

Good News Department

Volunteers Of America Builds Homes So Gulf Coast Residents Can Return Home

(NAPSA)—Almost five years after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, Volunteers of America continues to build much-needed affordable housing for locals and welcome back residents displaced by the storm.

In the aftermath of Katrina, Volunteers of America created the “Coming Back Home” initiative with a commitment to create more than 1,000 units of affordable housing in the Gulf Coast area. In partnership with the Major League Baseball Players Trust and other major donors, the organization also established the Rental Housing Development Fund, which will be used to develop affordable rental housing in the region.

The first newly constructed community in this initiative, The Terraces on Tulane, recently welcomed its first residents. The community offers 200 affordable apartments for seniors and is located in New Orleans’ Mid-City neighborhood. For many, moving into their new apartments was a joyous homecoming and a chance to reconnect with old neighbors and friends.

“I’m so excited I can’t wait,” said 74-year-old Alice Blue, who after Katrina was evacuated to the New Orleans Convention Center, then to Austin, Texas and finally to California, where her brother lives.

Founded in 1896, Volunteers of America is the largest nonprofit provider of affordable housing in the United States. Nationally, Volunteers of America provides hous-



The Terraces of Tulane, a newly constructed community, welcomes back many seniors displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

ing to more than 11,000 families and 8,000 senior households, and is committed to increasing the supply of permanent affordable rental housing for working families in greater New Orleans.

Elsewhere in New Orleans, the organization started construction on the Chateau Carre Apartments—a rehabilitated, mixed-income housing development with 150 one- and two-bedroom apartments. The project is being funded in part by a block grant from the Louisiana Recovery Authority and the Office of Community Development.

In 2007, the organization also reopened The Duvernay Residence on Canal Street, which provides 70 single-room occupancy units to people transitioning from life on the streets to permanent housing.

In southern Alabama and Mississippi, Volunteers of America is building affordable single-family houses that feature steel frames and other innovations that allow these homes to withstand hurricane-force winds.

For more information, visit www.VolunteersofAmerica.org.