

To Whom This May Concern:

I was looking to leave this post on the blog for Charles and everyone at Crescent City Carpenters House:

My name is Josh Dellheim, I am 22 and a senior at Salem State College in Salem Massachusetts. During the week of August 9th-16th I had the opportunity to lend a helping hand down in New Orleans as well as Slidell a suburb north of the city. The last two days of my trip I had the absolute pleasure of helping at Carpenters House 2 located right in the heart of the Lower 9th Ward. The very first day we handed out over 100 backpacks to the kids who were about to start school in the Lower 9th Ward, where these backpacks were stuffed with school supplies from donations given to Carpenters House. The experience over those two days working directly in the Lower 9th Ward were forever life-changing and absolute honor to be helping out such a great organization.

Three years have passed since Hurricane Katrina had hit New Orleans, and there is so much work that remains undone. I was told only 5% of the Lower 9th Ward [the hardest hit area in New Orleans] has been rebuilt since the disaster. That statistic alone is disheartening because if you just imagine where you live right now, your town/city, and in three years only 5% of your town/city had been rebuilt since a disaster? That's a tough pill to swallow. Carpenter's House is a tremendous gift to the city of New Orleans and they are helping every way possible to get these citizens of the Lower 9th Ward back to their homes and lives. The focus is not solely on rebuilding homes, it's now about rebuilding the community. Charles and Judy only have so many volunteers, but so much more are needed to help.

Hurricane Katrina has become old news, and the belief is that "New Orleans is back!," and with many things old news tends to be swept under the rug after. Well the truth is New Orleans is far from back, and so much help is still needed. Volunteers are needed now more than ever, and I could not stress this anymore. The volunteers that came down for the first year did an absolutely tremendous job of clearing the debris left from the storm, but now that the debris is gone homes and communities must go up, and simply the helping hands are not there. Your help is needed and you do not need to be a skilled carpenter to help make a difference. Whether you lend a hand to build or lend an ear to listen, it will be your presence and help that make a difference. I pray and hope that my words here today can strike a cord with you, the reader, and become a catalyst to get you to make a difference in New Orleans. Your help is needed more than ever, and I pray that the people of New Orleans can return to their homes that were taken away from them sooner than never.

08/28/08, Josh Dellheim