

Regional News

Serving Orleans, St. Bernard, Plaquemines and Jefferson Parishes

Post-Katrina Volume I, Issue I

March 2006



Special points of interest:

- Disability Rights Day
April 11, 2006 1-3 pm
- LaCAN Membership —
Learning How to Become an
Effective Advocate
- Upcoming FHF of GNO
Events You Don't Want to
Miss
- Katrina Aid Today Recovery
Assistance for Hurricane
Katrina Evacuees w/Disabilities
and their Families

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We Made it Through the Rain

"Raindrops keep falling on my head..."! Isn't that what so many of us have been feeling for the last six months? Well, your friends at Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans are no exception.

In case you hadn't heard, our offices flooded, the roof caved in on our information and referral office, which then collapsed onto our administrative offices. So...we've moved, and moved, and now we're moving again.

In the early days right after the storm, we were frantic to find a dry, mold free place to work. We moved what we could salvage into a small store front in Harahan and put the rest of our belongings in storage. Only to find out we had to move

again—just thirty days later.

So we began our search again and found another place—oh, it had received damages from Katrina, but it was being repaired. We were temporarily housed in a small office at the other end of the building—only to have the December 14th thunderstorm drench us through the not so secure roof.

Now we are just days away from being in our permanent location. We are all looking forward to getting settled, but what has kept us thriving is you, our customers. Knowing that through all of the commotion, you were there. You needed us and we needed you.



With all the physical and financial devastation that has occurred we know there will be tough times ahead. Budget cuts, frustrations, anxiety, stress and despair, these things will keep us down.

We need each other more now than ever. Please call us if you need assistance, or even if you just need someone to listen. You can still reach us at 504-888-9111 or 800-766-7736. Our new office hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Post-Katrina School Openings

Orleans Parish Schools

- Singleton Charter Middle
Uptown, 5-8
Contact: (504) 304-3915
- Nelson Elementary
Uptown (McDonogh 7 Campus), K-8
Contact Info: (504) 280-5684
- O.P. Walker Sr. High
Algiers, 9-12
Contact Info: (504) 363-1072
- Capdau Charter
3821 Franklin Ave., K-8
Contact Info: (504) 280-5684

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Post-Katrina School Openings

(continued from page 1)

- Martin Behrman Elementary
Algiers, PK- 8
Contact Info: (504) 363-1001
- Dwight D. Eisenhower Elem.
Algiers, PK-8
Contact Info: (504) 398-7125
- Edna Karr Sr. High
Algiers, 9-12
Contact Info: (504) 398-7115
- Alice Harte Elementary
Algiers, PK-8
Contact Info: (504) 398-7101
- Milestone Academy/Sabis
Uptown, K-8
Contact Info: (504) 894-0557
- International School of LA
Kenner/Uptown, K-5
Contact Info: (504) 615-7790
- Benjamin Franklin Elementary
Uptown, PK-8
Contact Info: (504) 304-5680
- McMain High
Uptown, 9-12
Contact Info: (504) 304-5680
- Lusher Charter
Uptown, K-12
Contact Info: (504) 862-5110

- NO Charter Science-Math High
Uptown, 9-12
Contact Info: (504) 862-5154
- Audubon Charter
Uptown, PK-8
Contact Info: (504) 862-5135
- Benjamin Franklin Charter High
Lakefront, 9-12
Contact Info: (504) 286-2600
- Bethune Elementary
Uptown (Bauduit Campus), K-8
Contact Info: (504) 896-4001

Plaquemines Parish Schools

Belle Chasse Primary
(504) 393-8940
Belle Chasse Middle (504) 656-2315
Belle Chasse High (504) 394-2810

St. Bernard Parish Schools

St. Bernard Unified School
Contact Info:
PK-5 (504) 272-0340
6-8 (504) 301-2688
9-12 (504) 301-2600

Jefferson Parish Schools

All Jefferson Parish Schools are currently opened. The following

schools on the Westbank are being housed together:

- Terrytown Elementary is being housed at Boudreaux Elementary
 - Woodmere Elementary is being housed at C.T. Janet Elementary
 - Lincoln Elementary is being housed at Butler Elementary
- Contact Information:
Eastbank (504) 736-7345
Westbank (504) 341-1932

