EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

On September 8, 2010 at Dillard University in New Orleans, Louisiana, NAACP convened a meeting of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the five Gulf Coast states (Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi, and Texas) to discuss the engagement of HBCUs in planning and executing a research agenda on sustainability in the Gulf region. The meeting had four primary aims: 1) Provide an opportunity for HBCUs to come together and determine priorities for our communities regarding the Gulf oil disaster and sustainability in the Gulf, as well as draft strategies to advance those priorities; 2) Provide a forum for HBCUs to learn about the various opportunities available to support their engagement in addressing the Gulf oil disaster and sustainability in the Gulf region; 3) Showcase to federal agencies and BP the assets and capabilities of the HBCUs as potential partners; and 4) Explore options for combining complementary assets in creative partnerships amongst HBCUs and with federal, state, and corporate partners to execute a Gulf region sustainability research and policy agenda.

The 42 participants included representatives from 12 historically black colleges and universities, NAACP membership and leadership, as well as representatives from, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency, the National Institutes for Environmental Health Sciences, the United States Coast Guard, BP, the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), BP, and the White House Initiative on HBCUs.

Grounding Us in Community Realities

Consistent with the aim of grounding the research agenda in the communities it seeks to serve, these proceedings commenced with a foundation in community perspectives. Reverend Tyrone Edwards, Pastor of Zion Travelers Baptist Church in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, spoke on behalf of the many community groups with whom he works. Reverend Edwards painted the picture of communities yet to recover from Hurricane Katrina and now besieged with another disaster. He described issues of distrust of BP and, to some degree, also federal agencies. For affected communities, these concerns have plagued the response to the oil drilling disaster since the beginning. He spoke of the imperative for independent research, conducted by trusted entities. Referencing the elevated death rates that have plagued the Hurricane Katrina affected region, Reverend Edwards warned that if swift action is not taken on engaging in appropriate, community-responsive, and effective research now, the scenario might be similar years down the line.

Charting an HBCU Gulf Research Agenda

The discussion on the HBCU vision for research in the Gulf region was framed using the following categories: Social Sciences; Public Health, Environmental Science, and Environmental Justice. NAFEO provided an extensive overview of the research and public policy assets and capabilities of HBCUs, in the referenced categories. A few of the research questions
that participants identified include: a) What makes the impact of the oil spill different on communities of color than other populations?; b) What is the cumulative impact of a community already under stress recovering from Hurricane Katrina?; c) What is the impact of the oil spill on sustainable living environments?; and d) What is the fate, effect and impacts of the dispersants?

**Dialogue with Potential Partners**

EPA, NIEHS, NOAA, the US Coast Guard, BP and the White House Initiative on HBCUs joined the meeting for a discussion on existing and planned research underway in the Gulf and the opportunities for participation of the HBCU Consortium. BP described their five research priorities that will frame the upcoming $500 million RFP and they clarified that this fund and decisions around it will be governed by an advisory council. NIEHS shared their plans to examine the long term health effects by working with the clean-up worker cohort of 10,000 people. NOAA and the US Coast Guard shared a brief overview of their respective roles and plans. While the Coast Guard has been more engaged in the immediate response, NOAA is examining the short and long term impact of the oil spill in the ocean. The EPA spoke of an upcoming $2 million RFP they will be releasing to evaluate the effects of the dispersants. The White House Initiative representative spoke in very affirming terms about this effort to organize the HBCUs and promised his support in moving this work forward.

**A Proposed Structure for HBCU Collaboration**

HBCUs collectively have extensive research capacity in a wide variety of areas. The socioeconomic, basic, and applied research needs in the Gulf region are many, not only due to the Gulf Oil Drilling Disaster, but also in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Communities of color and low income communities in the Gulf region face a plethora of social, health economic, and environmental threats. In addition to their technical acumen, HBCUs are uniquely positioned to carry out community-based participatory research (CBPR) and translate research findings and implications because of their history and relationships with most impacted communities. The framework of the HBCU Gulf Coast Sustainability and Public Policy Research Consortium is rooted in the “Communiversity,” a community based participatory research, education, and outreach model which is a collaboration between HBCUs, community members, civil rights/non-profit/legal organizations, environmental justice centers, and other stakeholder, that engages in research that combines community experience with academic knowledge and theories in a non-threatening environment. The deliverables of the Consortium would include generation of transferable experiential knowledge in the areas of indicators of community and ecosystem health and resilience, and integrated interdisciplinary decision tools.

**Agreed Conclusions**

1) Trust is an issue as it relates to the research agenda in the Gulf. It is not just the message. It is the messenger. HBCUs are uniquely positioned to mitigate this challenge.

2) Community participatory models are critical to the success and integration of sustainability and public policy research in the Gulf region.

3) Human dimensions and impacts of the oil spill and other environmental and health threats in the Gulf region must be addressed and serve as the objective and endpoint of the research agenda. Considerable shifting of emphasis and re-prioritization are needed in the current and forthcoming research initiatives.

4) Most affected communities are missing from decision making forums and this must be remedied in order to have an effective response, recovery, and restoration plan, as well as a long term sustainability plan. Inclusive review panels/advisory boards/commissions specifically recognizing HBCU investigators must be established at all levels of these processes.

