

A Path Toward Justice

The NIEHS Environmental Career Worker Training Program

A Virtual Presentation of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, Inc.

Host Organization:

**National Institute of
Environmental Health Science
Research Triangle Park, NC**

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Executive Director

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Worker Training Program

A project of



**DEEPSOUTH
CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**



The Mississippi River Chemical Corridor

- ▶ An 85-mile tract of land along the Mississippi River located between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- ▶ Lined with 136 petrochemical plants
- ▶ and 7 oil refineries
- ▶ It produces approximately 1/4 of the nations petrochemicals

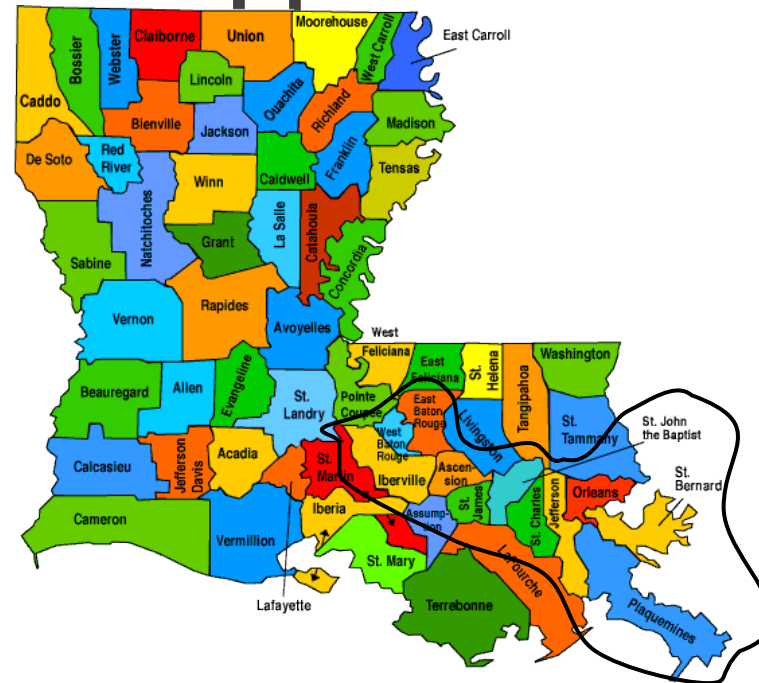


The Mississippi River Chemical Corridor Prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005:

- ▶ approximately 37% of the population of Louisiana was living within 11 parishes lining the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor

- ▶ **1.7 million people**

Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Iberville, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist and West Baton Rouge Parishes





CITIES ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER CHEMICAL CORRIDOR



CHEMICALS PRODUCED ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER CHEMICAL CORRIDOR



Photo from

Kate Orff, "Ecological Atlas to 'Petrochemical America'" depicting the kinds of toxic emissions emanating from petrochemical plants along the MRCC.

<http://dabrownstein.wordpress.com/2013/12/04/mapping-the-cancer-corridor-along-louisianas-gulf-coast/>

The Mississippi River Chemical Corridor

- ▶ Industry leaders call it the Chemical Corridor...
- ▶ Responsible for turning small rural towns into brick homes and shopping centers
 - ▶ In other words, **prosperity**

The Mississippi River Chemical Corridor

- ▶ Locals call it **“Cancer Alley”**
- ▶ Seeing themselves as a vast human experiment....
- ▶ blaming the millions of pounds of toxic chemicals pouring out of smoke stacks for:
 - ▶ Miscarriages
 - ▶ Cancer
 - ▶ Respiratory ailments
 - ▶ Other serious diseases



CANCER ALLEY

Concerns of the Residents...

