



NIH National Institute of  
Environmental Health Sciences



A joint workshop of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Labor Occupational Safety  
and Health Program (LOSH) and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)  
Worker Education and Training Program (WETP)

Workshop

APRIL 8, 2014 \ LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA  
THE WESTIN LOS ANGELES AIRPORT

# Building Safer & Resilient Communities in the Face of Climate Change

**Climate Change and How Training Can Increase  
Worker & Community Resilience  
Technical Workshop  
April 8, 2014**

**Beverly Wright, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Dillard University  
Deep South Center for  
Environmental Justice  
New Orleans, LA**



**DILLARD  
UNIVERSITY**

# 2005 Statistics

- The year 2005 saw the worst Atlantic hurricane season since record keeping began in 1851.



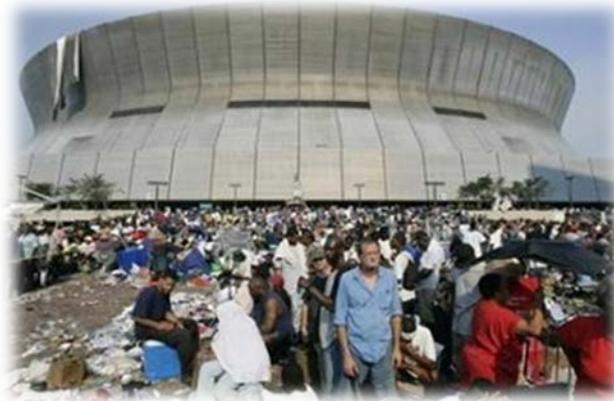
An average season produces 10 named hurricanes with 2 or 3 becoming major storms.

In 2005 there were 27 named storms topping the previous record of 21 in 1933.

# The Differential Effects of Weather & Man-Made Disasters



- The differential effects of catastrophic weather disasters are consistent with a pervasive continuum in which low-income and minority communities suffer from both higher socio-economic stress and greater environmental exposure to toxins, hazardous wastes and other environmental burdens.

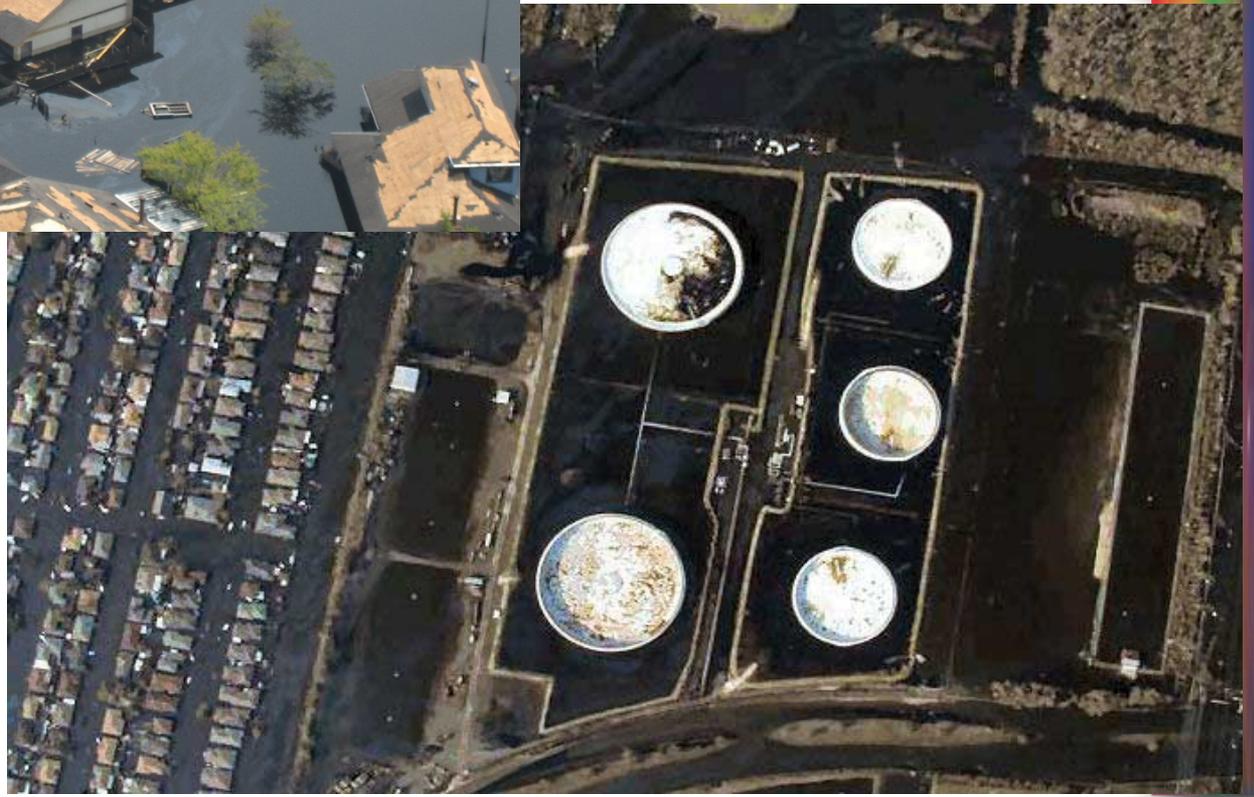


- Such was the case in New Orleans after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the BP Oil Spill.