5) Institutions holding the trust and respect of impacted communities (communities of color are among the most impacted groups and underrepresented at the decision making forums) must be prominently engaged in developing and executing the Gulf research agenda.

For More Information—NAACP Climate Justice Initiative, Jacqui Patterson, Director, jpatterson@naacpnet.org, 410-580-5786
Historically Black Colleges and Universities & the Research Agenda
on the Oil Drilling Disaster and Sustainability in the Gulf
8 September 2010
Dillard University--New Orleans, Louisiana

FULL REPORT

I. Greetings and Introductions
The HBCU convening began with greetings by Dr. Ernest Johnson, President of the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP and Jacqui Patterson, Director of Climate Justice, NAACP National Office. Dr. Marvalene Hughes, President of Dillard University and Vice President Dr. Walter Strong then brought greetings on behalf of the university. Dr. Lezli Baskerville of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), as a partner in implementing the event through outreach to NAFEO member institutions, brought greetings as well. Lenny Springs, NAACP National Board Member and official with the Department of Education gave an overview of the state of funding for HBCUS and challenges with gaining support for the critical work of these institutions.

II. Community Perspective, Grounding Us in the Realities—Reverend Tyrone Edwards, Zion Travelers Baptist Church

“My community is in Plaquemines Parish, which is where the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico meet in Southern Louisiana. We were devastated by Hurricane Katrina when it happened and we’re still devastated. We reached the point where when we walk into a bank they assume we’re robbing it because we don’t have any other reason to be in there. We have since built up homes and services with no government funding. We don’t want to beg anyone for anything. Now we have this oil spill. What BP has done to our communities is criminal. The fishermen are still pulling in traps with seafood that is polluted. Today BP put out an investigative report giving themselves a clean bill of health. What do you expect when you put Dracula over a blood bank?

We need independent research. We don’t trust BP and, to be honest, we don’t really trust the federal agencies either. BP has demonstrated it can’t be trusted. They can put 20 black people in their commercials and it still won’t change the fact that what they’re saying is not true. From what we’ve seen from the federal agencies they are often just siding with what BP is saying. When our experiences contradict what they’re saying and they don’t have an explanation, the mistrust continues to build. That’s why we need the HBCUs to be resourced to do this work. We trust you! Our communities trust you.

We need the research to start looking at issues we care about now. During Katrina the image a lot of people remember most is people walking through the water with stuff on top of their heads. What folks didn’t think about was the toxicity of that water that was inundated with dead bodies, backed up sewage, etc. Five years later, where before Hurricane Katrina our death notices were only 1 page long, now the notices are 3 pages long! No one is making the correlation. If we don’t do research now, 2 years from now things will be going on that we can’t explain.

We need research by people we trust. Working with Dillard University and the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice under the leadership of Dr. Beverly Wright, has radically changed how we’ve been engaging in this disaster. We were struggling around the language, the process, etc. but the minute we hooked up with Dr. Wright, things changed. Because of Dillard, Dr. Wright, and the Deep South Center, we’ve been able to go to Washington and tell our own stories. If there’s ever a time we need HBCUs, it is now. There is a lot of research to be done and we need the HBCUs to do it because we have history and relationship with them and we trust them. We need to make sure that NAACP advocates for resources for the HBCUs and that they receive it. We will sign, endorse, and support whatever it takes to ensure that the HBCUs are doing this research.”
III. Forming a Sustainability and Public Policy Research Agenda in the Gulf — Small Group Work

To begin to establish priorities for the HBCU research agenda the participant split up into five discussion groups according to the following categories: Social Sciences; Public Health, Environmental Science, and Environmental Justice. Each group was asked to identify issues and research questions that the collaborative should explore in addition to the selected four areas, as well as any missing categories.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Category</th>
<th>Group Members</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Suggested Additional Categories</th>
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<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>Sunny E. Ohia, Texas Southern University</td>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>Is there a social science research repository for minorities regarding the BP oil spill?</td>
<td>Education/Training</td>
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<td>Rubye Braye, Wu Li Turtle Corp.</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>What makes the impact of the BP oil spill different on minorities than other populations?</td>
<td>Economy</td>
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<td>Carolyn Scantlebury, Pres. NAACP Houston, TX.</td>
<td>Cultural competency</td>
<td>What are the short and long term psycho-social economic effects of the BP oil spill on minorities?</td>
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<td>Brittany Brown, NAACP</td>
<td>Existing repository of information</td>
<td>What is the impact of the BP oil spill on sustainable living environments for minorities?</td>
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<td>Sharron Herron-Williams, Alabama State Univ.</td>
<td>Linguistic connections</td>
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<td>Leonard Springs, Dept. of Ed.</td>
<td>Demographics</td>
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<td>John P. Brown, White House Initiative on HBCUs</td>
<td>• Who are those affected?</td>
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<td>Felix Okojie, Jackson State University, Jackson MS</td>
<td>• Where are they located?</td>
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<td>• What are the numbers of those most affected?</td>
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<td>Possible long term effects</td>
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<td>Preliminary mental health assessments</td>
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<td>Available services to meet needs</td>
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<td>Identify and recommend mitigating conditions</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>❖ Existing Repository</td>
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<td>❖ What is the impact on the sustainable living environment of the community? (e.g., housing value, and schooling)</td>
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<td>❖ Effect on the “shadow economy”</td>
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<td>❖ Understand the system of living</td>
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<td>Environmental Justice</td>
<td>Julian Pugh, Tallahassee Community College</td>
<td>Economic disparities</td>
<td>Education and training of transition workers to new occupations</td>
<td>Economic—seafood industry, oil industry workers, hotel tourism business developed in the clean-up, transitional</td>
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<td>Brian Rowland—TX NAACP</td>
<td>Disaster training</td>
<td>Where is the waste going? Who is affected? What are the environmental impacts?</td>
<td>Environmental Degradation—waste disposal, coastal erosion</td>
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<td>Lewis Jennings, Florida State Conference, NAACP</td>
<td>Workers organizing</td>
<td>Contamination of seafood? Who is collecting data and how?</td>
<td>Health Issues—unknown (uptake of seafood) dispersants (never used) long term health effects,</td>
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<td>Beverly Wright, DSCEJ/Dillard University</td>
<td>Service delivery (culturally sensitive)</td>
<td>Health impacts for dispersants?</td>
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<td>Mary Williams</td>
<td>DSCEJ/Dillard University</td>
<td>Who is impacted?</td>
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## What are the mental health impacts of the oil spill?