The following Orleans Parish Charter Schools will be opened up in the future:

- Henderson Murry Elementary, K-8
- William J. Fischer Elementary, K-8
- Julius Rosenwald Elementary, K-8
- Schwarz, K-8
- Paul B. Habans Elementary, K-8
- Lord Beaconsfield
Landry High
School, 9-12
- McDonogh 32
Elementary, K-8
- Harriett R. Tubman
Elementary, K-8



Upcoming FHF OF GNO Trainings and Events

THE FAMILY EMPOWERMENT FORUMS

Co-Sponsored with the

Metropolitan Human Services District

- ▶ **Saturday, March 25, 2006**
10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church
2320 Paris Road, Chalmette
- ▶▶ **Saturday, April 1, 2006**
10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Belle Chasse High School
8346 Hwy. 23, Belle Chasse
- ▶▶▶ **Saturday, April 8, 2006**
10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Kingsley House
1613 Constance Street, New Orleans

These forums are designed for individuals with disabilities and their families to learn about resources and services in the community Post-Katrina. Complimentary lunch and children's Easter egg hunt will be provided in a picnic set-

ting. Bring your family and friends out to enjoy the beautiful Spring weather and network with other families. Don't forget your blankets or lawn chairs! We look forward to seeing you there! To make sure we have enough food, please be sure to register for the event you choose to attend. Please call (504) 888-9111.

THE POWER OF THE PARENT

Tuesday, April 11, 2006
9:00 a.m.-3:00p.m.
St. Jerome Knights of Columbus Hall
3310 Florida Avenue, Kenner

Dr. Mark Viator and Jamie Wyble, LCSW will do a riveting all day conference on how great a parent's role is in a child's life. Based upon Mark's book-series of the same title, this fun and informative presentation focuses on helping parents develop "true communication" with their children and how to avoid the mistakes that can destroy relationships between parents and children. **THIS CONFERENCE IS FREE! BREAKFAST & LUNCH ARE INCLUDED!** To register, please call (504) 888-9111.

Support for your Child's Education

by: Bebe Bode, Project PROMPT Coordinator

Project PROMPT is Louisiana's Parent and Training Information Center. We provide help for families of children with disabilities through workshops, conferences, and individual assistance, in regard to all issues relating to IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and other state and federal laws. Project PROMPT has a part-time parent facilitator in each region of the state. Following is a list of our offices and staff:

Regions 1 & 10 –

Families Helping Families of GNO

Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Jefferson Parishes

Cindy Arceneaux,

Project PROMPT Director

Laura S. Nata, Senior Facilitator

201 Evans Road, Building 1, Suite 100
Harahan, Louisiana 70123

504-888-9111 or 1-800-766-7736

504-888-0246 Fax

Region 2 – Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge

Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana Parishes

Summer Mizell, Facilitator

778 Chevelle Drive

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806

225-216-7474 or 1-866-216-7474

225-216-7977 Fax

Region 3 – Bayou Land Families Helping Families

Assumption, Lafourche, St. James, St. John, Terrebonne, St. Charles, St. Mary Parishes

Karen Scallan, Facilitator

204 East Bayou Road

Thibodaux, LA 70301

985-447-4461 or 1-800-331-5570

985-447-7988 Fax

Region 4 – Families Helping Families of Acadiana

Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, Vermillion Parishes

Valerie Balsler, Facilitator

303 New Hope Road

Lafayette, Louisiana 70506

337-984-3458 or 1-800-378-

9854

337-984-3468 Fax

Region 5 – Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana

Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Jefferson Davis, Cameron Parishes

Myllinda Elliott, Senior Facilitator

2927 Hodges Street

Lake Charles, Louisiana 70601

337-436-2570 or 1-800-894-6558

337-436-2578 Fax

Region 6 – Families Helping Families at the Crossroads of Louisiana

Avoyelles, Concordia, Catahoula, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, Vernon, Winn Parishes