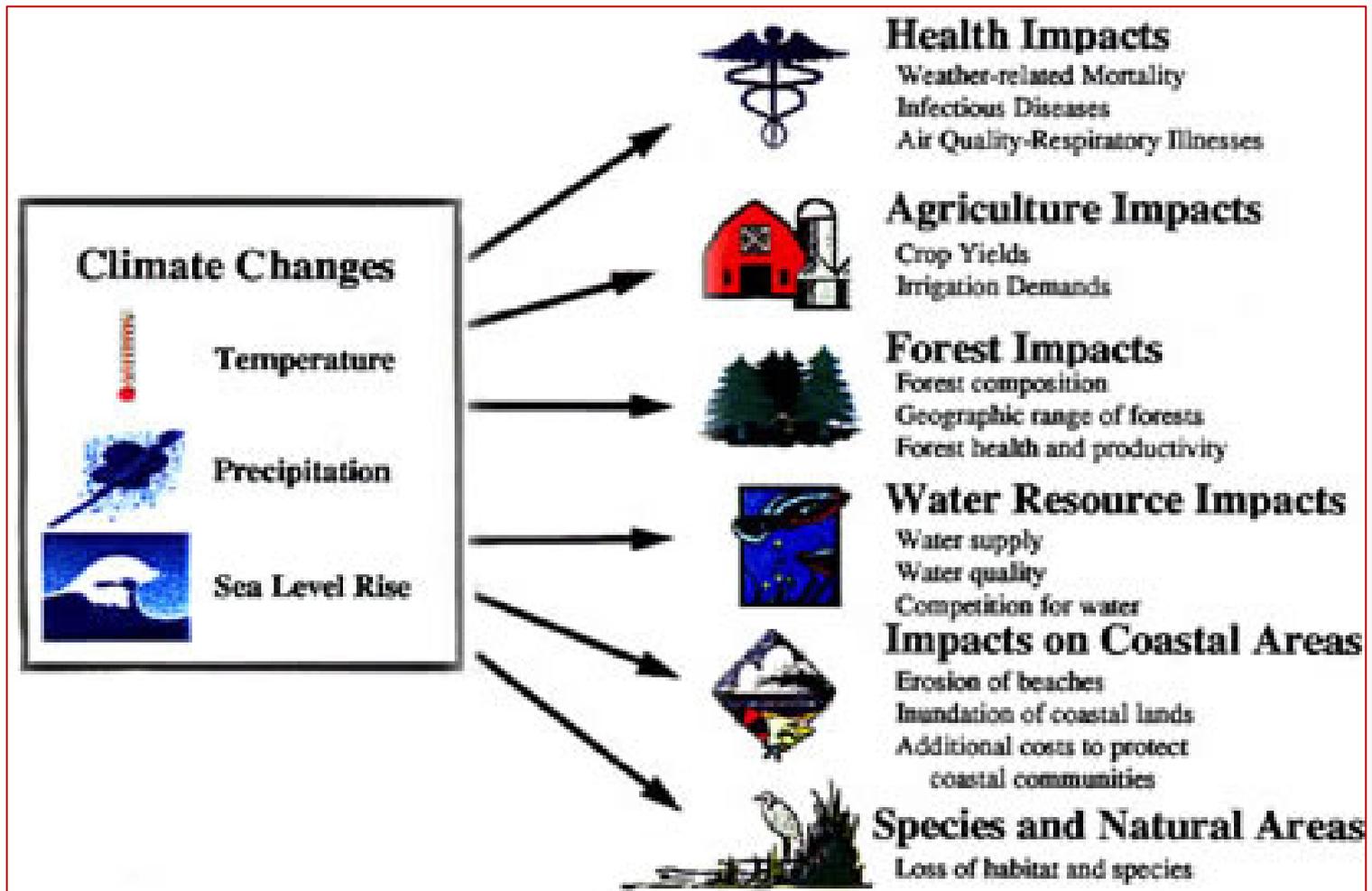






# Managing Weather Impacts

- Societies have always had to manage the impacts of weather and climate related events.



The Work of the DSCEJ

# POST KATRINA FOCUS



# Katrina Survivors' Program

- After Hurricane Katrina, the Center directed its programmatic components and research efforts toward finding solutions and providing technical assistance for community residents along the Gulf Coast whose communities have been devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- This programmatic shift was funded by the Ford Foundation

# Katrina Survivors' Advisory Board

## An Expansion of the DSCEJ Advisory Board

- After Katrina, boards were established in Atlanta, GA, Baton Rouge, LA, Houston, TX and Jackson MS, as these were the major cities with the largest populations of displaced New Orleans residents.



# Advisory Board Locations



These advisory boards serve as liaisons between displaced New Orleans residents and local government as well as community leaders involved in the rebuilding and repopulation of New Orleans.

# Advisory Board Meetings & Workshops



# United Steelworkers Contribute

- Preparedness Classes for Communities
- Tyvek Suits
- Other Personal Protective Gear and Equipment



**HUD Healthy Homes Project**

# **DIRECT SERVICE PROJECTS**



# HUD Healthy Homes Project

- The DSCEJ in collaboration with Howard University implemented a HUD grant to:
- Provide Environmentally Safe Renovation and Remodeling Work Practices (ESRRWP) Training and
- Provide subsidized physical renovation of Katrina-damaged homes in New Orleans



# HUD Healthy Homes Renovation & Remediation Project

- The program provided environmentally safe renovations and remodeling in 25 houses in areas of New Orleans affected by Hurricane Katrina.
- Direct services provided:
  - Soil remediation
  - Mold remediation
  - Sheetrock replacement
  - Window replacement



# HUD Soil Remediation Project



Before

Some homes received soil remediation & landscaping to return them to healthy and aesthetically pleasing conditions.