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<th>Environmental Science</th>
<th>Richard Gragg Florida A&amp;M University</th>
<th>Ecological Mapping</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Richard Green, Alcorn State University</td>
<td>Microorganisms</td>
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<td>Chris Zarba, EPA</td>
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<td>Safloat H Shakur, Prairie View A&amp;M University</td>
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<td>Rachel Cruthirds, Xavier University</td>
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<td>Irvin Osborne Lee, Prairie View A&amp;M</td>
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<td>Adebayo Oyekan, Texas Southern</td>
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<td>Louis J. Hall, MS Valley State</td>
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<td>Vida A. Dennis, Alabama State University</td>
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<td>Mamie Coats, Alabama State University</td>
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<td>Public Health</td>
<td>Thomas E. Wiese, Ph. D, Xavier University of LA</td>
<td>Direct Effects</td>
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<td>Cynthia Sonich-Mullin, National Homeland Security Research Center</td>
<td>• Toxic Pollution</td>
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<td>Karen Bailey, Dillard University</td>
<td>• Exposure Effects of the BP Oil Spill: Via Air, Soil, Water, Food (Fish)</td>
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<td>Robert Bullard, Environmental Justice Research Center at Clark Atlanta University</td>
<td>• Oil, Dispersants, and Bi-Products</td>
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<td>Barbara Howard, Tuskegee-Macon County NAACP</td>
<td>• Exposure Effects to Workers and Residents</td>
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<td>Wanda Battle, Montgomery County NAACP, AL</td>
<td>Indirect Effects</td>
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<td>• Economic Dislocation – Loss of Jobs</td>
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<td>• Resources for green and sustainable reconstruction and recovery</td>
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<td>• Resources and relief for subsistence fishermen</td>
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<td>• Availability of Social Services</td>
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<td>Community Health Model</td>
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<td>• Total community health as opposed to medical model</td>
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<td>• Effects Change in Diet</td>
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<td>• Research to look at the cumulative impact of a community already under stress recovering from Katrina</td>
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<th>mental health Innovations</th>
<th>Assessment of economic, social and human health impacts</th>
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<td>Cumulative and Longitudinal Risk assessment and communication</td>
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<td>Long term Ecological Mapping – Temporal Baseline</td>
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<td>Grant opportunities and review participation invitation</td>
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IV. HBCU Assets and Capabilities—Dr. Lezli Baskerville, NAFEO

HBCUs are a tremendous and rich resource (representing 3% of colleges and universities) producing graduates who are 32% of African Americans in STEM fields, 50% of African American teachers, and 60% of African American doctors.

HBCUs are a $10 billion per year industry with 188,000 employees, 350,000 enrolled students, and 5 million alumni. In order to move the Gulf region from where it is now, to where it needs to be, the HBCU community must be strategically involved. Renowned academic and research programs in environmental sciences and studies, engineering, medical and public health sciences, and social sciences among the HBCU community warrant their involvement in addressing the Gulf oil disaster and other sustainable communities and public policy issues.

NAFEO shared a book entitled The State of America’s Black Colleges, which details the programs of all HBCUs.

Partnership Discussions

V. FEDERAL RESEARCH INITIATIVES/ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Dr. Joseph “Chip” Hughes, National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences

Dr. Hughes discussed NIEHS’ focus on protecting and training workers responding to the oil spill. They have been training beach cleanup workers addressing environmental damage. Clark Atlanta University and Dillard University have been included in their worker training and environmental justice programs.

On September 7th, NIEHS released an announcement on a request for applications for a Gulf Coast Research Consortium from universities. Money will be available over the next year to establish a research presence in gulf. They will also be looking at the 10,000 most exposed people in terms of oil spill cleanup mental and physical impacts, as community based studies. NIEHS is trying to meet with different groups and universities to conduct outreach. A partnership for environmental public health is underway as well.

