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LOUISIANA PRESS ADVISORY

THE STORM WITH NO NAME: DISASTER SURVIVORS STILL RECOVERING NEARLY 2 YEARS LATER

BATON ROUGE (August 7, 2018) – Nearly 2 years have passed since the flooding of 2016. Ironically, the storm with no name birthed a vital alliance with a name – “Flood Proof.” Now, two years later, the Flood Proof team has helped a total of 337 disaster-impacted homeowners, resulting in over \$7.2 million in flood recovery funding and other economic benefits being returned to the community. With 170 outreach events held and over 90,000 pieces of literature distributed, Flood Proof has been effective in building solidarity and resilience within the community.

“Flood Proof” was one of the many projects formed to help Capital Area residents restore their lives. Beginning in November of 2016, Flood Proof continued to assist the community through July 31, 2018. During this time, “Flood Proof” helped families in the Capital Area with: navigating the legal process to obtain proof of ownership, engaging and educating the public on “heir property”, and advocating to policy makers to change a statute allowing for more community members to utilize the small succession affidavit through the successful passage of House Bill 96. The project provided free legal services – even including court filing fees – to eligible homeowners with flooded homes in East Baton Rouge, Ascension, Livingston, Point Coupee, and Iberville Parishes.

“Thanks to the hard work of our volunteers and project partners, residents throughout Louisiana were able to unlock resources necessary to rebuild their homes and revitalize their communities”, explained Gerren Sias, Outreach Coordinator of Louisiana Appleseed. Support for the project was provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the Capital Area United Way, Equal Justice Works, the Greater New Orleans Foundation, and the Louisiana Bar Foundation. Project partners include Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, Louisiana Appleseed, Southern University Law Center, the Baton Rouge Bar

Association, the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center, and the American Bar Association (ABA) Center for Innovation. "Due to the generous support of these funders, Flood Proof was a huge success in providing assistance to disaster-impacted residents" informed Laura Tuggle, Executive Director of Southeast Louisiana Legal Services. "Although this specific project has come to an end, our work helping residents throughout Louisiana preserve their homeownership is not over."

Through other resources, families who still need free legal help to prove ownership of their homes to help them recover from the flood can call 1-844-244-7871, visit us online at www.floodproofla.org, or download the "Flood Proof" app on Android and Apple phones. A video was also made possible by the ABA Standing Committee on Disaster Response and Preparedness explaining the app and how we are making a difference in the lives of survivors, which is available at <https://vimeo.com/226507610/6ea3ec8103>.

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Louisiana Appleseed engages professionals to donate pro bono time to solve problems at their root cause. Our goal is to advance social justice by effecting change at the policy, or systemic, level. Louisiana Appleseed's projects seek to increase access to education, opportunity and justice. Since 2007, Louisiana Appleseed has worked with volunteer attorneys, lawmakers and community groups to address the heir property issue head-on, working to solve the problem at the systemic, or policy, level. Louisiana Appleseed recently became part of a collaborative with the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, Southern University Law Center, LSU Law Center and the Baton Rouge Bar Association to further policy-related efforts, as well as direct services for heir property owners. For more information, visit www.louisianaappleseed.org.