After



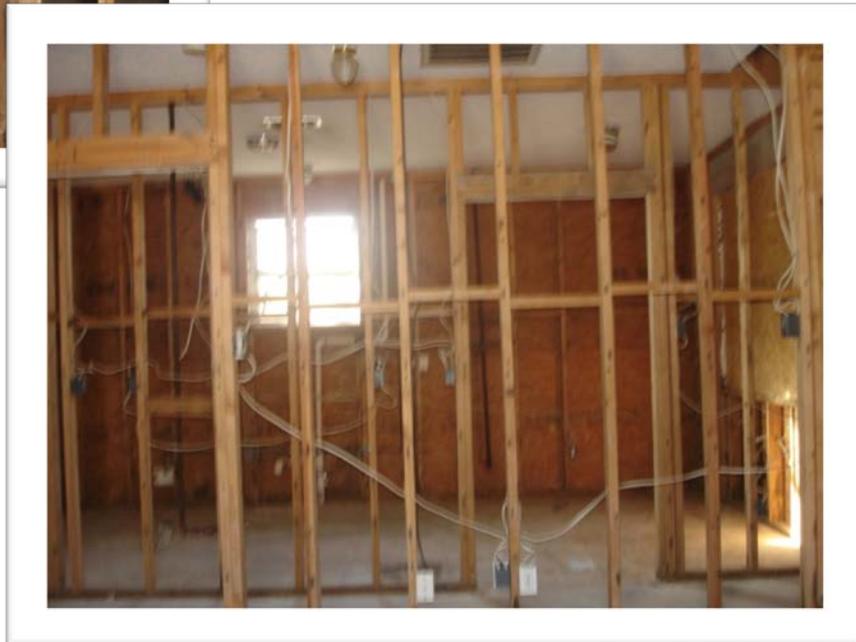
# HUD Mold Remediation Project



*Before*

Other homes received mold remediation to rid them of the toxic growth that accumulated after Hurricane Katrina.

*After*



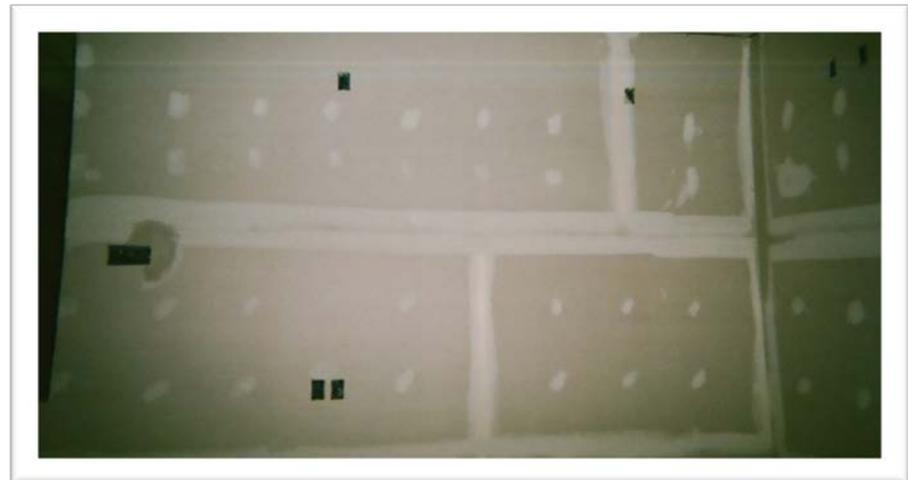
# HUD “Green” Sheetrock Project



*Before*

DSCEJ provided green sheetrock for the sustainable renovation of Katrina damaged homes in New Orleans.

*After*



# HUD Window Installation Project



*Before*



*During*

With the remediation of each block comes the renewed hope for a community's future.

*After*



# Program

Pro



# HUD Healthy Homes Project

Program continued with funds from the City of New Orleans Community Block Grant Minor Repairs Project. Completed over Sixty-Five houses under this project.



Training Program

# HUD HEALTHY HOMES PROJECT



# HUD ESRRWP Training

- This project was designed to provide Environmentally Safe Renovation and Remodeling Work Practices (ESRRWP) Training to:
  - Residents
  - Contractors



# HUD ESRRWP Target Audiences



*Residents*

These trainings are designed for elderly and low to moderate income community residents and minority contractors doing the renovations.

*Contractors*



# HUD Demonstration House

A demonstration house was set up to provide practical application of the classroom training residents and contractors received in how to safely renovate homes post-Katrina.



Healthy Rebuilding Toolkits and Packets

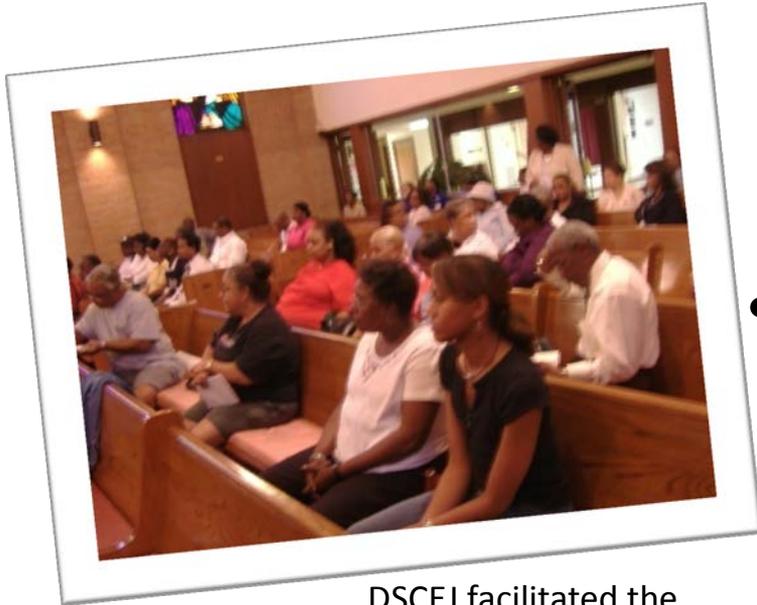
# KATRINA SURVIVORS PROJECT



# Katrina Survivors' Project

- The focus of this project was to serve the citizens of New Orleans displaced by Katrina, by providing important information and serving as an advocate for the cause of the equitable and safe rebuilding of the City around the important issues of race and class.

# Katrina Survivors' Project Goals



DSCEJ facilitated the flow of information to displaced residents through meetings in churches and other community facilities throughout the South.

- Facilitate the re-empowerment of the citizenry of New Orleans to govern themselves and participate in the design for rebuilding New Orleans.
- Facilitate the flow of information and promote a dialogue among citizens to ensure participation in some of the critical areas of rebuilding that include clean-up standards and health.
- Identify, train and mobilize minority workers and firms to participate in the clean-up and rebuilding of New Orleans.