Sam Coleman, Cindy Sonich-Mullin and Christopher Zarba—U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Cindy Sonich-Mullin is from the EPA Office of Research and Development, working in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security on research. Her goal has been to examine existing research and help the emergency operation scientific team make informed decisions. EPA is beginning to move from response to long term recovery. “The EPA wants to do the right thing and I’m here at this meeting to learn.”

The EPA has a 60-day monitoring plan which will serve as a transition to a long term plan. The long term research strategy will examine health impacts, effects of by-products, where oil is going, risk communication, mental health, and more. They will also look at how their research strategies compare to those of other federal agencies.

Research, both In-house and external, is being supported through RFAs being issued in the next 8 or 9 weeks. Two million dollars has recently been dedicated to dispersant research. Additional funding will be available for remediation using different technologies. Proposals on economic impacts on communities are accepted as well. EPA acknowledged that information needs to be shared in a way people can understand and believe.
“Some of the things that the reverend said this morning are actually in our proposal,” stated Christopher Zarba. He promised to examine where there are overlaps from the HBCU convening discussion and possibly change the RFA and include things deemed important by participants at the meeting.

They emphasized the competitiveness of the process and advised that universities should team up with others who complement their strengths. To find the guidelines, interested groups should Google EPA/NCER. Everything is online.

EPA also shared that two big things have been done with ongoing research and field work. Pre imposed impact sampling is being done by EPA in near shore (defined as up to 3 miles from shore line). NOAA is doing the work further out.Secondly regarding dispersants, much work is needed in the area of communication and advancing understanding in the communities.

EPA’s involvement in use of dispersants is related to volume and frequency of use. No one thought this much would be used. In the history of this work, there have only been one or two oil spill occurrences that have not been controlled within the first 48 to 72 hours. Thus, the concept of using dispersants daily was not what EPA had been doing. The pre approval process played itself out and, as the amounts grew, the situation was at the point where BP tried the top kill activity. They knew something different needed to be done with dispersants. BP brought in the best experts around the world on dispersant application and use. They were not good at communicating what was happening. EPA put together a better approach to how the daily use was approved and documented it. This added a lot of confidence regarding where the dispersants were used and how. Plus, a paper trail now exists. Samples have been taken and analyzed for toxicity. According to the EPA, dispersants and all of its components are more toxic to aquatic life than humans.

Lt. Commander John Settle, US Coast Guard
The Coast Guard puts the fire out and has a narrow lane within which to work. The Coast Guard then hands the reins to those with knowledge when response stops and the restoration stage begins. The emergency response is winding down soon.

Dr. Charlie Henry, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency
Dr. Henry lives in Baton Rouge and was born and raised in Louisiana. He covers most of the Mississippi River, up to St Louis. His role is Lead Science Advisor to the Coast Guard on all hazard response.

Dr. Henry shared that the story of the BP Oil Spill went from unfortunate to tragedy when the rig sank and the pipe broke, starting the oil spill. It starts out as trying to make things less bad.

There was a decision to eject dispersants on the sea floor as a more efficient delivery system. The deep ocean has not been studied well (about as much as the moon). Oil doesn’t act the same at 5,000 feet. The coastal zone has been researched much more.

He further stated that over the last month, no hydrocarbons or any chemicals have been detected in the boom area. A significant amount of oil is released by natural seeps. That does not make the oil spill less bad, but it may mean that adaptation is less challenging. More samples need to be taken in order for the data to be stronger statistically. Emergency response is not research. Much more monitoring must be done to protect public.

NOAA’s position is that in a response to the oil spill, the job is to protect the public and environment, and ensure the protection of property. One challenge is that the tools used to respond were actually tools created shortly before or after the Exxon Valdez spill, in the early nineties. The technology was outdated, particularly given that they had never had this type of spill. Funding is great after spill, but then it tends to trickle off. Like with the Exxon Valdez, undoubtedly there will be large amounts of funding after this spill.
Furthermore Dr. Henry pointed out that damage assessment is more research prone. Long term research is looking back at things done in the beginning to look at what was good and bad, and what could be better.

Q&A, Comments, and Recommendations

1. **QUESTION:** For the $2 million grants, what would be the average size?

   **EPA RESPONSE:** The range would be approximately $200k to $600k. The grants run for 3 years with a possible one or two year extension with the potential for additional money, if available and warranted. A panel of 12-15 nationally recognized experts, unconnected to EPA, vet the proposals.

   **COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION:** Often proposals that come from the African American community are not funded. Panelists should have connectivity to the African American community. If not, exclusion will persist.

2. **QUESTION:** Can we submit names for the national review committee?

   **EPA RESPONSE:** I will find out what I can do.

   **COMMENT:** Big universities are often favored and small universities are not recognized.

   **EPA RESPONSE:** I encourage people to team up, if you don’t have the expertise. For the RFA requirements, optimize connections and lead with being uniquely able to tap into resources. We want to make sure that the institutions within the area are getting resources. This is a test case. There is strong interest within the agency to do what you all are saying.