- People living closest to these plants in **Cancer Alley**
- wondered if their health was being **compromised by the chemical emissions**
 - ▶ but had no way of determining what was being released or how much



Cancer in Louisiana

- ▶ Louisiana has one of the highest cancer mortality rates in the nation
- ▶ 160 people die from cancer in the state every week
- ▶ Approximately 22,780 new cancer cases (excluding some skin cancers and carcinomas) occurred in Louisiana in 2011
- ▶ 60 Louisiana residents receive the diagnosis of cancer each day
- ▶ 8,360 people in Louisiana died from cancer in 2011
- ▶ 23 people die of cancer every day in Louisiana

Cancer in Louisiana

- ▶ The combined mortality rate for Louisiana residents with cancer is 30% higher than the national average
- ▶ The combined cancer mortality rate for African Americans in Louisiana is approximately 30% higher than the national average



Who We Are

Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

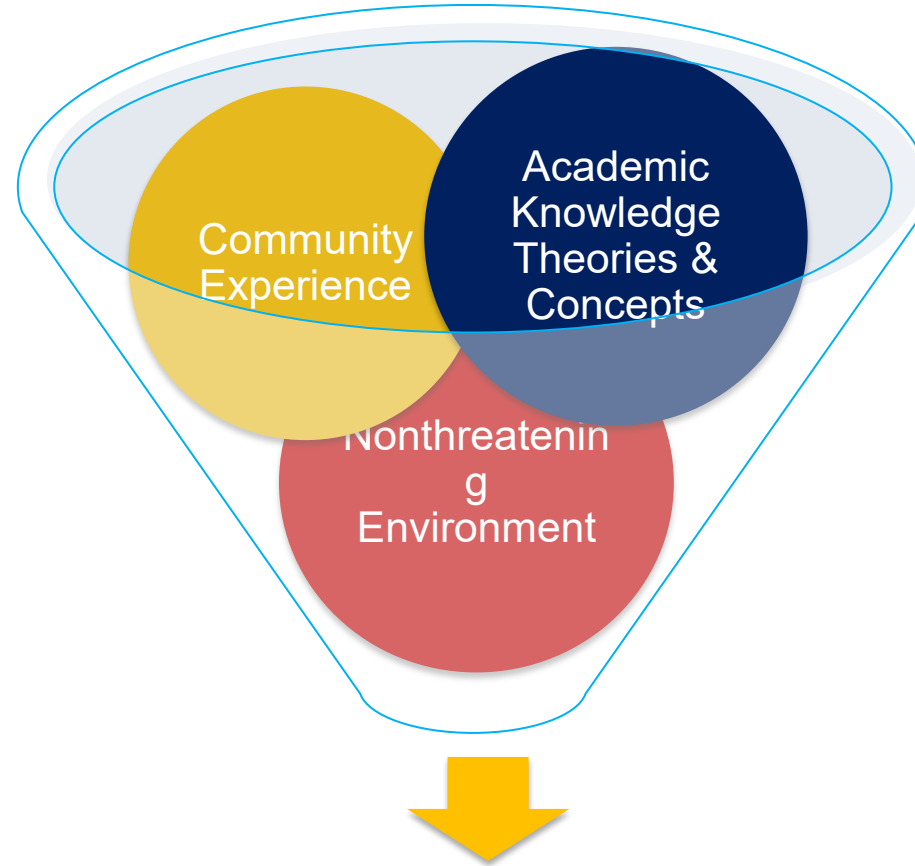


Our Mission

The DSCEJ provides opportunities for communities, decision makers and scientific researchers, to collaborate on programs and projects that promote the rights of all people to be free from environmental harm as it impacts health, jobs, housing, education, and a general quality of life.

“COMMUNIVERSITY” MODEL

The essence of this model is an acknowledgement that for effective research and policy-making, valuable community life experiences regarding environmental insult must be integrated with the theoretical knowledge of academic educators and researchers.



EFFECTIVE RESEARCH AND POLICY

Formalized Agreement

**DEEP SOUTH CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA**

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

**WITH THE
MISSISSIPPI RIVER AVATAR COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD**

The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to formalize and strengthen the ties between the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and the Mississippi River Avatar Community Advisory Board to enhance the understanding of environmental issues. Within the limitation of the funding for these activities, the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, through a collaborative partnership, will provide:

(1) workshops/seminars within the community in the areas of pollution prevention and health related environmental hazards; (2) access to environmental data and other related analytical tools available at the Center; (3) access to the Center's technical personnel to answer questions related to environmental justice issues; (4) liaison with local and state health departments for lead screening, lead analysis and testing in the homes; (5) workshops on Toxic Release Inventory; and (6) workshops related to asthma prevention; (7) workshops in addressing and negotiating community relocation issues; (8) workshops in Clean Production; (9) workshops to educate community residents in Climate Justice and Workshops in Ethical Challenges in Environmental Health. The goal of these cooperative activities is to help the communities characterize their current environment and improve management skills of community leaders.