# Katrina Survivors

## Healthy Rebuilding Project

- *The Healthy Rebuilding* education and awareness project funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation was designed to increase awareness of ways to reduce unhealthy, toxic living conditions and to focus on educating residents on how to remediate indoor and outdoor environmental issues Post-Katrina.



# Healthy Rebuilding Toolkits

- The “Healthy Rebuilding” toolkits and packets include information on identifying and improving unhealthy environments and conditions in addition to providing residents with the information they need to rebuild their homes in the safest way possible.



# Toolkit Contents



50 toolkits were produced in hard copy and on compact disk for distribution at the Race, Place & the Environment Conference 2008



# Toolkit Rollout

- Toolkits and packets were distributed at the *Race, Place & the Environment after Katrina: A National Symposium on Reclaiming, Rebuilding, Restoring New Orleans & the Gulf Coast*
- The Symposium was held in May of 2008 where the toolkit was introduced to the community and conference participants.



# Neighborhood Caucus



The toolkits were rolled out and its contents explained at Neighborhood Caucus session during the 2006 RPE Symposium.



**A Safe Way Back Home**

# **SIGNATURE PROGRAM**



# “SHOUT OUT” TO THE UNITED STEELWORKERS



***A Safe Way  
Back Home  
The Gang***



# A Winning Partnership

- An unusual partnership between universities, labor, environmental organizations, community organizations and homeowners.
- Taking a proactive approach to cleaning up neighborhoods in New Orleans as a demonstration project.



# Top Soil Removal & Landscaping

- 6 inches of top soil and contaminated sediment was removed from the front and backyards of 23 homes on one block.
- Each lot was re-landscaped with graded river sand and fresh sod.
- Sidewalks, curbs and streets were pressure washed to remove all accumulated sediments
- Returning these homes to a safe and livable condition.

# Public Awareness

- *Safe Way* partners talk to the media about this Demonstration Project in an Eastern New Orleans, LA neighborhood.

## Meet the Press



# Landscaping



*Sod Arrives*

Lots were re-landscaped with graded river sand and fresh sod.

**Sidewalks and curbs were pressure washed to remove accumulated sediment.**

*Volunteers at Work*



# Aberdeen Road Block Party



Residents celebrated  
after the  
Aberdeen  
demonstration  
project in a New  
Orleans East  
neighborhood  
was completed.

- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School Playground**
- **Lake Forest Charter School Playground**

**PUBLIC FACILITY CLEAN UP**



# *Safe Way* Health and Safety Training

- DSCEJ conducted a health and safety training for the 45 volunteers and school staff involved in this soil remediation project.
- The clean up took place over two weekends in June of 2008.

Partnerships with the Orleans Parish Civil Sheriff's Office, the Crescent City Chapter of Links, Inc., and New Orleans Chapters of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity resulted in volunteer labor for this project.



# Volunteer Partnerships in Action

*After*



*Before*

Volunteers laid sod on the school yard playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter Elementary School providing a safe place for children to play in this 9<sup>th</sup> Ward neighborhood of New Orleans.

# Lake Forest Charter School Soil Remediation Project

**WORKING**



**Volunteers...**



**TRAINING**

# The Lutherans Made Their Mark!



ENJOYING... THE FRUIT OF THEIR LABOR

- This Lutheran Student group returned to New Orleans in successive years to assist in clean up efforts throughout the city.

Minority Worker Training Programs

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



# Displaced Residents

- Because of the numbers of New Orleans residents displaced due to the storms, DSCEJ implemented training and education programs geared to effecting their safe return complete with the skills necessary to take care of their homes and families.



# MWTP for Displaced Residents - Houston

Partnership: Texas Southern  
University/United Steel Workers

20 targeted for Truncated Basic  
Skills/Technical Training

30 targeted for Work-Ready Technical Training

**Trained: 48 Total**

- Primarily funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

# MWTP for Returning Residents – New Orleans

Partnership: United Steel Workers

Targeted: Small Business Contractors & Workers  
involved in Post-Katrina Clean Up/Rebuilding

4 Training Cycles: January – October 2007

Trained: 72 Total

- Primarily funded by the United States Department of Labor

Training and Cleanup Efforts

# THE BP OIL SPILL



# Worker Training Needs

Translators for workers speaking:

Spanish

Vietnamese

Creole/Cajun Dialects

40 Hour HAZMAT Training

Culturally Sensitive Curriculum for Training African American and Bayou Fishermen

