

A GLOBAL GIVING MOVEMENT



NOVEMBER 27, 2018



# STEPPING UP AND STEPPING OUT WITH STEPS!

Newsletter | Fourth Quarter 2018



**TAKING STOCK AND LOOKING AHEAD!****Dear Friends of Steps:**

Season's greetings from the Steps Coalition! I hope this note finds you doing well as we approach the end of an exciting and challenging 2018 and that you are excited about your ability to have a positive impact on the continued restoration and development of the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 2019. Given the latter, we would like for you to consider making a tax-deductible contribution of **\$250.00 or more** toward the work that the Steps Coalition has planned during 2019 in support of our core values – ***Affordable Housing, Economic Justice, Human Rights, Environmental Justice, and Restoration of Historical Communities***. Our year-end 2018 fundraising campaign will officially launch on Tuesday, November 27, 2018 – “Giving Tuesday” – and our goal is to raise a minimum of **\$50,000** to support capacity development for our new and legacy programs.

**THE YEAR IN REVIEW**

Since its inception in December of 2006, the Steps Coalition's primary mission has been to advocate for environmental justice for underserved and underrepresented communities on the Mississippi Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina and the BP

Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill. And though we are still passionately addressing the negative impacts and recovery efforts of those two historic, catastrophic events, we believe now is an appropriate time to adjust our gaze forward to leverage our expertise in collaborative advocacy, economic development, and affordable housing to help the Gulf Coast plan and develop a thriving, culturally-inclusive economy for current and future generations. Toward that end, Steps Coalition successfully launched several programs in 2018 that we plan to build on in 2019 and your contribution of **\$250.00 or more** will ensure the continued sustainability of these programs which include:

**THE STEPS COALITION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND (STEPS CDLF):**

The Steps CDLF is an Emerging Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that, when fully established, will provide a portfolio of loan products and technical assistance resources to low-to-moderate income (LMI) first-time homebuyers, existing homeowners, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), and minority and women owned business enterprises (MWBES) in Mississippi's six coastal counties. The program is structured to help these communities traverse the hurdles typically encountered with traditional banks and payday lenders by providing below-market-rate loans, financial literacy training, and small business coaching. During 2018 we engaged with more than 45 prospective homebuyers and more than 60 SMEs/MWBES via our technical assistance collaborations with BancorpSouth, Hancock Whitney Bank, and the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). We also commenced our **\$1.5 million** fundraising initiative to support the loan fund and began engaging prospective resource partners including the NAACP Biloxi Branch, South Mississippi Planning and Development District (SMPDD), Biloxi Innovation Center, Mercy Housing and Human Development, Hope Credit Union, NeighborWorks America, and AVL Certified Public Accountants to name a few. We are extremely excited about the long-term potential of this program to positively

impact economic development on the Coast and we believe you will be too.

### THE BRIDGE OF FAITH:

During 2018, Steps made significant strides in the continued development of the Bridge of Faith (BOF) Coalition which was formed in November 2017 by 20 faith leaders looking to leverage their capacity in their respective communities to promote racial healing. Through this program we are helping to catalyze new and authentic relationships among religious leaders; creating a team of religious healers using the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's model of "Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT); and increasing collaboration opportunities among leaders of different faiths, denominations, and ethnicities to advance Steps' core values – Affordable Housing, Economic Justice, Human Rights, Environmental Justice, and Restoration of Historical Communities. The collaboration achieves its objectives by facilitating events and activities that bring together people of diverse backgrounds to engage, dialogue, and challenge racial stereotypes and barriers to racial and ethnic harmony. During 2018, the number of participating faith leaders and their congregations has grown to over XX and has also engaged with other, non-faith-based, government and civic leaders on topics of importance to the Gulf Coast Community like economic and workforce development, access to affordable healthy foods, and affordable housing. Steps is very proud to be leading this initiative during a particularly contentious time in our countries political discourse and your contribution will help us continue to do this work.

### TURKEY CREEK ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PROJECT:

In recognition of the importance of youth development, we successfully implemented a Water Quality Education and Leadership Development program serving 20 African-American students (5th – 8th grade). Turkey Creek EJ (Environmental Justice) is Steps' first program targeting youth, and it has been a growing experience for our organization. We are excited to continue to work to develop the next

generation of "Environmental Justice" advocates, and we hope we can continue to diversify and grow our youth leadership program in 2019. Since its inception, students in the program have learned about:

- **The History of Turkey Creek, a historically black community**
- **The Clean Water Act and what it means for their community**
- **The benefits of healthy watersheds**
- **Point and non-point pollution sources**
- **Strategies for reducing pollution**
- **The best storm water management practices**

It goes without saying that our youth will be the leaders of the future, so we hope that you will see the value in investing in them just as we do.

To learn more about Steps other current and legacy programs, please visit our website at [www.stepscoalition.org](http://www.stepscoalition.org).

### COME CELEBRATE WITH US!

To kick off our 2018 year-end fundraising campaign in a big way and to say thank you for your ongoing support, we will be hosting a networking and jazz reception – "**Stepping Up and Stepping Out**" at Satchmo's Jazz Café in D'Iberville, Mississippi on Thursday, November 29, 2018 at 6:00 pm and we would love for you to come out and join us. It will be a great opportunity for you to meet other Steps Coalition supporters, hear more about our programmatic plans for 2019, and expand your network in a festive, coastal-inspired atmosphere. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Ms. Sanjuana Valtierra at [svaltierra@stepscoalition.org](mailto:svaltierra@stepscoalition.org).

**Satchmo's Jazz Café**  
**10206 Seymore Avenue**  
**D'Iberville, Mississippi 39540**  
**228.207.2812**


Steps Coalition is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization so your contribution will be tax deductible. Finally, if you are employed by an organization that has a

“Matching Gift” benefit for its employees, please be sure to notify your employer of your generous contribution to Steps Coalition.

In closing, we would like to wish you a joyous, safe, and prosperous holiday season and thank you again for your financial support of Steps Coalition’s mission – *“To Make the Coast a Place Worth Calling Home!”*

Sincerely,

Gregory Brown,  
Executive Director

**Black Friday. Cyber Monday.**  
**#GI**  **INGTUESDAY**  
**November 27, 2018**



## STEPPING UP AND STEPPING OUT! 2018 YEAR-END FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

### Donor Information

First Name	Last Name	
Company/Organization Name		
Street Address		
City	State	Zip Code
Payment Method:      Check <input type="checkbox"/> Credit/Debit Card <input type="checkbox"/>		
Credit Card Number (Amex, Discover, MasterCard, Visa)	Expiration Date	
Name on Credit Card		
Signature	CCV	Date

### Support Level

BRONZ	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	100.00
SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	250.00
GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	500.00
PLATINUM	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	1,000.00
DIAMOND	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	5,000.00 +
OTHER	<input type="checkbox"/>		_____

Please make your check payable to "Steps Coalition" and mail to:

Steps Coalition  
11975 Seaway Road  
Suite A240  
Gulfport, MS 39503

**You may also process your contribution online at  
<https://www.gofundme.com/stepping-up-with-steps>**