Melissa Brossette, Senior Facilitator

2840 Military Hwy., Suite A

Pineville, Louisiana 71360

318-641-7373 or 1-800-259-7200

318-640-4299 Fax

Region 7 – Families Helping Families of Northwest Louisiana

Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, DeSoto, Natchitoches, Red River, Claiborne, Lincoln, Sabine, Webster Parishes

Cassie Hubble, Facilitator

2620 Centenary Boulevard,

Building 2, Suite 231

Shreveport, Louisiana 71104

318-221-0315 or 1-888-989-0315

318-221-0301 Fax

Region 8 – Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana

Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, West Carroll Parishes

Lisa Robinson, Facilitator

5200 Northeast Road

Monroe, Louisiana 71203

318-361-0487 or 1-888-300-1320

318-361-0417 Fax

Region 9 - Northshore Families Helping Families

St. Tammany, St. Helena, Livingston, Washington, Tangipahoa Parishes

Casonya Williams, Facilitator

204 West 21st Avenue

Covington, Louisiana 70433

985-875-0511 or 1-800-383-8700

985-875-9979 Fax



Visit us on the WEB at:
www.projectprompt.com

Immediate Help from the IRS for victims of Hurricane Katrina

President Bush officially signed into law "The Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act of 2005" which provides considerable tax benefits to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The IRS is offering some immediate relief in the Louisiana parishes and Mississippi



and Alabama counties declared by the President to be disaster areas.

Businesses will have until September 23, 2006 to make employment and excise tax deposits normally due before that date. For tax returns and other tax payments, an extension period will run until October 31, 2006. Taxpay-

ers should write "Hurricane Katrina" in red at the top of forms to qualify for the extension.

The IRS website (www.irs.gov) provides complete and updated information on the program. The local telephone contact number for the IRS is (504) 558-3344. The toll free number is 1-800-829-4059.



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"IT'S WHO WE ARE, IT'S WHAT WE DO."

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Harahan, LA 70123

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JOIN US IN BATON ROUGE DISABILITY RIGHTS DAY

Disability Rights Day

The Right to Receive Services
A Rally at the State Capital in Baton Rouge

April 11, 2006, 1-3 p.m.

Join other Individuals with Disabilities
and Family Members

A Waiting List is NOT a Service!
Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Whys and Hows of Effective Legislative Advocacy

by: Kay Marcel, LaCAN Statewide Coordinator

Parents of children with disabilities often ask why they need to do legislative advocacy. The reasons are simple:

1. Legislators make decisions that have profound impact on the lives of our children and families.
2. Legislators make decisions about what services are funded, or not funded.
3. Legislators often make decisions without knowing how their decisions affect people with disabilities and their families.
4. Louisiana's current system is not meeting the needs of all that must rely upon the state for long-term supports. For example, almost 15,000 people are on the waiver waiting list.
5. **And most importantly,** Who better than parents to tell legislators about their child and family's situation? How wonderful our child is, how much we love



Advocates with Legislator

them, what supports they need and how those supports will help our child and family.

But with all the important responsibilities we have we wonder how we can do one more thing? And, we are not sure how to talk to a legislator or what to say; we may even be afraid to talk to our legislators.

Here are some ways that **parents can be effective advocates with legislators:**

1. First and foremost, realize that you can't do everything and that is okay, but it shouldn't keep you from doing some things when you can.
2. Realize that the most important thing legislators need to know is your child and family's story, **and that you are the expert on that topic.** In fact, you are the only person who can provide this information.
3. **Join with others to educate legislators** so you don't have to do this hard job by yourself. Join an organization that focuses on legislative advocacy and supports its members to be more effective.

4. **Join LaCAN**

(www.lacanadvocates.org) by completing and returning the membership application included in this newsletter.

What are some of the benefits of membership in LaCAN?

1. LaCAN members are informed about legislative activities that affect their lives and available services.
2. LaCAN members learn effective advocacy skills and strategies to better advocate for themselves, their children, and other people with disabilities who need services.
3. LaCAN members are part of an important movement to eliminate waiting lists.

Join LaCAN today so you can know what will be happening during the 2006 Regular Legislative Session that will begin March 27th, and to add your voice with others to improve services for your child and others.

Together we can make a difference!