

Gulf Equity Water Corps:

Students Raising Awareness about Sea Level Rise and Flooding Along the Gulf Coast



New Harmony High School students, Mervin Smith and Isabella Chauvin quiz classmates during the train-the-trainer exercise in New Orleans, LA

For over twenty-seven years, the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice has been instrumental in engaging high school and college students in environmental justice and climate change training and advocacy. The Bezos Family Foundation and Students Rebuild funded the intergenerational Deep South Center for Environmental Justice “Gulf Equity Water Corps Project.” The project is designed to develop climate justice student leaders in the Gulf Coast Region. The Gulf Equity Water Corps (The Corps) is comprised of HBCU student interns from Dillard University, New Orleans and Texas Southern University, Houston, TX, as well as, high school students from New Harmony High School and BARD Early College High School in New Orleans. The HBCU interns have conducted research on drainage capacity and flooding in the Lower

Ninth Ward in New Orleans and the Pleasantville Community in Houston, TX. The Interns have assisted DSCEJ staff and faculty mentors Dr. Bernard Singleton, DU and Dr. Denaë King, TSU with the development of a curriculum to design a water focused project to raise awareness about sea-level rise, flooding, and water asset mapping in their communities. The Gulf Water Equity Corps have been engaged in interactive sea level rise and flooding training and research and have completed four (4) of the five (5) stages of the project.

(1) Eight (8) students received sea level rise, flooding, and water asset mapping training

(2) Four (4) student Corps members presented a webinar, “Students Rising Above Sea Level Rise,”

(3) Four (4) student Corps members gave an engaging community presentation, “Storm Water Management Community Forum” in the Lower Ninth Ward

(4) A total of seventy (70) students were trained during the student train-the-trainer sessions at New Harmony High School and Dillard University in New Orleans, LA and the Pleasantville Community in Houston, TX.



Joy Semien conducts train-the-trainer exercise with students in Pleasantville community in Houston, TX

The Corps will have an opportunity to present their research (stage 5) at the **7th Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference**, November 16, 2019. The Gulf Equity Water Corps Project is allowing students a unique

opportunity to develop the skill set to become climate justice leaders within their communities. The DSCEJ will continue to advance youth awareness and leadership, building capacity and collaboration around the issues related to sea level rise and flooding to improve community resiliency. This project is funded by the Bezos Family Foundation and the Students Rebuild Funding.