   **COMMENT:** EPA used to be lead in making sure communities and HBCUs were included. As a reviewer there is a definite in the culture of the scientific community have their own rules and set of ideas. Hopkins, MIT, etc.... those are the ones that make the decisions.

   **EPA RESPONSE:** We used to set aside money for HBCUs and that is not allowed now, as this was changed by the Supreme Court.

   **COMMENT:** This is a misconception that needs to be corrected. That’s not what that the law means. This interpretation is being misapplied.

3. **QUESTION:** How do you have continued transition from emergency response data to restoration and what is the process to communicate the data to the community?

   **NOAA RESPONSE:** It depends on different compartments. Marine transition goes to Natural Resource Damage Assessment. It has to go through the public review process. Groups do research and see if something was done wrong and if there is claim potential.

   Issues such as seafood safety, has a cyclical effect on the community. The research piece is not done by those close to the issues and the message is confused. Fish don’t complain. People do. Understanding what are real affects and those that are fabricated is key. We need to get risk communication out to the public and get the public to respond.

4. **QUESTION:** How do you verify different proposals?

   **EPA RESPONSE:** There is an extensive vetting process and candidates must sign that they have no conflict of interest.

   **COMMENT:** We need to make sure people with environmental justice perspective accept the positions when they are called to be reviewers. We are so busy sometimes.
VI. White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities--John Brown

“Given my job, which is to build capacity of HBCUs, so far this has been a wonderful learning process.”

❖ John Brown’s Take-Aways:
  o This meeting has been a tremendous resource.
  o The meeting has highlighted the need for improved communication.
  o We should explore how to leverage the resources of White House to support this effort.
  o We request the list of attendees from this meeting so that we can conduct outreach.
  o Discussions have revealed how much we don’t know re what’s going on in our communities.
  o We recommend connecting with the Philander Smith Curriculum on social justice (Walter Kimbrough). This could be a strategic and profitable relationship for moving forward.

VII. BP--Paula Hubbard

Paula started out by stating that the initial intent of BP’s participation in this event is a little bit different than why she was at the event. In talking with NAACP about the Gulf of Mexico research initiative, at the end of the day, she discovered that BP is not far enough long to bring the desired level of detail and information. As she only had cliff notes shared by the technologies, she stated that she probably would not be able to answer technology questions. But she promised to get the answers and send subsequently.

BP interested in how we diversify university populations. Paula shared that she came prepared to provide a high level overview of what is going on with the Gulf Research Initiative. BP has committed 500 million dollars for a 10 year research project. Forty million dollars of the $500 million have already been awarded.

The five core areas for BP’s research priorities are as follows:

1. Physical distribution and ultimate fate of contaminants related to spill;
2. Chemical evolution and biological degradation of contaminants;
3. The impact of the contaminants on the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem;
4. Technology developments for offshore oil spills; and
5. Impacts on health.

There is an advisory council which will be responsible for making decisions around funding allocation. Governance of the funds will be independent of BP. Members will be scientists and researchers and there appears to be no diversity on the council. Paula asked question about how BP will ensure that there is diversity in the allocation of funds. Diversity and inclusion is one of BP’s 4 priorities.

As soon as the consultation process is finalized, BP will be ready to announce. “As soon as we have the final process for submitting proposals, Jacqui/NAACP will be one of my first phone calls.” BP will be “more than happy to come back and answer questions and give assistance where needed.”

Q&A, Comments, and Recommendations

1. QUESTION: How is the organization giving the funds?

   **BP RESPONSE:** I am not really sure.

   **COMMENT:** Of the $500 million research fund, $40 million has already been distributed. No funding has gone to Historically Black Colleges and Universities which represent many of the most impacted communities.
With the advisory committee that is going to control the funds, it seems that there is no diversity. That has to be corrected because if it doesn’t start there, it will not be corrected.

**BP RESPONSE:** I will circle back and let you know if there is diversity on the advisory committee.

**COMMENT:** I am so pleased with what I am hearing and seeing with HBCUs in this region. This is a good start, but the real work will start after this. We must continue to collaborate, and continue to work and make sure research dollars become available. The only way the schools are going to be successful is to work together.

BP must be held accountable, but unless we work together collectively that will never happen. I know that NAACP can play a major role in this moving forward. I hope you come back soon and have some of the decision makers with you.

**BP RESPONSE:** I feel like all I’m saying is no. We are looking to find areas where we can partner. When I presented to the person that owns the initiative we all agreed that this could be a win for all. We can’t do everything, but in those spaces where we find opportunities, we will do what we can.

2. **QUESTION:** What role are the governors going to play in distribution?

**BP RESPONSE:** I don’t have the exact answer. The purpose of the consultations is not to involve the governors in the allocation.

**COMMENT:** The $40 million that has already been dispersed was based on the consultations with the governors, who made recommendations. A joint decision was made between BP and governors of the states. There was a big meeting at LSU on this.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is good to open for competition. If we can get at least some sensitivity to HBCUs, that would be good. They should fund projects that are representative of impacted areas. If we focus on the 5 priority areas and how they affect minorities, we will be more effective.

