

LDRF GRANTEE BRINGS MUCH-NEEDED FUN & EXERCISE TO PLAQUEMINES PARISH CHILDREN

March 20, 2009: Nearly 200 children waited anxiously as Emily Campbell, president of LDRF grantee **Project Rebuild Plaquemines**, lifted her scissors to the light blue ribbon -- the only thing keeping them away from the recently completed Boothville-Venice park filled with brand new playground equipment. One snip unleashed a rush of giddy kids, eager to swing, climb, jump, yell, play and have fun. Within seconds, every square inch of the new playground was covered with smiling children. **They really needed this.**



Nearly 200 Plaquemines Parish children relish their first opportunity to play on state-of-the-art playground equipment at the grand opening of Project Rebuild Plaquemines' Boothville-Venice park.

-- Photograph by Jim Belfon

Plaquemines Parish, a low-lying peninsula located on Louisiana's southeast coast, is home to families, communities and industry that are among those hardest hit by hurricane Katrina. Though important progress has been made, recovery in Plaquemines Parish is far from complete. Over 500 families are still living in FEMA trailers and approximately 7,000 pre-Katrina residents have not returned to the Parish.

Emily Campbell saw the need for these parks first hand. As Parish housing director, she saw thousands of Plaquemines residents struggling to cope with the intense stress of losing homes, jobs and loved ones while living in cramped and crowded temporary trailer parks. A strong believer in the

positive power of physical activity, Campbell gained widespread community support for her idea of offering children and adults open spaces and cheerful playgrounds they could call their own – places where they can expend pent-up energy or enjoy a quiet stroll; spread out in the fresh air for a family picnic or lose themselves in a novel beneath a shade tree.

Ms. Campbell has served her Plaquemines Parish community in a number of ways: as an engineer, as the Parish Housing Director, and, most recently, as the creator and president of Project Rebuild Plaquemines, a community-based nonprofit organization with the mission to aid in Plaquemines' lengthy and difficult recovery process. Rebuild Plaquemines' Park Project is working with the Parish government to rebuild 5 parks on Parish land to provide recreation and relaxation for all age groups that will lighten the emotional burden carried by so many during this lengthy recovery process.

LDRF's partnership with Project Rebuild Plaquemines is yet another example of community philanthropy that works for everyone. Congratulations to Emily, Project Rebuild Plaquemines and the residents and leaders of Plaquemines Parish! LDRF looks forward to continuing to support the recovery effort here and throughout the state of Louisiana.

For more information about the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation's recent work, please visit www.louisianahelp.org