# Trained Workers Deploy

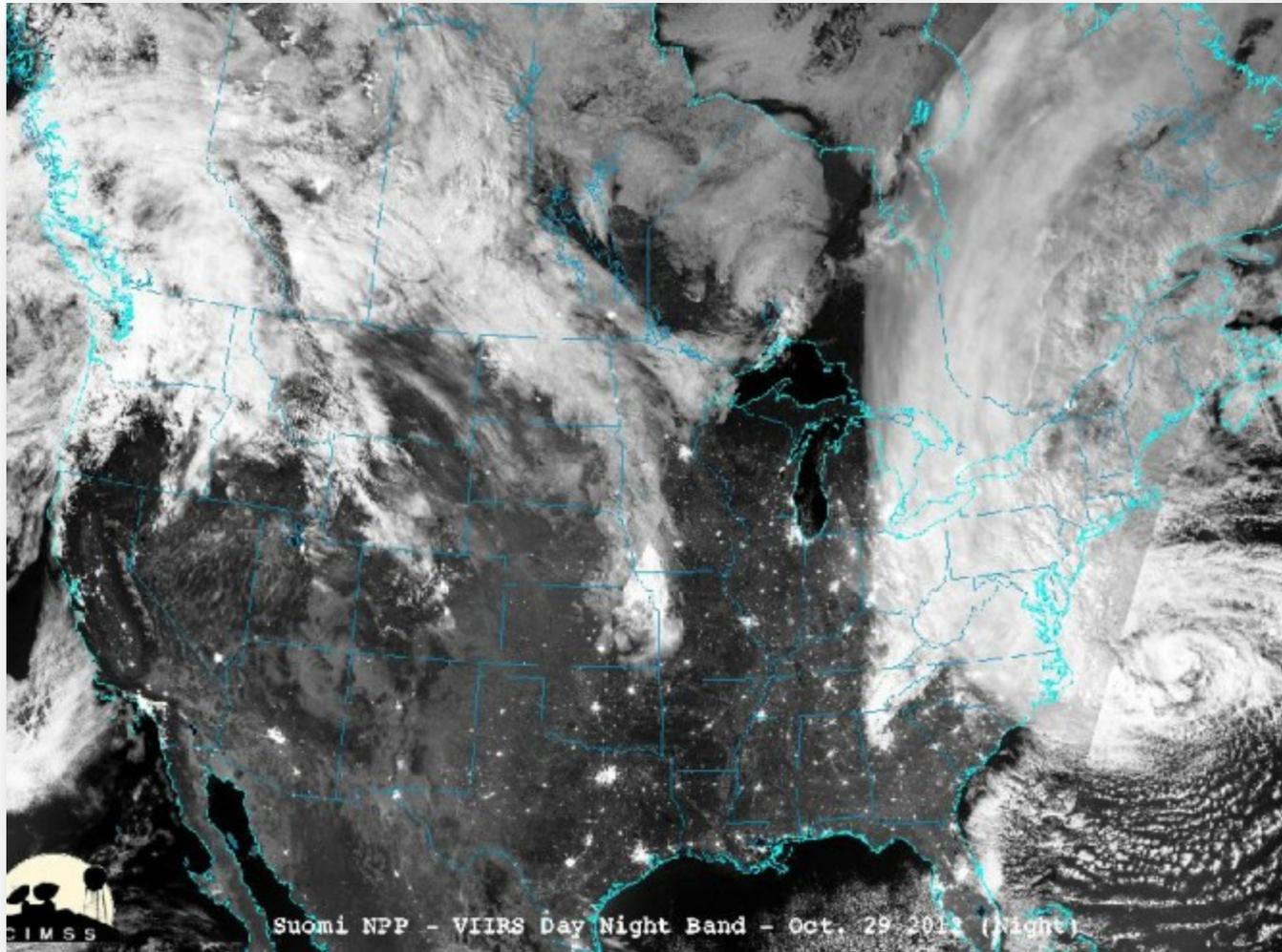


# 2012 Statistics

- The 2012 Atlantic hurricane season produced a total of 19 tropical storms
  - 10 became hurricanes,
    - Well above the average of 6
  - 1 of which were major hurricanes
    - Below the average of 2
- This level of activity matched NOAA's predictions and continues the trend of active hurricane seasons that began in 1995.
- The 19 tropical storms represent the third-highest total (tied with 1887, 1995, 2010 and 2011) since records began in 1851
  - Above the average of 11



# Hurricane Sandy in 2012



This image provided by University of Wisconsin-Madison is a composite of several satellite passes over North America taken 16 to 18 hours before Sandy's landfall.

# Hurricane Sandy's Impacts

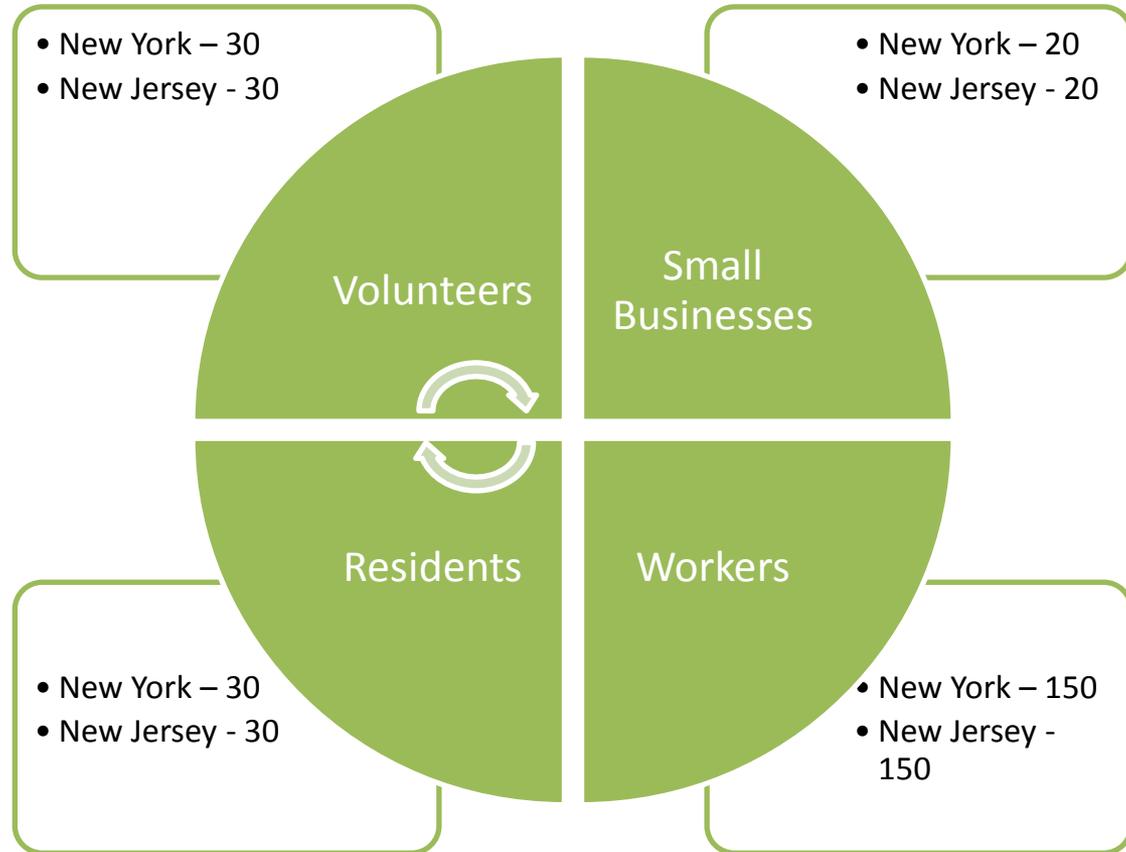
- **Sandy rescue efforts on Staten Island lead to grim discoveries**
- Nineteen bodies were found in Staten Island in the days immediately following Hurricane Sandy alone.
- Staten Island residents were outraged by what they describe as the slow response from relief organizations.
- This echoed the experiences of residents of poor communities in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina

