

# Louisiana FEMA Park Survey: Tentative Findings

---

## ○ Researchers

- Dr. Mark J. Schafer
- Dr. Joachim Singelmann

## ○ Institutional Affiliations

- Louisiana State University
- LSU Agricultural Center
- Louisiana Population Data Center

## ○ Funding Agencies

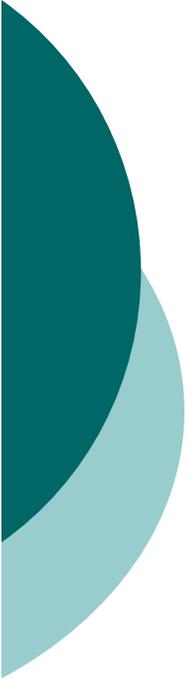
- Louisiana Family Recovery Corps
- Louisiana Department of Labor
- Louisiana Recovery Authority



# Survey Objective

---

- Identify Barriers to
  - Employment
  - Permanent Residency



# Sample

---

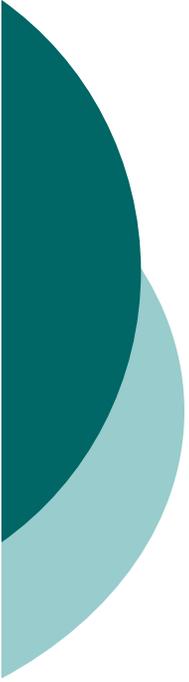
- Ten FEMA Parks Selected:
  - Plaquemines (1)
  - Lake Charles (1)
  - Baton Rouge (3)
  - Lafayette (4)
  - St. James (1)
- Sample Size = 321
- Convenience Sampling
- Face-To-Face Survey Interviews
- Response Rate 74%



# Outline of Presentation

---

- Dr. Schafer
  1. Selected Demographics
  2. Residence Patterns
    1. Pre-Hurricane
    2. Post Hurricane
  3. Employment and Income
  4. Life in FEMA Parks
- Dr. Singelmann
  1. Analysis of Well-being in Parks



# Selected Demographics

---

- Female: 62%
- Mean Age: 42 yrs
- Black: 73%
- Education
  - <High School 36%
  - HS Diploma/GED 35%
- Family
  - Married/Living with Partner 30%
  - Children 66%
  - 4 or more in trailer 19%
- Poor Health 43%



## Residence Patterns: Pre-Hurricane

---

### ○ Length of Residence

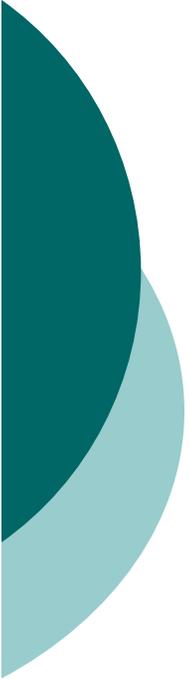
- Mean Length: 14 years
- Less than 2 years 36%
- More than 10 years 42%

### ○ Residence Type

- House: 44%
- Apartment: 25%
- Mobile Home: 25%

### ○ Home Ownership

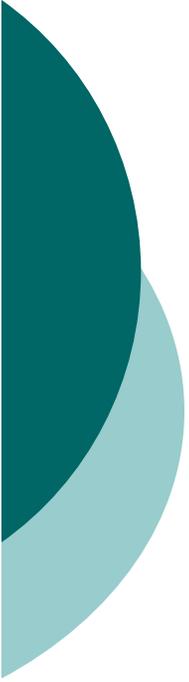
- Renters 62%



# Residence Patterns: Post-Hurricane

---

- Mobility: Number of relocations
  - 1-2 35%
  - 3-5 55%
  - >5 10%
- Current FEMA park residence
  - Average Length: 10 months
- Returning to Pre-Hurricane
  - Want to Return: 54%
  - Likely to Return to Residence: 38%
  - Likely to Return to City: 70%
- Reasons for not returning:
  - High cost of living: 58%
  - Lack of available housing 60%
  - Lack of affordable housing 65%



# Employment and Income

---

- Employment (if under 65):
  - Before Hurricanes 71%
  - Now 34%
- Not Employed
  - Looking for work 44%
- Reasons for not looking for work:
  - Health Limitations 66%
- Employed
  - <1 month at current job 24%
- Income
  - < \$15,000 per year: 80%
  - Decline in income: 36%
  - No change in income: 58%



# Life in FEMA Park

---

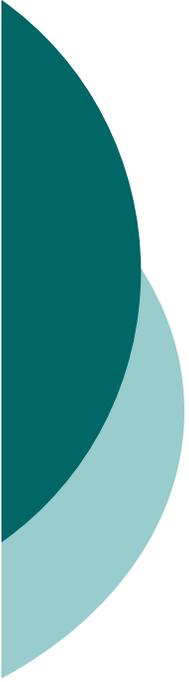
- Safety/Security
  - Generally Safe 75%
  - Safe for Children 50%
  - Property Stolen 30%
- Hard to get needs 40%
- Feel Sense of Belonging
  - General sense of belonging 50%
  - Friends from before 40%
- Involvement
  - Don't know how 33%
  - Can't make a difference 31%



# Emotional Well-Being and Depressive Symptoms

---

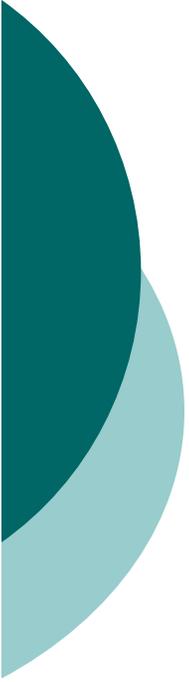
Key Results



## Emotional Well-Being of Poor and Fragile Populations usual worse than General Population Average

---

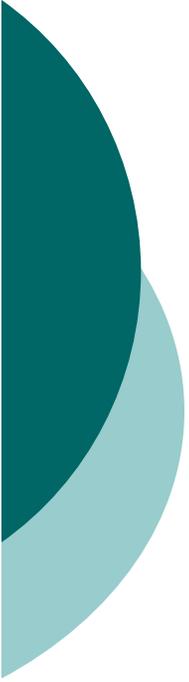
- **LSU surveys show consistent results for levels of depressive symptoms. On a 0-49 point scale (CES-D, mean values):**
- 2002 Louisiana Job Search Survey
  - 10.5 - total sample
  - 18.4 – below \$5,000 household income
- 2000 Louisiana Welfare Survey
  - 16.0 – all TANF participants
- 2007 FEMA Park Survey
  - 26.0 – all respondents



## Depressive Symptoms of FEMA Park Residents Are:

---

- 67% higher than for poor persons in Louisiana
- in the range of clinical depression for 58%



# Our Model Estimates for all Surveys Show:

---

- Employment improves emotional well-being, especially when it is full time.



## New Model for FEMA Park Residents Shows Importance of Four Additional Factors:

---

- Sense of belonging-presence of old friends
- Absence of perceived obstacles to getting involved in park
- Feeling of security
- Maintenance/improvement of/in physical health
  
- ***All four factors improve emotional well-being***



## Policy Implication

---

Study suggests that policies aimed at (FEMA) park conditions to better integrate the residents would greatly improve the emotional well-being of dislocated persons.