**BP RESPONSE:** In terms of follow up, I have the questions that came out around the advisory board and the diversity of it, the $40 million and how they were selected, the review panel and the diversity of that.

3. **QUESTION:** What do you perceive as a barrier to the commitment to partner?

**BP RESPONSE:** We have gotten many proposals and many of them have not fit where we are today and where we think we’re going, or it’s something that we are already doing unbeknownst to all. We need proposals that will benefit both sides. What we have to do is look at what are the two or 3 things that BP is going to look at to commit to. We’re looking to go out and say “these are the 4 areas we are looking to support.”

4. **QUESTION:** When will you start receiving proposals?

**BP RESPONSE:** We are not far along enough yet to start receiving proposals.

**COMMENT:** You weren’t here to hear all of the information that we provided earlier. Everything centered around the individual, even social science. If they are not far along in developing the funding guidelines, perhaps they can include some of our ideas?

5. **QUESTION:** Is BP looking out for itself, or the people?

**BP RESPONSE:** It’s all about the community. It is not just us.
COMMENT: If it’s about people, when you look at demographics I don’t see anything in what you talk about being focused on the type of people that are affected. If you as company have not realized where some of your emphasis needs to be, I begin to wonder if this is worthwhile.

6. QUESTION: Is there somewhere where you post all the proposals?

BP RESPONSE: Generally for the proposals submitted, because we are not being specific in what BP is committed to supporting, we are getting something about everything. We need to get more specific. Right now we are spending a lot of time in minority schools.

VIII. HBCU Gulf Coast Sustainability Research and Public Policy Consortium—Robert Bullard, Clark Atlanta University, Beverly Wright, Dillard University, Richard Gragg, Florida A&M University

Dr. Bullard started this presentation by making a compelling case with regard to the environmental justice issues prevalent in the Gulf. He clearly illustrated the myriad areas where communities of color are being disproportionately impacted by pollution/contamination showing slide after slide demonstrating elevated rates of illness and poor quality of life resulting from disproportionate exposure to emissions from various plants in the petro-chemical corridor that characterizes the Gulf region. He went on to show how funding streams do not track with the level of impact which burdens some communities far more than others. Dr. Beverly Wright followed and shared the unique contributions that HBCUs make in executing a research agenda that is built on community relationships, engagement of most affected persons, and is sensitive to local contexts as a result. She shared the “Communiversity,” a community based participatory model which is a collaboration between HBCUs, community members, civil rights/non-profit/legal organizations, environmental justice centers, and others, to engage in research that combines community experience with academic knowledge and theories and performs research in a non-threatening environment. Dr. Gragg wrapped up this presentation by sharing the proposed foci and structure of the HBCU Research and Public Policy Consortium on Gulf Coast Sustainability. The deliverables of the Consortium would include improved community resilience, generation of transferable experiential knowledge in the areas of indicators of community and ecosystem health, geospatial analysis, and integrated environmental decision tools.

IX. Debriefing Comments

a. In terms of chronology preceding where we are today, NAACP called and pulled us together. Southern University, Texas Southern University, Jackson State University, and Tuskegee University had already started a process of developing a consortium. After we had the initial planning meeting for this convening, they agreed to expand that original consortium. A core of institutions has been at the table during this planning process and had already started working. Some of the people in this new core were not in the initial group/consortium.

b. The proposed structure of the consortium is to have a core group of institutions who are the strongest in terms of capacity, resources and research. Additionally the consortium general membership would be eligible to team on proposals. In this way there will be a manageable, focused core group that will be evaluated when external entities are considering the merits of the consortium, and other member institutions will still be included, as warranted, in various research initiatives.

c. Universities haven’t always been in the same place as communities, but this model will be centered in our communities. Once you make the connection with communities, you have to be genuine and they will back you up all the way. They need to be included.

d. If we experience X% of the impact, an argument needs to be made to justify that the proportionate amount flows to our communities and institutions.
X. Agreed Conclusions
   a. Trust is an issue as it relates to the research agenda in the Gulf. It is not just the message. It is the messenger. HBCUs are uniquely positioned to mitigate this challenge.
   b. Community participatory models are critical to the success and integration of sustainability and public policy research in the Gulf region.
   c. Human dimensions and impacts of the oil spill and other environmental and health threats in the Gulf region must be addressed and serve as the objective and endpoint of the research agenda. Considerable shifting of emphasis and re-prioritization are needed in the current and forthcoming research initiatives.
   d. Most affected communities are missing from decision making forums and this must be remedied in order to have an effective response, recovery, and restoration plan, as well as a long term sustainability plan. Inclusive review panels/advisory boards/commissions specifically recognizing HBCU investigators must be established at all levels of these processes.
   e. Institutions holding the trust and respect of impacted communities (communities of color are among the most impacted groups and underrepresented at the decision making forums) must be prominently engaged in developing and executing the Gulf research agenda.