**Training and Cleanup Efforts**

# **HURRICANE SANDY**



# New York and New Jersey Training Population



- Small Businesses
- Volunteers
- Residents
- Minority and Immigrant Workers

# Hurricane Sandy Cleanup Trainers

- DSCEJ Technical Trainers
- CBTU/CARAT Team
- Steel Workers

**Community Meetings with Local and National Government  
Agency Representatives**

**AFFECTING PUBLIC POLICY**



# The BP Oil Spill & Public Policy



DSCEJ Discusses Fishers Needs with HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius



Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu talks to members of the Vietnamese Fisher Community



# Meeting with Kathleen Sebelius

## Secretary of Health & Human Services



Congressman Ahn “Joseph” Cao and NO Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu in attendance



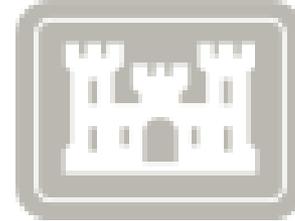
**Disaster Recovery: Collateral Damage in the Melia  
Community New Orleans, LA**

**PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY IN  
ACTION**



# Advocating for the Melia Community

- Residents suffered structural damage to their homes resulting from work conducted on the **Southeast Louisiana (SELA) Dwyer Road Drainage Project** designed to decrease the risk of flooding in the future
- The project was carried by the United States Army Corps of Engineers in conjunction with the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans.



# DSCEJ hosted Community Meetings with Melia Residents Waiting to be Made Whole

Melia residents frustrated with slow response from S & WB and the Army Corps



Due to these meetings, residents concerns were addressed and properties were restored.

**BP Oil Spill Disaster Wastes Disposal**

**PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY IN  
ACTION**



# Distribution of BP Oil Spill Waste

Landfills located in four Gulf Coast states were selected for BP Waste disposal.

- Alabama
- Florida
- Louisiana
- Mississippi



# The BP Waste Tracker Project

The major goals of the project were to train impacted communities in:

- the understanding of scientific data;
- the understanding of health impacts;
- ways to protect their health;
- how to track amounts of wastes disposed;
- how to track the transport of wastes disposed via diesel trucks.



# **WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES**



# Community Trainings

- The DSCEJ conducts numerous community workshops on environmental justice issues in order to educate community members to equip them to effect change within their neighborhoods.



Plasma Arc Gasification  
Technology Training



BP Waste Landfill  
Community Training



2006 and 2008

# **RACE, PLACE & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AFTER KATRINA SYMPOSIA**



# Race, Place & the Environment after Katrina Symposium 2006

## *Looking Back to Look Forward*

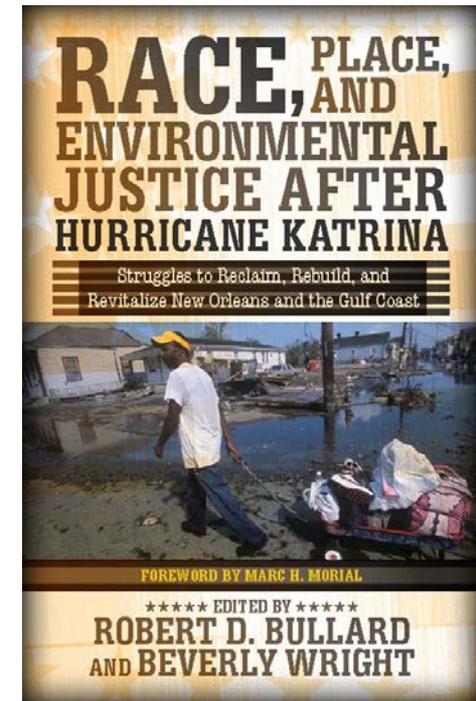
- Keynote Speaker William Lucy  
Founder of the Coalition of Black  
Trade Unionists
- *The Race, Place and the Environment  
After Katrina* symposium was held  
**October 19-21, 2006.**
- Over 200 persons attended the  
symposium in which sixteen panels  
and workshop sessions were  
conducted.



The symposium was  
cosponsored by:  
Lawyers Committee for Civil  
Rights Under Law, Fannie Mae,  
the Kirwan Institute,  
Environmental Justice Resource  
Center, National Black  
Environmental Justice  
Network, and Advocates for  
Environmental Human Rights.