The Mississippi River Community Advisory Board agrees to assist in the characterization of the community, identify community leaders whose involvement and management skills will help this project; recommend individuals for training to return to the community to teach and act as community liaison representatives to attend meetings, as required, and provide access to facilities and technology to conduct neighborhood training as necessary.

The undersigned agree, on this 21st day of March, 2002 to the cooperative agreement described in this Memorandum of Understanding which will be in effect for a period of two years and renewable on the 31st day of March 31, 2004. We further agree that either party shall retain the right to withdraw from this program upon timely notification to the other members and/on the completion of the current obligations.

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New Orleans, LA*

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New Orleans, LA*

Our Objectives

- The DSCEJ strives to achieve three key objectives:
 - Partnership between Universities and Communities
 - Interaction among Program Components
 - Legacy

Our Methodology

- We have three components for reaching our objectives:
 - Research and Policy Studies
 - Community Assistance, Training and Education
 - Primary, Secondary and University Education



What We Do

Research and Policy Studies

Primary, Secondary and Higher Education Initiatives

Community Education & Training Initiatives

Workforce Development



Workforce Development



Bending toward Justice

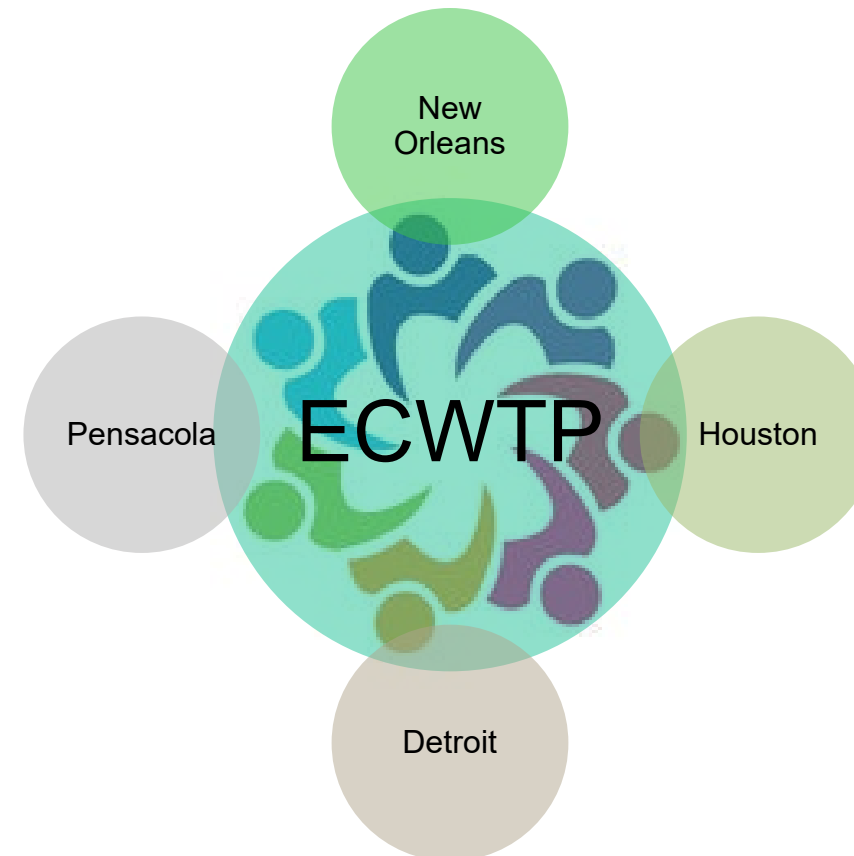
Worker Training Programs

DSCEJ's MWTP (ECWTP) began in 1994 and has a 23 year history of successfully training minority, disadvantaged, and environmentally impacted community residents in hazardous waste remediation and responding to training needs of communities after disasters.



