



STAIR

Start The Adventure In Reading



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS 1985-2005

WINTER 2006

STAIR Program Reaches Children in Post-Katrina World

Even before schools started to open after Hurricane Katrina, STAIR was actively seeking out 2nd grade students in need of tutoring help. Beginning in January, STAIR began opening 12 tutoring sites in the metropolitan area. In Orleans Parish, we are working with Communities in Schools and Ben Franklin Elementary School to provide our tutoring services. We also are partnering with the University of New Orleans and New Orleans Outreach to offer the STAIR program to Capdau UNO Charter School. Tulane University is providing tutors for the on-campus STAIR site serving Nelson Elementary School.

On the West Bank, STAIR is working

with the Algiers Charter School Association to provide tutoring services to children from Behrman (Algiers United Methodist Church) as well as Harte and Eisenhower (Woodland Presbyterian Church) schools.

In Jefferson Parish, the STAIR program is serving children from Airline Park, A. C. Alexander, Jefferson and Harahan elementary schools at STAIR sites at Parkway Presbyterian Church, Faith Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Jefferson Presbyterian Church and St. Paul's United Methodist Church, respectively. Our program serving Hazel Park students at Hickory Knoll Church of Christ will re-open in

the fall due to church damage. STAIR also has expanded in Jefferson Parish this year with a new program serving children at Westwego Elementary School. In Plaquemines Parish, STAIR opened its first-ever site in that parish serving children from Belle Chasse Primary School at Belle Chasse United Methodist Church.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Pre-Katrina, STAIR served Orleans and Jefferson Parish public elementary schools, on both the east and west banks. Demographics for these

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*A special thanks to
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STAIR to Celebrate 20th Anniversary with A STAIR Affair Reception

The 2005-2006 school year was to be a time of celebration for STAIR, but then there was Hurricane Katrina! We are proud to say that Katrina did not stop our tutoring program, but it did change all of our 20th Anniversary plans. Many of our anniversary activities have been postponed until the 2006-2007 school year, except for **A STAIR Affair**. Our *STAIR Affair* Committee has decided to honor STAIR's efforts by moving forward with our event during this school year. It will not be the same event we had planned for the Audubon Golf Clubhouse in October 2005. Instead we are bringing STAIR home to The

Land Building at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church, where our program has its roots.

So please **mark your calendar for A STAIR Affair, 5:30-7:30 PM, April 22, 2006**, and plan to join us for fun, friends and cocktails as we look to the future and commemorate our past 20 years of service to the children of Greater New Orleans. If you would like to purchase ticket(s) by credit card (Visa/MC), please email or call Jackie at jrichard@scapc.org or 504-899-0820. Or you can send a check to: STAIR, 1545 State Street, New Orleans, LA 70118. Ticket price: \$35 per person.

Save the Date! A STAIR Affair on April 22, 2006

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

While many of STAIR's tutoring locations were in buildings that survived Hurricane Katrina, seven sites and their books and curriculum materials were lost. These included our sites at Carrollton Church of Christ, Community Church Unitarian Universalist, Cornerstone United Methodist Church, Dillard University, Peace Presbyterian Church, Southern University New Orleans, and Tulane Chapel of the Holy Spirit. The STAIR materials at Lakeview Presbyterian Church are safe, but the church sustained major damage.

Other sites, including those at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church, are temporarily on hold due to the closing of the schools they served. Our sites at schools – Bauduit, Lafayette and McDonogh #15 – are closed until further notice. Another site, Hickory Knoll Church of Christ, will re-open in the Fall due to damage to the church.

Unfortunately, FEMA denied STAIR's claim for funding to recover its losses. Undeterred, STAIR applied for and received a Hurricane Katrina Bridge grant for \$11,965 from the Foundation for the MidSouth to help us replace curriculum materials, equipment and supplies lost at the sites that were



Tutor and student work together at new Westwego STAIR site.

severely damaged.

STAIR is fortunate that many of its veteran site directors were able to return to operate those sites that survived Hurricane Katrina. STAIR welcomes new staff members, Debra Shorty at the Algiers Site, Danielle Knoblauch at the Belle Chasse site, Kate Archer at the Jefferson site, Katie Valence at the Westwego site and Ione Bolden at the Woodland site.

We also must gratefully acknowledge the return of our STAIR tutors and volunteers, many of whom have put aside Katrina-related concerns to help New Orleans area children catch up on their reading skills. STAIR salutes you!

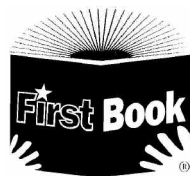
REX ORGANIZATION TO HOST FIRST BOOK DISTRIBUTION

Now that we've all enjoyed the beautiful floats and wonderful throws from the REX parade, it's time



to get down to the business of books! Thanks to the generosity of the REX Organization, First Book out of Washington D.C. will host a book distribution the second week of May 2006 in New

Orleans. The U.S. Coast Guard, First Book's national partner, is unable to host this next distribution but will still provide the manpower needed to



help get these books out. First Book is administering this hurricane relief effort to send books to the children and adults affected by the hurricane in New Orleans and on the Gulf Coast.

Applications for this and other First Book - Book Relief distributions can be found on their Web site, www.NationalBookBank.org. For questions, contact the First Book - Book Relief team at bookrelief@first-book.org or at 866-393-1222.

