

**NEWS RELEASE: "PREPARING FOR THE NEXT KATRINA" CONFERENCE TO PRESENT
GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP ON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

Approaching the five year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, graduate and undergraduate students from around the country will convene at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM)-Gulf Park campus to discuss how their research on disasters can be applied to make communities more resilient for "the next Katrina." "The next Katrina" could be a natural disaster, a man-made disaster, or a chaotic disruption like economic depression. No matter the source, community resilience is predicated on a commitment to preparation and effective response to disruptive events of all sorts.

Like a community itself, community resilience involves all spheres of a society: economic, political, geographical, and social. Accordingly, this Conference will feature research in all of these areas from budding scholars in the field of community resilience. For Dr. Tom Lansford, USM-Gulf Coast Academic Dean, "Effective community resilience requires putting different pieces of a larger puzzle together. This Conference will provide such an opportunity for graduate and undergraduate students to discuss their research in a multi-disciplinary context with the aim of applying those lessons to practical use, ultimately making communities better prepared for disruptive events."

The Conference is sponsored by the University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Coast in partnership with the Community and Regional Resilience Institute (CARRI) and the Center for Policy and Resilience (CPR), a program housed at the University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Coast. USM, CARRI, and CPR have worked together for nearly two years to research and advocate resilience planning in the rebuilding process on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The Conference will be held on Friday, October 2, 2009 at the USM-Gulf Park campus in the Advanced Education building. For more information, please contact Dr. Jack Covarrubias at thenextkatrinaconference@gmail.com or Chris Hare (USM Graduate Research Assistant) at Christopher.Hare@usm.edu.

###