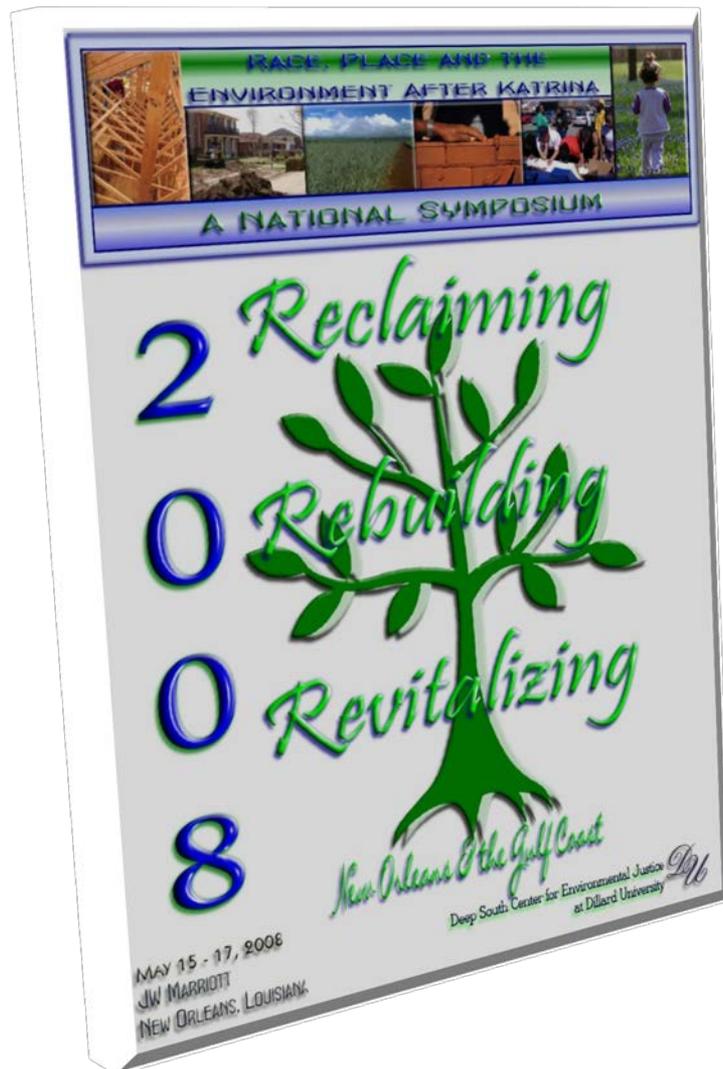
# Focused on Katrina Recovery

- For three days the city was focused on the environmental impacts of Katrina and race, including the issues of Clean and Just Production.
- The symposium was attended by city, state and congressional representatives who placed the issues of discussion at the symposium on their “high priority” list.



The DSCEJ commissioned a paper series based on the Symposium presentations resulting in the volume above.

# Race, Place & the Environment Symposium 2008



- This symposium , held **April 15 – 17, 2008** in New Orleans, LA brought together experts in the field of environmental justice and policy, representatives of government, academia and the Gulf Coast communities groups in an effort to gauge our progress toward an equitable and sustainable recovery of the Gulf Coast.

# Race, Place & the Environment Symposium 2008



**Keynote Luncheon speaker,  
Ted Shaw, of Columbia Law  
School addressed an attentive  
audience.**



# Symposium Highlights



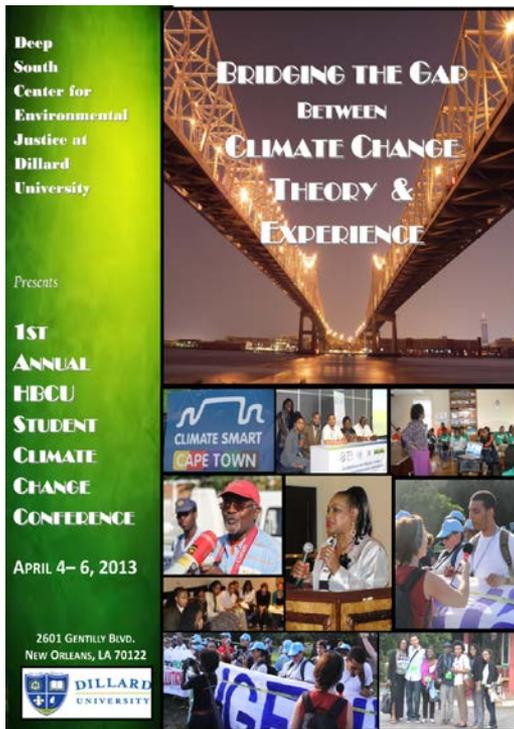
The Symposium included Exhibits, Local Culture, Panels, Workshops, Environmental Leaders, Activists and Organizations, Government Agencies as well as a Neighborhood Caucus and an Awards Ceremony.

2013 and 2014

# HBCU STUDENT CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE



# 1st Annual HBCU Student Climate Change Conference 2013



- Dillard University DSCEJ hosted the **First Annual HBCU Climate Change Student Conference, *Bridging the Gap Between Climate Change Theory and Experience***, April 4 – 6, 2013.
- **In Attendance:**
  - Over 100 students, faculty, staff, and environmental leaders from across the country
- To discuss the effects climate change is having on vulnerable communities.

# Purpose

- To educate minority students on climate change theory and experience as it relates to racial, social, public health, and economic disparities in the wake of weather related disasters.



# 9 HBCU's Participated

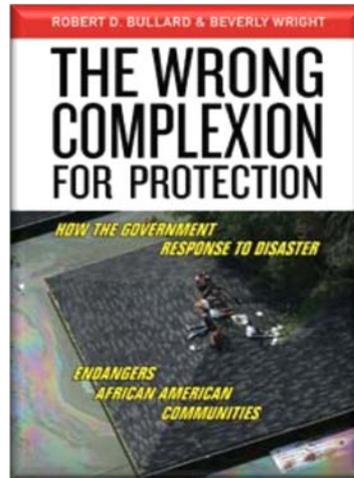
- **Dillard University**
- **Morgan State University**
- **Howard University**
- **Spelman College**
- **Southern University Baton Rouge**
- **Texas Southern University**
- **Tennessee State University**
- **Florida A & M**
- **Meharry Medical College**

