



# Bay Area Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement

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## Support the People of the Gulf Coast

*“We are the ones who've been treated without care, dignity or respect in our own place, our own country. We are the ones who will decide how to claim what we know as home — officials have engaged in — criminal neglect — and we call upon the world community to listen and support us.” — Community Labor United*

October 22, 2005

Dear Veteran of the Southern Freedom Movement:

With those words, in early September an ambitious grassroots effort for community reclamation was born. The people of New Orleans and the Gulf region are fighting back against the opportunistic “catastrophe capitalism” threatening to engulf the cultural center of the south. With strong support from progressives all across America, they are organizing a Peoples Hurricane Response and Relief Fund. We urge you to support their efforts with all the resourcefulness at your command, and we have listed below several ways you might begin.

First, who we are: Several years ago, a group of Veterans living in the San Francisco Bay Area came together to reclaim our Movement history, renew the trust and friendships forged more than 40 years ago, and rebuild our community. We do these primarily through our website, [www.crmvet.org](http://www.crmvet.org). Like you, we were staff members and volunteers for CORE, SCLC, SNCC, NAACP, COFO and related local organizations. The bonds we forged in danger, struggle, defeat and victory have neither rusted nor withered with age. In our hearts we still stand in that band of sisters and brothers in a circle of trust and, today, righteous indignation.

So it is with urgency and hope that we are writing to ask that you extend your heart, hand, and help to the people of the Gulf Coast, and particularly New Orleans Community Labor United (CLU) and their People's Hurricane Relief Fund (PHRF).

Led by former SNCC workers Curtis (Hayes) Muhammad and John O'Neal, and supported by other Movement veterans such as Bob Moses and Dave Dennis, CLU/PHRF is a coalition of labor and grassroots organizations that are determined to ensure that aid reaches those who need it most, that the material and health needs of the poor and disenfranchised are met, that justice is done for those who were harmed by the willful actions and inactions of government at

all levels, and that families are reunited. The longer term goal of this coalition is to ensure that the residents themselves influence and monitor the reconstruction of the devastated areas. More information about these efforts can be found on CLU/PHRF's website at: [www.communitylaborunited.net](http://www.communitylaborunited.net).

We urge you to give generously to this effort. Tax-deductible contributions can be made to CLU/PHRF with your credit card via the Vanguard Foundation website at [www.vanguardsf.org](http://www.vanguardsf.org). Checks can be sent to:  
People's Hurricane Relief Fund:  
C/O Vanguard Public Foundation  
383 Rhode Island St., Set 301  
San Francisco, CA 94103

We also urge you to begin mobilizing NOW! "Right of return" is a politically charged issue in the Gulf region. As private developers and some public officials are assembling plans to create theme parks and casinos on land that recently housed whole neighborhoods, civil and labor rights are suspended and undocumented workers are being brought in to work at sub-poverty wages. Yet another blow to the traumatized families: no jobs in the reconstruction, no living wages.

Please consider joining with others in your community to organize a local Gulf Community Solidarity Group and use your contacts and networks to press for evacuees' right of return. People in the storm zone must give comfort and recovery support to their own and rebuild their own community ...affordably...and in environmental safety. Please join CLU's struggle around issues of racism, reconstruction, family reunification, jobs and wages, land tenure, environmental justice, and conditions in FEMA camps. For weeks we've suffered and grieved. Now it's time to act.

- CLU has established Communication Centers in Jackson MS., and New Orleans with more to come. They need volunteers — particularly people of color — who can come down and help out at these centers.
- They also need donations that will specifically support staff.
- Individuals and local solidarity committees are also needed to work in their own communities supporting CLU work and committees:  
POLITICAL OVERSIGHT & RECONSTRUCTION: [oversight@communitylaborunited.net](mailto:oversight@communitylaborunited.net)  
FUNDRAISING/FINANCE: [finance@communitylaborunited.net](mailto:finance@communitylaborunited.net)  
HEALTH: [health@communitylaborunited.net](mailto:health@communitylaborunited.net)  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: [environmental@communitylaborunited.net](mailto:environmental@communitylaborunited.net)  
Go to the CLU website at: [www.communitylaborunited.net](http://www.communitylaborunited.net) for additional committees, and projects, and updated news.

You can also help to rebuild the community of Movement veterans. For example:

1. Help us locate Movement veterans in the storm zone. On the Civil Rights Movement Veterans' website ([www.crmvet.org](http://www.crmvet.org)) we have a list of storm-area Movement veterans and their current status. If you can add to this list, please send information to

**bayvet@crmvet.org**. Note that we are particularly interested in the status of the local folks who were the heart and backbone of the Movement.

2. Adopt a veteran. Volunteer to provide community, support, and aid to an individual Movement veteran and his/her family in the storm zone. When veterans in need are identified, we want to create a one-to-one relationship with a volunteer who will keep in touch, help cut through red tape, and make sure that their needs are being met. Heather Baum is coordinating this effort. Please contact her at **hbandbob@comcast.net**.
3. Stay in touch via the Veterans Website. Why not? It's your website after all, and we think you'll be more than pleased with it. This mailing is going to 1600 Movement veterans. Since we don't have the financial resources to do a second one, all our future communication concerning Gulf Coast Support will be via the website and email. You can stay in touch by sending us your email address. Better yet, visit the website and add your name to the "Veterans Roll Call" at **www.crmvet.org**.

Please pass this letter on to other Movement veterans that you may know because our mailing list is not comprehensive. You can also direct other Movement veterans to a copy of this letter posted on the website at: **www.crmvet.org/katrina/letter.htm**.

In struggle, Bay Area Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement:

Chude Pam Parker Allen  
Miriam (Cohen) Glickman  
Hardy Frye  
Bruce Hartford

Phil Hutchings  
Don Jelinek  
Betita Martinez  
Mike Miller

Willie (Wazir) Peacock  
Jimmy Rogers  
Jean Wiley