Common Ground Relief Free Legal Clinic

In order to continue to provide free legal services to local residents we have partnered with *The Louisiana Civil Justice Center.*

This partnership allows us to provide a wide range of services including consumer protection matters, Elder Law, Family Law, Estate Planning, Foreclosure issues, government programming, Housing and Landlord-Tenant disputes. Attorneys are available on a daily basis. This partnership also expands Common Ground Relief's services to the Spanish speaking community.

The Louisiana Civil Justice Center is the organization responsible for emergency assistance in the event of a future disaster, such as another hurricane, under the Louisiana State Bar Association/Access to Justice emergency disaster plan.

In addition, we continue to advocate for the restoration of certain rights and benefits of the formerly incarcerated. We support efforts to rehabilitate and educate first time criminal offenders rather than sending them to jail or prison.

COMMON GROUND RELIEF

Geaux New Orleans

We hold in our hearts a more generous and caring future and thank you for helping us through the long haul in rebuilding Greater New Orleans over the past 9 years.

Please consider supporting Common Ground Relief and our 2015 programs. All tax deductible checks can be made to Common Ground Relief, 1800 Deslonde Street, New Orleans, LA 70117.

Wishing you and the world a kinder and better future.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to Common Ground Relief, Inc.

Make checks payable to:
Common Ground Relief, Inc.
Reminder:
Date your checks by Dec. 31, 2014 for 2014 Tax Deduction

☐ **$2,500**	☐ **$250**	☐ **$35**
☐ **$1,000**	☐ **$100**	☐ **$25**
☐ **$500**	☐ **$50**	☐ **Other**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Email: _____

To make a Tax-Deductible Credit Card Donation visit our website and donate through our secure server, JustGive.org - **www.commongroundrelief.org**

For more information: www.commongroundrelief.org
Founders: Scott Crow, Sharon Johnson, Malik Rahim

COMMON GROUND RELIEF

Common Ground Relief's mission is to create resilient Gulf Coast communities that are environmentally sustainable, financially viable and personally cohesive. Common Ground Relief fulfills this mission assisting residents to build assets that support community transformation and renewal.

Our *Sustainability Framework* includes a platform of integrated programs and services that empower local residents and communities to advocate for and obtain quality housing, educational and cultural facilities, health and wellness systems, job training and opportunities, and sound environmental resources and infrastructure.

The Anita Roddick Advocacy Center

Our offices serve as a community outreach center for general information, legal and construction needs. In addition we continue to offer free copy services, free scanning and faxing and Internet access for residents. We provide a safe environment for students needing computer access to do their homework and we provide meeting space for community service and homeowner groups.

Common Ground Relief remains committed to providing support and remains true to its activist structure. As the recovery moves forward we are working with New Orleans area residents to create positive, resilient and functional communities. Common Ground Relief's approach to community transformation and renewal is built upon the notion of sustainability: environmental, financial and personal. Hence, Common Ground Relief, through The Anita Roddick Advocacy Center, offers a holistic, integrated platform of grassroots, environmentally conscious, and civic-minded services and programs.

The Anita Roddick Advocacy Center houses our short term and long term volunteers.
In 2014 we coordinated over 2,400 short and long term college volunteers and conventioneers. Since our founding on September 5, 2005, nearly 45,000 volunteers from around the world have joined us in providing services to the Greater New Orleans Community.

Our volunteers founded and initially staffed the Common Ground Health Clinic in Algiers and a women's shelter, now known as the New Orleans Women's Shelter, in the Ninth Ward. We provided food, water, clothing and tool lending in nine distribution centers in seven parishes from Houma in Terrebonne Parish to Belle Chasse in Plaquemines Parish.

Our volunteers gutted approximately 3,000 houses, businesses, churches and schools in the Ninth Ward. Our construction skilled volunteers have worked primarily on the renovation of home interiors since January 2008 in addition to completing a variety of additional volunteer construction jobs that run the gamut from house foundation repair to re-roofing. Additionally, we have provided volunteers to cultural institutions in the city to assist in repairs to their architecturally significant structures.

Common Ground Relief Wetlands LLC

Louisiana continues to lose a football field-size piece of land every 37 minutes due to soil erosion.

Common Ground Relief is actively involved in wetland planting and working with local environmental groups and government agencies to remove invasive plant species. We have organized and participated in many efforts to rebuild a greener New Orleans and we have made wetlands restoration an institutional priority.

To achieve this goal we created the Wetland Restoration Station in 2009. We are growing thousands of bottomland hardwood trees, including Bald Cypress, and tens of thousands of stems of marsh grasses that we are planting with volunteer groups in both fresh and salt water environments throughout the region. Planting sites are monitored and we have the ability to salt harden plant material if needed.

We provide volunteers for planting projects with our partners Audubon Nature Center, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture and private property owners since personpower is often the limiting factor in replanting efforts.

In 2014 we completed our second marsh grass and native tree nursery in the Lower Ninth Ward. This nursery contains citrus trees and roses for the use of community members. Nursery 2.0 , the "Cabane Coypu" and our wetlands contemplative center are open to the public seven days a week.

We have partnered with Groundwork New Orleans to create the Green Team at the Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School for Science and Technology in the Lower Ninth Ward. The participating students are paid a weekly salary and help us coordinate plantings and rain garden installations and work in our nursery. The participants also learn plant nursery management and act as mentors for other students.

Common Ground Relief Wetlands is also providing environmental education programming for K-12 schools in Orleans and Jefferson parishes as part of our Meg Perry Healthy Soil Project.

Forty percent (40%) of New Orleans' carbon footprint is created when the water pumps are turned on during a rainstorm. By installing residential rain gardens and rain gardens along the sides of city streets we can reduce the city's carbon footprint as well as keep polluted rainwater runoff from being pumped into the bayous surrounding the city. We created a wetland demonstration project at The Anita Roddick Advocacy Center so residents can see which types of native plant material grows best in a typical yard and to see how rain gardens

Skilled Volunteer Building and Restoration

Common Ground Relief continues to house and feed volunteers who possess skills essential to home building and wetland restoration. We have partnered with colleges from across the country who provide us with skilled volunteers to maintain our programs. Our programs are administered by paid staff members. We are continually re-evaluating our programs to meet the needs of the residents in the neighborhoods where we work.

From our early days in 2005 when we were providing food, water and basic medical care to our current focus on rebuilding, restoration and job creation, Common Ground Relief has consistently advocated for New Orleanians right to return. We work side-by-side with residents as they rebuild their homes, re-create their neighborhoods and restore their environment.

Common Ground Relief has a fully equipped shop to create custom wood moldings and build hardwood kitchen cabinetry and bathroom vanities for homes being remodeled throughout the city. The millwork shop is able to replicate and install antique moldings and trim pieces in historic wooden houses. *We are a certified Section 3 Small Business.*

Please visit www.commongroundrelief.org/calvinduncan for more information regarding our efforts to save New Orleans architecturally significant and historic housing.

We believe that volunteers should not be taking jobs away from local residents. Local not-for-profits should be hiring and training local residents. We encourage the purchase of materials from local merchants who employ local residents.

Common Ground Relief has created a job training program in partnership with a Louisiana licensed, bonded and insured general contractor. By expanding our new home construction and historic home restoration program throughout Jefferson, Orleans and St. Bernard parishes, our contractor partner and sub-contractors are hiring and training more local residents.