

Points of Light Institute/HandsOn Network and New Orleans Mayor Landrieu to Announce Critical Support for Gulf Coast

Largest volunteer network in the nation to recruit, train and mobilize 50,000 to region

June 30, 2010 (NEW YORK CITY) - As millions of Americans bear the brunt of one of the nation's worst-ever environmental disasters, Points of Light Institute/HandsOn Network CEO Michelle Nunn and New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu will meet in New York to strategize on the needs of Gulf Coast residents and how the power of volunteerism can help the region recover from the ongoing oil spill.

With 13 HandsOn Action Centers serving the oil spill-impacted states of Alabama, Mississippi, Florida and Louisiana, HandsOn will recruit and train 10,000 volunteer leaders and mobilize 50,000 volunteers to devote an expected 1 million hours to support the region's environmental and economic recovery. In addition, HandsOn will conduct a series of on-the-ground and virtual "boot camps" to train volunteer leaders to manage others and develop projects to meet community-specific needs, such as creating job re-training and job search clinics; restoring parks and open spaces; and assisting small businesses in operations, marketing and finance to recoup losses or improve business sustainability. To sign up and Get HandsOn for the boot camps, please visit www.handsonnetwork.org/nola2011.

"This disaster is unusually complex in terms of volunteer deployment," said Michelle Nunn. "Much of the oil-related issues require special skills particularly to assist with oil spill remediation and to resolve specific health concerns associated with the environmental clean-up. However, there are many ways that volunteers can help with the vast social service needs that have been amplified with recent disaster. In many ways the area is still recovering from Katrina, so some of the greatest needs are with the families dealing with the economic impact of the situation."

HandsOn volunteer leaders and member organizations immediately engaged in the Gulf as the oil spill unfolded and are actively working to manage and direct volunteer resources.

- HandsOn affiliates in south Alabama and Mississippi are training volunteers to observe the coast and report signs of oil to authorities.
- United Way of the Gulf Coast opened a Volunteer Reception Center in Harrison County and has one operating in Hancock County to refer volunteers to available opportunities.
- HandsOn affiliates in Florida are clearing the beaches of litter and debris to help expedite the spill clean-up.
- AmeriCorps Alums members and VISTAs—who are national service recruits already—are being dispatched by HandsOn help lead others in recovery operations.

HandsOn Network has the expertise to channel surges of volunteers to help communities recover from disaster.

- Immediately after the flooding in Tennessee, Hands On Nashville mobilized thousands of volunteers for flood relief. In just over a month, they had organized 17,000 volunteers who contributed an estimated \$1.5 million worth of relief work.
- In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, HandsOn established new Action Centers in New Orleans and Mississippi, mobilized thousands of volunteers from around the world and delivered an estimated \$13 million worth of recovering and rebuilding in just one year. HandsOn New Orleans and HandsOn Gulf Coast continue to mobilize volunteers to support the recovery.

About Points of Light Institute

Points of Light Institute inspires, equips and mobilizes people to take action that changes the world. The Institute has a global focus to redefine volunteerism and civic engagement for the 21st century, putting people at the center of community problem solving. We are organized to innovate, incubate and activate new ideas that help people act upon their power to make a difference. Points of Light Institute operates four dynamic business units that share our mission: HandsOn Network, generationOn, AmeriCorps Alums, MissionFish and the Civic Incubator. For more information, visit PointsofLight.org.

HandsOn Network is the volunteer-focused arm of Points of Light Institute with more than 250 Action Centers in 16 countries.

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