XI. Next Steps
   a. We will put together a statement with recommendations engage directly with the BP advisory committee.
      i. A top recommendation will be that the RFP change its fifth priority area to “human dimensions in health”—not just “health.”
   b. We will ensure that the BP Advisory board and EPA review panel have persons representing our communities.
   c. We will ensure that a letter is sent from President Benjamin Jealous advocating for diversity on the BP advisory board/review panel, and altering the language/focus in the RFP to reflect human dimensions in public health.
   d. We will increase youth involvement in the HBCU initiative as a priority, following the principle of engagement of the most affected communities and persons.
   e. We will request that the White House Initiative on HBCUs help move other agencies to work with HBCUs.
   f. NAACP will send a letter to the Presidents of Prairie View, Alabama State, Xavier, and Alcorn requesting that they appoint representatives to be engaged in the HBCU Consortium Planning Committee (HCPC).
   g. NAACP will organize a debriefing call to plan next steps within two weeks.
   h. NAACP will establish a listserv for the HCPC.
   i. NAACP will set up a minimum monthly telecom for the HCPC.
   j. NAACP will establish an online “Blackboard” for ease of sharing documents among HCPC members.
XII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

This rich and fruitful meeting and report would not have been possible without the partnership of several notable people and organizations we would like to acknowledge and thank. First, Dr. Beverly Wright, Dr. Robert Bullard, Dr. Richard Gragg, Dr. Adebayo Oyekan have worked with us since this was a mere kernel of an idea. They were immediately responsive to our call for collaborators and worked from the beginning on fleshing out the idea, the agenda, and collaborated with us to decide who needed to be in the room. Special thanks go to Dr. Beverly Wright, Celeste Cooper, and Mary Williams of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice for hosting our planning meeting, as well as working with us on the logistics of hosting this meeting. We warmly thank Dr. Marvalene Hughes, Dr. Walter Strong and Dillard University for bringing greetings and hosting the HBCU Convening in their lovely state of the art facility on their historic campus which has produced so many of the thought leaders who grace our communities and society today. Meta Williams Esq. and Dr. Lezli Baskerville of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education partnered with us on outreach and we are deeply appreciative of this. Meta Williams Esq, further joined Dr. Leslie Fields of Howard University and the Sierra Club, Dr. Samuel Washington and Dr. Michael Stubbsfield of Southern University as well as Samuel Coleman of EPA as we convened our strategy/planning meeting with the core organizing team listed above in advance of the September 8th gathering and we were gratified by their engagement. Sam Coleman further assisted us in identification and outreach with the participating federal agencies and we thank him. Though he is one of our own, serving on our National Board, we thank Lenny Springs who also worked with us in his capacity with the Department of Education, as he helped us with conceptualizing and planning and has also committed to continuing on as we advance this initiative. We extend our thanks to Julia Tolbert, Dr. Steve Murawski, Jacqueline Rousseau, and Gail Adams who all worked with us behind the scenes in ensuring that representatives from the federal agencies were there to share the information we sought on research initiatives underway in the Gulf. Our warm and most heartfelt gratitude goes to Reverend Tyrone Edwards who, representing the communities we seek to serve, blessed the proceedings with his grounding perspective and statements. We thank our other guest speakers who enhanced the proceedings with his grounding perspective and statements. We thank our other guest speakers who enhanced the proceedings with their contributions to the discourse, enabling us to better understand the landscape, the research initiatives, and the available resources, as we chart our course forward—Dr. Charlie Henry of NOAA, Dr. Chip Hughes of NIEHS, Lt. Commander John Settle of the US Coast Guard, John Brown of the White House Initiative on HBCUs, Paula Hubbard of BP, Cynthia Sonia-Mullich and Christopher Zarba of EPA and Dr. Larry Robinson of NOAA who was fully committed to joining us and supporting these efforts but was unable to connect with us, due to scheduling and technology challenges. Though he is also one of our own, we’d like to acknowledge Gary Bledsoe Esq, NAACP State Conference President of Texas and NAACP Gulf Oil Disaster Taskforce Member, for originating the idea of having this gathering of HBCUs to plan a joint initiative. Finally, we would like to thank all of the HBCU representatives as well as NAACP members for participating in a very productive day which resulted in this rich report with its research agenda planning ideas, critical agreed conclusions, and the establishment of the HBCU Gulf Coast Research Consortium on Sustainability and Public Policy.
Appendix A

AGENDA

8:30am  Continental Breakfast

9:00am  Welcome  Dr. Ernest Johnson, NAACP

9:10am  Greetings From Dillard University  Dr. Marvalene Hughes, Dillard University

9:15 am  Greetings From NAFEO  Dr. Lezli Baskerville, NAFEO

9:20am  Overview of Meeting Purpose and Agenda  Jacqui Patterson, NAACP

9:30am  Grounding Us in the Realities—Community Recommendations  Reverend Tyrone Edwards

10:00am  Group Work—Discussion of Issues and Priorities Related to the Gulf Oil Drilling Disaster and Beyond  Facilitator, Jacqui Patterson

GROUPS: Social Sciences, Environmental Law and Policy, Environmental Justice Sustainability, Environmental Sciences, And Environmental Public Health

11:00am  BREAK

11:15am  Report Back From Group Work  Facilitator and Rapporteurs

11:45am  Challenges and Opportunities—Funding Issues for HBCUs  Leonard Springs, NAACP/Dept of Ed

