

Strengthening Democracy, Increasing Opportunities in the Gulf/Midsouth Region: Summary of Findings

	Alabama	Arkansas	Louisiana	Mississippi
Organizations in sample	5	5	5	5
Total monetary benefits	\$4.77 billion			
Total funding for advocacy and organizing	\$41.9 million (78% from foundations)			
Aggregate Return (ROI)	\$114			
Economic Security	Blocked legislation that would have denied tuition, scholarships, and financial aid to "illegal aliens," and expanded the instances in which law enforcement agents, state agencies, and employers are required to verify immigration status.	Secured state minimum wage increase from \$5.15 to \$6.25 per hour; 127,000 workers have garnered \$209 million per year in added wages.	Rural Recovery Response initiative ensured that after hurricanes, \$13.3 million in investment went to rural homes and businesses, which may generate as much as \$108 million in broader economic impact in rural Louisiana.	Convinced state Department of Human Services to make a recourse policy for a fair hearings process in the child care subsidy program, benefiting both child care providers and low-income working families.
Affordable Housing and Community Development	Prevented City of Mobile from blocking development of new affordable housing units. Won zoning approval so \$3 million development could be built.	Successfully advocated for money in the state budget for rural services in communities of less than 1000, garnering more than \$5.5 million over 5 years.	Litigated for fair treatment of African American homeowners under federal/state Road Home program and won more than \$2 billion in additional grants for low-income homeowners to rebuild their properties after hurricanes.	After Hurricane Katrina, secured a portion of federal community development block grant funds for affordable housing through the Neighborhood Home Program that the governor had attempted to use to expand a port.
Education and Youth Development	Secured 1% sales tax to get a new high school built in Sumter County.	Successfully advocated for necessary funding to allow isolated schools and districts to operate, ensuring that more than \$48 million was allocated over 5 years.	Vietnamese youth in New Orleans East neighborhood organized after Katrina to prevent placement of landfill in their community and fight for better public schools.	Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) was fully funded in 2008 by the state for the first time since its inception--an increase of \$222 million over 2007 level.
Environment and Transportation	Blocked a bill requiring drivers license tests to be given only in English, which would have hindered transportation safety.	Helped form state Global Warming Commission and enact Sustainable Energy Efficient Program to reduce energy use in all state buildings by 30 percent by 2017. Estimated taxpayer savings are \$30 million by 2017.	Established Refinery Efficiency Initiative to engage fence-line communities, regulatory agencies, workers and refineries to reduce pollution and improve health and quality of life by reducing accident rates at Louisiana oil refineries.	Through organizing and legal advocacy, compelled City of Jackson to improve transit services and access for people with disabilities, including allocating \$139,000 over 3 years for an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance officer.
Civil and Human Rights	Won an end to life without parole for non-violent offenders, saving the state more than \$15,000 a year per inmate, or \$113 million over 25 years.	Fought against state ban of adoption by same-sex couples, which was enacted in 2008 but overturned by courts in 2010.	Educated federal policy makers on how residents and fishers were affected by the BP oil spill and ways to address linguistic and cultural competence issues for Vietnamese and other ethnic families.	Successful campaign in Tunica County and at state level to reform school discipline policies that violated student rights. Secured passage of Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2009.
Health and Safety	Negotiated standards for administration of medicines to children by child care providers to ensure child safety.	Organized 800 workers in a Bentonville poultry processing plant to get their employer to provide safety equipment.	Organized state agencies, service providers and philanthropy to improve access to mental health services for women, including those suffering postpartum depression.	Prevented a major state funding cut of \$110 million to Medicaid that would have eliminated important health services for elderly participants and those with disabilities.
New core leaders	1,758			
Participated in leadership training	33,577			
Communicated with policymakers	98,036			
Joined community organizations	22,755			
Attended public actions	46,582			