# Conference Activities

**HBCU Student**



**Book Signing**



**Stem Student Sessions**

**Poster Session**



**Keynote Speakers**

**Plaquemines Parish**



**Toxic Tour**

**Roundtable**



**Experts**

**Damu Smith**



**Award**

**JOIN US...**



**Climate Change  
Bridging the Gap**

between

**Theory & Experience**

**HBCU Student  
Conference**

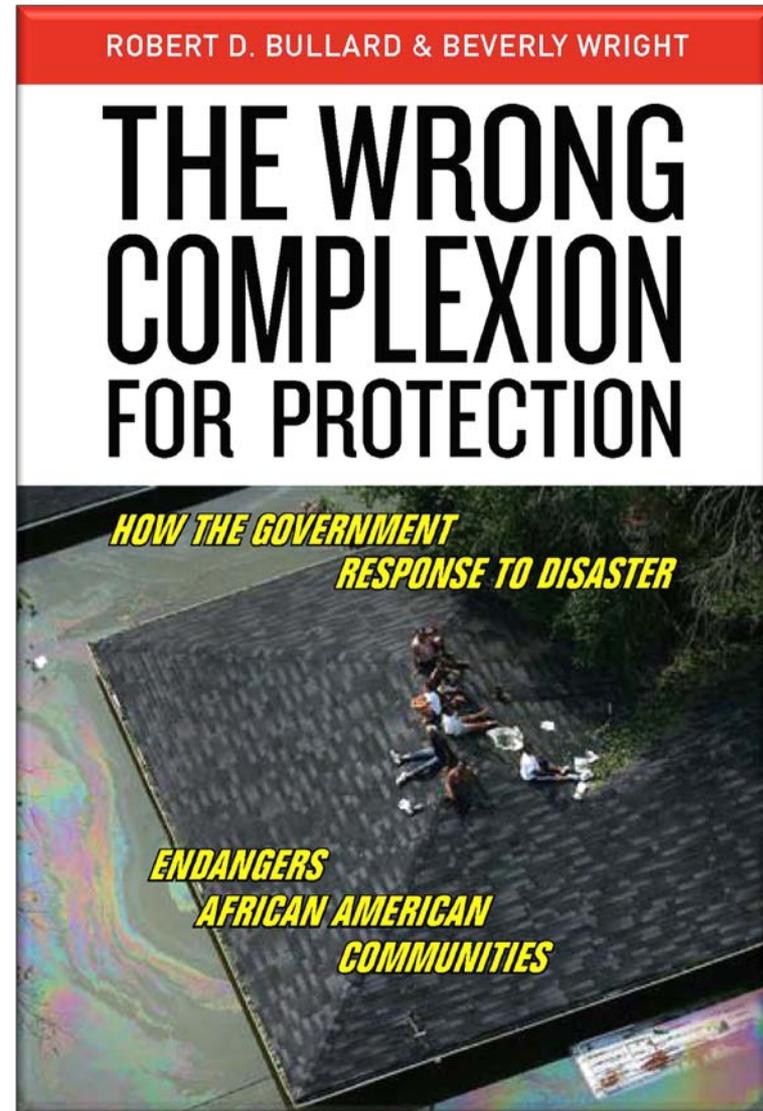
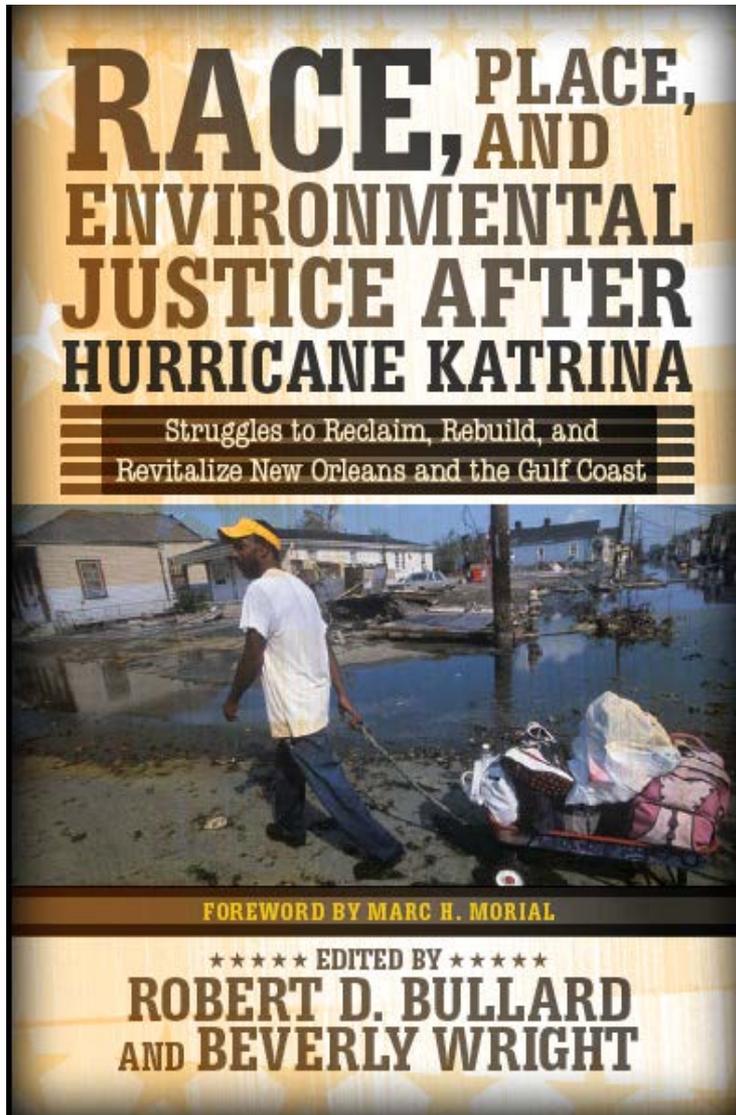
A graphic showing three puzzle pieces: a grey piece on the left labeled "Theory", a grey piece on the right labeled "Experience", and a green piece in the middle labeled "&". Two metal chains are attached to the green piece, one to the top and one to the bottom, suggesting it is a bridge between the other two pieces.

**Building Safer & Resilient Communities for All**

*Register at:*  
[www.dscej.org](http://www.dscej.org)

**April 17-19, 2014**

# Two Must Reads...



***Learn More  
About the Work of  
The Deep South Center  
for Environmental Justice***



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