

Lessons Learned Post-Disaster
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Hurricane Katrina August 29, 2005 80% of City Flooded, Stranding Thousands











- State recovery program delays in releasing funding
- Storms in 2005. In early 2007, Louisiana Appleseed was asked to help.
- Immediate systemic need: seek extensions with recovery officials for those with heir property and title issues
- Root cause of problem: too expensive and complicated

Changes to Small Succession Laws

- Study resolution in 2008
- 2009 Act 81 allowing use of heirship affidavit for:
 - Immovable property (houses, land, funeral plots)
 - Decedent's portion of estate valued at \$75,000 or less at time of death
 - Compromises with clerks' offices
 - Intent easier and cheaper to clear title
 - Cast the net wider (2011 and 2012 sessions)











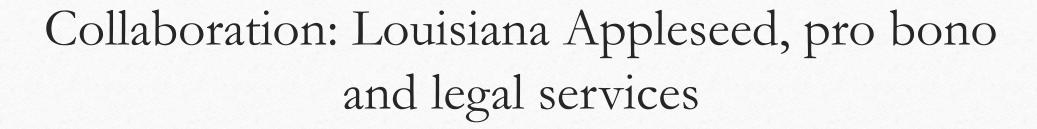
Education and Outreach











- Funded by community foundation (Greater New Orleans Foundation GNOF)
- Two-year project
- Helped save 740 homes in the New Orleans area
- Economic benefit of more than \$10 million
- Little interest elsewhere in the state until . . .







DR-4277 August 12, 2016 - 1/3 of State Impacted in 21 Parishes







Katrina v. 2016 Flood

- August 29, 2005: Hurricane Katrina destroys or damages nearly 80% of metro New Orleans homes and structures
- 400,000+ residents are displaced (<u>The Washington Post</u>).
- FEMA fields 1.5 million Gulf region requests for aid. – 3 States
- Costliest disaster in U.S. history \$67.8 billion in insured losses on homes, businesses and cars

- August 12-14, 2016 6.9 Trillion Gallons of Rain Fell in the Greater Baton Rouge, Northshore, and Lafayette areas.
- 1/3 of Louisiana Parishes in the Disaster Declaration 21 parishes
- "Cajun Navy" and Armed Forces evacuated over 10,000 people
- 154,000 Households Registered with FEMA
- Costliest Disaster Since Super Storm Sandy







Collaborative: La. Appleseed, pro bono, legal services, law schools

- Funded by community foundation (Baton Rouge Area Foundation BRAF)
 and Kellogg
- Heir property and title issues
- Direct legal services, community education and outreach, advocacy
- Hoping for 2 year collaborative







Advocacy – Small Successions Affidavit

- 2017 Legislative Session HB129
- Expand use of affidavit to decedent's portion of estate valued at \$125,000 or less
- If decedent passed away more than 20 years ago, can use affidavit, regardless of estate value
- Compromises passed unanimously
- Sent to governor for signature

What's Different This Time?

- Collaborative formed and funded much faster
- FEMA information sharing
- Technology app, web-based platform
- State's recovery program rolling out much sooner Restore La.





Challenges



- Community might not be ready
- Proof of ownership for recovery funds v. obtaining clear title
- Keeping people's attention
- Proactive v. reactive communities resilience



