

Since September 2005 Common Ground has:

Hosted and organized **10,000 volunteers** to provide relief and assistance to hurricane survivors.

Supported well over **100,000 people** in seven parishes – New Orleans, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Terrabone, St. Tammy, St. Charles and St. Mary's.

Contributed millions of dollars to the community through distribution of food, water, cleaning supplies, protective gear, tools, building materials, and volunteer labor

Established the **Common Ground Health Clinic**, the first civilian run medical clinic, nine days after the hurricane. Since then Common Ground has run mobile clinics, a **Latino Health Care Outreach Project**, a Health Center in the Upper 9th Ward that has now shifted to a brand new **Lower 9th Ward Health Clinic**. Common Ground clinics have seen 15,000 residents, workers and volunteers in the last eleven months.

Initiated and support nine **Distribution Centers** in four parishes – Algiers, Upper 9th Ward, Lower 9th Ward and New Orleans East in Orleans Parish, in Houma/Dulac in Terrabone Parish, Project Hope in Violet in St. Bernard Parish, and Zion Travelers Cooperative in Phoenix in Plaquemine's Parish.

Provided volunteers with extensive **Anti-Racist work** providing analysis, education and organizing through orientations, trainings, caucuses and workshops. Over 1200 have participated in the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond's "Undoing Racism" training.

Cleaned and gutted over 450 homes in the Upper Ninth Ward.

Cleaned and gutted 250 homes in Lower Ninth Ward.

Cleaned and gutted 12 churches in four parishes, 4 daycare centers and numerous offices and homes of community groups, organizers and activists.

Tarped over a 100 roofs, cleared and cleaned many streets, parks and yards.

Provided **skilled arborists** to trim and cut hundreds of damaged trees.

Common Ground gutted **Martin Luther King Elementary School** in the Lower Ninth Ward. Common Ground also gutted, cleaned and painted eleven other schools throughout New Orleans.

Transformed the **Mt. Carmel Baptist Church and Community Center**, from a flooded, muddy and moldy building to an extensive volunteer housing site including a distribution center and health center to a fully restored Church, sanctuary and community center operating a kids program.

Supported the parishioners in their fight to save **St. Augustine's Catholic Church**, which the Archdiocese attempted to close down. This is one of the oldest Black churches in the country – where both free blacks and slaves worshiped together.

Supported the residents of public housing projects in their fight to open up public housing, including the establishment of the **Survivors Village** at St. Bernard Housing Project.

Began to detoxify polluted soil at over 30 sites using a variety of bioremediation techniques in the Upper and Lower 9th Ward, 8th Ward, New Orleans East, Gert Town, Gentilly and the 7th Ward. Three volunteer and community trainings have been offered and we have gathered extensive analysis of toxins in the area.

Created a **Women's Center** that has offered resources, emergency housing and training programs for dozens of women and their children in New Orleans.

Served hundreds of people through our **Common Ground Legal Team** monitoring police harassment and abuse, sponsoring a free legal clinic every Saturday since October 2005, supporting litigation and on the ground resident

action to block evictions and to open up public housing. Also assisted residents to access hundreds of thousands of dollars from FEMA and Insurance companies.

Common Ground Media Centers provide free access to local phone calls, fax machines and Internet six days a week to New Orleans area residents. Also publishes "*Breaking Ground News*" and hosts the **Post Katrina Portrait Project** which chronicles survivors and volunteer experiences.

Cleaned numerous community gardens in preparation for and with returning gardeners and restored the Sundone Organic Garden, now also known as the **Meg Perry Community Garden**, in memory of Meg who lost her life in a tragic bus accident December 10, 2005.

Initiated a **Kids and Community Project** that ran an after school program this spring with 15 special education kids from Martin Behrman Charter Elementary School (students, aged 8-14). Over the summer the project supported existing programs at Capdau UNO Charter Elementary School (K-8), Medard Nelson UNO Charter Elementary School (K-8), Sophie B. Wright Middle School (5-8), KidsmArt, Country Day Creative Arts – (in return Country Day Creative Arts provided 5 scholarships to students from our after school program) by providing 16 full-time volunteer teaching assistants.

At the Woodlands Apartments programs include before and after school activities for youth and their families including: *Tupar Amaru Shakur Children's Breakfast Program, serving 20-30+ kids/day, *Summer Camp, serving 20 kids, aged 4-10, per day, * Kids' Bike Shop, serving 10-20+ kids per day, * Weekly Thursday Night Basketball Tournaments, attended by 60+ people, *Bi-Monthly Community Unity Day celebrations, attended by 80+ people.

Kids and Community has also distributed: * 300+ backpacks stuffed with school supplies, * 120+ winter coats, * 1400+ Christmas and Valentines Day gift packages, * 300+ books to public schools, * Approx. \$10,000 worth of art and school supplies at the Woodlands Apartments and

9th ward distribution centers.