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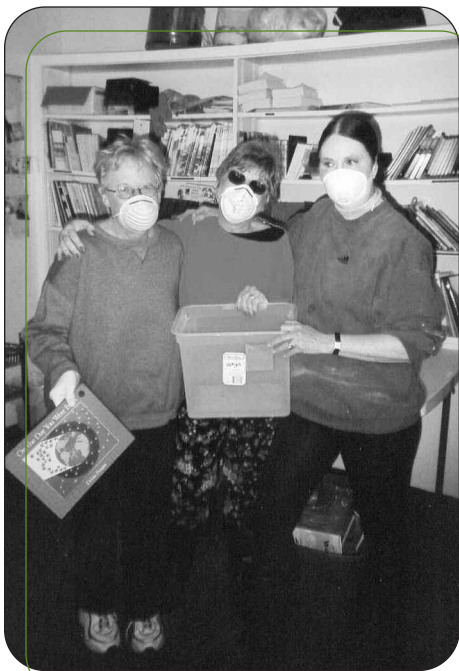
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STAIR PROGRAM IN POST-KATRINA WORLD

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areas have changed drastically since the storm. We predict that the majority of our STAIR students, post-Katrina, will be primarily seven to nine year



STAIR staff and volunteers rescue curriculum materials at our Lakeview Presbyterian Church site.

old African-American boys and girls living at or below the poverty level in our community. We also expect to see a higher number of white students and Hispanic students with the influx of Hispanic workers and their families. All need our services due to the disruption in the school year and so much time missed out of the classroom.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to working with its community partners, STAIR also is participating as a member of the United Nonprofits of Greater New Orleans. In late fall, STAIR submitted information about our program to the Bring New Orleans Back Commission. STAIR is listed at the Commission's website as a source of volunteer opportunities for New Orleans citizens who want to be part of the solution.

STAIR's Volunteer Tutors Boost Program

Despite the disruption Katrina caused, STAIR was encouraged by the many tutors, both veteran and brand new, who called our office eager to start tutoring again. The volunteer program also benefited from a generous \$20,000 Harrah's Community Impact Grant received last August. This is the first time in STAIR's twenty-year history that it has received such a large grant designed to support the volunteer component of our program.

Tutor training sessions were held in December and January at six different locations—three of which were new to our training program, reflecting our efforts to widen our reach in the community. Fifty-three STAIR tutors have been trained to date.

A training session was held at Westwego Senior Center for the convenience of volunteers who would be tutoring across the street at the new STAIR site at Westwego Elementary School. For the first time East Jefferson General Hospital hosted a STAIR training at the request of some of the nursing staff.

In early December STAIR conducted a tutor training session at Parkway Presbyterian Church. Surprisingly, it attracted a large crowd, demonstrating that the volunteer spirit in Metairie is alive and well. Parkway subsequently became one of the first sites to reopen and is currently our largest site with fourteen students;



Thanks to a Harrah's Community Impact Grant, STAIR Volunteer Director Elizabeth Artigues trains new tutors at Parkway Presbyterian Church.

several of them are displaced Orleans Parish children.

Successful training sessions were also held at Hickory Knoll Church of Christ, St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church and Woodland Presbyterian Church. STAIR will conduct a tutor training session for Harrah's employees at a future date.

A number of volunteers also have been recruited to test students using the Brigance Inventory of Basic Skills, a reading tool used to evaluate the success of STAIR's program.

2005-2006 STAIR Sites

ORLEANS PARISH

Algiers United Methodist Church
Ben Franklin Elementary School
Capdau UNO Charter School
Nelson UNO Charter School
Woodland Presbyterian Church

JEFFERSON PARISH

Faith Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Hickory Knoll Church of Christ
Jefferson Presbyterian Church
Parkway Presbyterian Church
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
Westwego Elementary School

PLAQUEMINES PARISH

Belle Chasse United Methodist Church

AFFILIATE SITES

Alabama

Independent Presbyterian Church
Birmingham
First Presbyterian Church
Birmingham

Delaware

First and Central Presbyterian Church
Wilmington

Florida

Edgewater United Methodist Church
Port Charlotte

Pilgrim United Church of Christ
Port Charlotte

Louisiana

New Covenant Presbyterian Church
Mandeville
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Ruston

Maryland

First Presbyterian Church
Annapolis

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Old Stone Presbyterian Church
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STAIR needs your help

As New Orleans recovers and rebuilds in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, STAIR is proud to be able to provide its tutoring services. Today STAIR is focused on finding our second-grade children in need of help and we are focused on finding our volunteers who are ready and willing to work with these children.

Your support of the STAIR program will allow us to continue to help our children who have missed so much school this year. Now more than ever these second-graders need STAIR's tutoring help. If you can, please support STAIR with your donation. Your gift will make a difference in a child's life.

YES, I would like to be a Friend of STAIR!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please charge \$ _____ to my credit card.

VISA MasterCard Exp. Date: _____

Card No.: _____

Name as on card: _____

Signature: _____

I want to purchase ____ *STAIR Affair* tickets @ \$35 each

My company will match gift (match form enclosed).

I am interested in volunteering. Contact me.

\$1,000 20th Anniversary Major Supporter

\$500 to Sponsor a Student for a year

\$250 to Sponsor a Student for a semester

\$150 to recruit and train a tutor

\$100 for curriculum materials for 10 students

\$50 for reading games for 10 students

\$25 for pencil and paper for 10 students

\$ _____ Any size gift is greatly appreciated.

Please make checks payable to Start The Adventure In Reading (STAIR)
 STAIR, 1545 STATE STREET, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70118

THANK YOU FOR GIVING THE GIFT OF READING!