
- 5) Distributing "know your rights" brochures and other educational materials that are tailored to the oil disaster and to impacted communities. These materials will be available in Vietnamese and Spanish, as well as English.
- 6) Partnering with national environmental law organizations and leveraging the resources of pro bono lawyers to mobilize the specific legal expertise needed to respond to individual and systemic legal needs resulting from this disaster.
- 7) Conducting community legal clinics that include "know your rights" workshops, and that provide attorneys to meet with individuals for advice, counsel and follow up representation. MCJ is sponsoring a legal clinic for Vietnamese residents on June 25th in Biloxi in partnership with the Vietnamese-American Bar Association of Northern California. The bar association is sending Vietnamese-speaking lawyers to our region.
- 8) Working with community groups and regional and national partners to develop specific policy advocacy strategies, including tracking the flow of federal and state recovery funds.

9) Hiring an experienced environmental lawyer to lead MCJ's Oil Disaster Team, and to help coordinate regional legal response efforts.

10) Stepping up communications and media advocacy efforts through press conferences, web-based communications and social media.

7. TOPS-The Ordinary People Society

Organization Name: THE ORDINARY PEOPLE SOCIETY – T.O.P.S.

Amount: \$7,000.00

Summary of Request: Our Florida Support Operations are directly on the coast in spill affected areas operating in Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton and Bay Counties. (These areas have been declared spill affected areas and are under a State of Emergency) National Coordinator John Beebe has certification and clearance to perform testing, support and clean up operations in these HAZMAT defined areas as Level III HAZMAT / HAZWOPER Clean Up, Support, Mitigation and Remediation for this BP Spill Incident. MC252 – POST EMERGENCY RESPONSE

We have ordered equipment to primarily measure the VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) Air Quality Data at different intervals daily to measure the levels of toxic gas build up in spill affected areas and reporting them to the Local and State EOC, BP, BP Approved Contractors, residents and local, State and National Media.

We will be measuring the Daily PPM of the following VOC compounds to alert if any areas reach above EPA safety thresholds in particular: HYDROGEN SULFIDE BENZENE METHYLENE CHLORIDE and other chemicals

If we receive additional regular funding we can also provide these other services as needed:

GIS/ Geospatial Environmental Information Management Service

Emergency Management/ COOP services Including running EPA's EOC, Project Management

EPA Emergency Remediation Response Contractor

Certified Haz-Woper Trainers

"Boots on the Ground" Field Technicians

* Assistance in emotional and mental support for persons affected by the spill.

Fisheries

Wildlife Biologists

Logistic/ Transportation experts with Offices in Dallas, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama

GIS Data Management

Aerial Fleet of Surveillance Planes (both VOC and real time Surveillance)

Marsh Studies and Flyovers

Industrial ROV repair

Air-Boats and Pro Trained Captains 5-10

Robotics Repair ROV, AGV ASRS Club Car Rover

Medical MD's and PRN's upon request Field Surgeons

Train personnel

Oil Sensor and safety buoy installations in swamp conditions from resources that have been raised in local affected areas