Supported **New Orleans Workers Rights' Movement** since last fall. In 2005, Common Ground Health Clinic organized mobile health clinics to provide essential services to isolated communities of workers, many of whom are immigrants and non-English speaking. In the early part of 2006, Common Ground volunteers established a mobile distribution of food and water supplies to workers living in tents in City Park. Out of the mobile distribution, volunteers began to support workers' organizing efforts in City Park to better their living conditions. Volunteers also organized and supported community efforts that resulted in a march of 5000+ on May 1st, when millions marched nationwide in support of workers and immigrant rights. We are a member of the **New Orleans Workers Justice Coalition**. Coalition Work includes establishing a Worker Rights Center and challenges to the H2B "Guest worker" Visa program that is not fulfilling its commitments to the workers including a lawsuit for damages.

Supported **Wetlands Restoration** by providing public education materials and using volunteer labor to plant thousands of plants at Bayou Sauvage and the wetlands in City Park.

Mold Remediated 30+ homes, one church and one warehouse using efficient micro-organisms instead of bleach or chemicals, as well as initiating 3 independent studies of the efficacy of **EM (efficient Micro-organisms)** and it's effect on toxic molds. To date, CG is brewing activated EM in the 9th ward and distributing it to residents and workers while training them how to use it correctly. Approximately 100 buildings have been sprayed with EM at some point before, during or after the gutting process, thereby reducing the mold spore count by 80 percent either inside the building or at the pile in the street.

Initiated a project called **Rebuild Green**, which is building a model home in the upper 9th ward, that will showcase sustainable design and alternative energy sources.

Donated or repaired over a thousand **bicycles**, offered bike repair classes and repaired thousands of flat tires through the bike shops.

Organized or participated in numerous **special events** and concerts including Bonnie Raitt, Jefferson Starship, Boots Riley and the Coup, Damion “Jr. Gong” Marley, Jazz Vipers, Rebirth Brass Band in New Orleans and around the country.

Supported public education through our **Speakers Bureau** and tabling where we have sent volunteers and residents on speaking tours throughout the country and world to spread the word and build support for the residents of New Orleans.

Created a **Student Solidarity Network** of 35 College Groups who have mobilized volunteers

and donations to support the people of New Orleans.

Gained management rights of the **Woodland Apartment's**, a 361 unit apartment complex on 13 acres, in Algiers and is working to manifest a vision of safe, affordable and sustainable community housing.

Initiated a Job Training program called **INVEST** that is paying stipends to over a dozen local residents who work 5 hours a day with 1 hours in training classes.

Attracted national media attention including Democracy Now, Night Line, CNN, the Washington Post, The Nation, Yes Magazine and many, many more.

AREA WORK

- Set up a protection plan in the **Lower 9th Ward** to insure homes are not bulldozed without consent. Since January, we have opened a distribution center, temporary resident housing, a community kitchen, and a media lab. We continue gutting residents homes and are bioremediating numerous sites. A new Common Ground Health clinic opened on August 28th.
- Supported the **Houma Indian communities** in Terrabone Parish, (Houma, Dulac, and Point-Aux-Chenes) devastated by Hurricane Rita. Of the 3500 members, over one thousand were left homeless, their homes completely destroyed by wind and water. In addition to making regular deliveries to the Bayou since Hurricane Rita. Also started the Marshall Eddie Conway and Vikki I. Richardson Children's Free Breakfast Program, Common Ground's has distributed goods to over 10,000 people, gutted, tarped or repair 100 homes, reconstructed the Bobtown Grave site and ran a children's free breakfast programs Mon-Fri for most of June and July.
- Supported the work of **Zion Travelers Cooperative Center**, a community initiative in **Phoenix, Plaquemines Parish** that has organized a community relief distribution center and tool and equipment loan center and has restored the church, gutted dozens of homes, cleaned and repaired the local cemetery, and cleared a blighted lot four hundred FEMA trailers. The Church celebrated its grand opening on June 16th
- Initiated what is now call **Project Hope in Violet, East St. Bernard Parish** This volunteer site and distribution center continues to serve the communities around Violet in the lower east end of the parish with distribution and house gutting support.
- Initiated work in **Mid City** in February by establishing a volunteer base at the ArtEgg Warehouse we helped to clean and restore the building for art studios, a large permaculture garden, offices for the Alliance for Sustainable Energy and green building vendors. We cleaned numerous other homes and buildings in the area. The new volunteer site on Miro St. includes cleaning out schools, supporting the bioremediation team including a project cleaning up pesticides from the Thompson Hayward Pesticide Plan in Gert Town. This team is now helping to build a mobile laboratory with a donated trailer and equipment.
- Secured management rights at the **Woodland Apartments, in Algiers** , is a 361-unit apartment complex on 13 acres. The residents are building a safe community--rents have been reduced, clean up and repairs begun, workers cooperatives, the community center, kids program, community garden and computer lab with free classes are underway.