PARTNERSHIP DISCUSSIONS

12:00pm  Welcome to Federal Agencies and BP Guests  Dr. Ernest Johnson, NAACP

12:05pm  HBCU Assets and Capabilities  Dr. Lezli Baskerville, NAFEO

12:15pm  Federal Research Initiatives/Engagement Opportunities Q&A  NOAA, EPA, NIEHS, Coast Guard

1:15pm  LUNCH  White House Initiative on HBCUs  John P. Brown, WHIHBBCs

2:00pm  Overview of Upcoming BP Financed RFP, including 5 focal areas Q&A  Paula Hubbard, BP

2:30pm  Proposed HBCU Gulf Coast Sustainability Research And Public Policy Consortium—Plus Q&A  Dr. Robert Bullard, Clark Atlanta University Dr. Beverly Wright, Dillard University Dr. Richard Gragg, Florida A&M University

3:30pm  BREAK

3:45pm  Debrief from Discussions with Federal Agencies and BP How do presented priorities mesh with our agenda?  Facilitator, Jacqui Patterson

4:15pm  Other Funding Sources/Partnership Opportunities  Brittany Brown, NAACP

4:30pm  Next Steps, Timelines, Commitments (Group Work)  Facilitator, Jacqui Patterson

5:30pm  Report Backs  Facilitator and Rapporteurs

5:50pm  Closing/Adjournment  Dr. Ernest Johnson, NAACP
Appendix B

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Julie Andrews - Southern University at New Orleans
2. Karen Bailey - Dillard University
3. Lezli Baskerville - NAFO
4. Wanda H. Battle - Alabama NAACP
5. Rubye Braye - W U Li Turtle Corp
6. Brittany Brown, NAACP Headquarters
7. John P. Brown - White House Initiative on HBCUs
8. Robert Bullard - Clark Atlanta University
9. Mamie Coats - Alabama State University
10. Sam Coleman - US EPA
11. Marcus Cook - BioJam
12. Rachel Cruthirds - Xavier University of Louisiana
13. Vida Dennis - Alabama State University
14. Richard Gragg - Florida A&M University
15. Richard Green - Alcorn State University
16. Louis J. Hall - Mississippi Valley State University
17. Charlie Henry, NOAA
18. Sharron Heron-Williams - Alabama State University
20. Paula Hubbard - BP
21. Joseph “Chip” Hughes, NIEHS
22. Marvalene Hughes, Dillard University
23. Lewis Jennings - Florida NAACP
25. Sunny E. Ohia - Texas Southern University
26. Felix Okojie, Jackson State University
27. Irvin Osborne-Lee - Prairie View A&M University
28. Adebayo Oyekan - Texas Southern University
29. Jacqui Patterson—NAACP Headquarters
30. Jullian Pugh—Tallahassee Community College
31. Musheer Robinson- Louisiana NAACP
32. Brian Rowland- Texas NAACP
33. Carolyn Scantlebury - Houston NAACP
34. John Settle—US Coast Guard
35. Safwat Shakir- Prairie View A&M University
36. Benard Simelton - Alabama NAACP
37. Cynthia Sonich-Mullin - US EPA/ORD
38. Lenny Springs- NAACP/Department of Education
39. Walter Strong—Dillard University
40. Thomas Wiese - Xavier University of Louisiana
41. Mary Williams- Dillard University
42. Beverly Wright- Dillard University
43. Christopher Zarba- US EPA/Research
## APPENDIX C

### Sampling of Relevant HBCU Departments in the Gulf Region

*Partially Extracted from NAFEO HBCU Inventory*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Programs</th>
<th>Historically Black Colleges and Universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Environmental Studies** | ➢ Alabama State University  
➢ Alcorn University  
➢ Dillard University  
➢ Florida A&M University  
➢ Mississippi Valley  
➢ Prairie View A&M University  
➢ Southern University  
➢ Texas Southern University  
➢ Xavier University |
| **Aquatic Sciences** | ➢ Florida A&M University  
➢ Prairie View  
➢ Xavier |
| **Engineering** | ➢ Alabama A & M University  
➢ Florida A & M/Florida State University  
➢ Prairie View A & M University  
➢ Southern University  
➢ Texas Southern University  
➢ Tuskegee University |
| **Public Health** | ➢ Florida A&M University  
➢ Jackson State University |
| **Social Work** | ➢ Alabama A&M University  
➢ Bethune-Cookman University  
➢ Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University  
➢ Grambling State University  
➢ Huston-Tillotson University  
➢ Miles College  
➢ Oakwood College  
➢ Prairie View A&M University  
➢ Southern University and A&M College  
➢ Southern University at New Orleans  
➢ Southern University at Shreveport  
➢ Texas Southern University |
| **Nursing** | ➢ Alcorn State University  
➢ Bethune-Cookman University  
➢ Bishop State Community College  
➢ Dillard University  
➢ Florida A&M  
➢ Grambling State University  
➢ J.F. Drake State Technical College  
➢ Oakwood College  
➢ Prairie View A&M University  
➢ Southern University and A&M College |
For More Information

NAACP Climate Justice Initiative

Jacqueline Patterson, Director

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