DSCEJ Environmental Career Worker Training Programs 1994 through 2016

Previous Training Sites

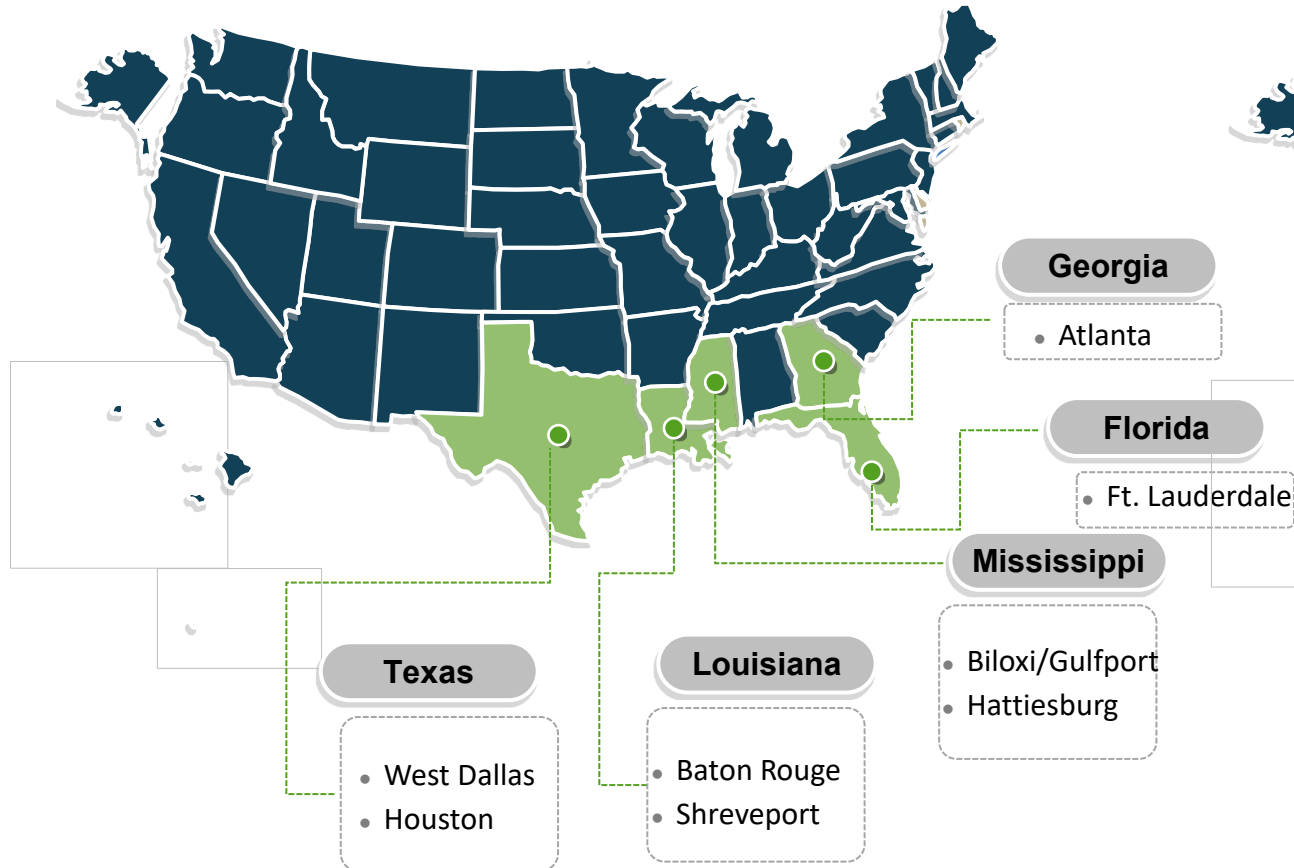


Current Training Sites

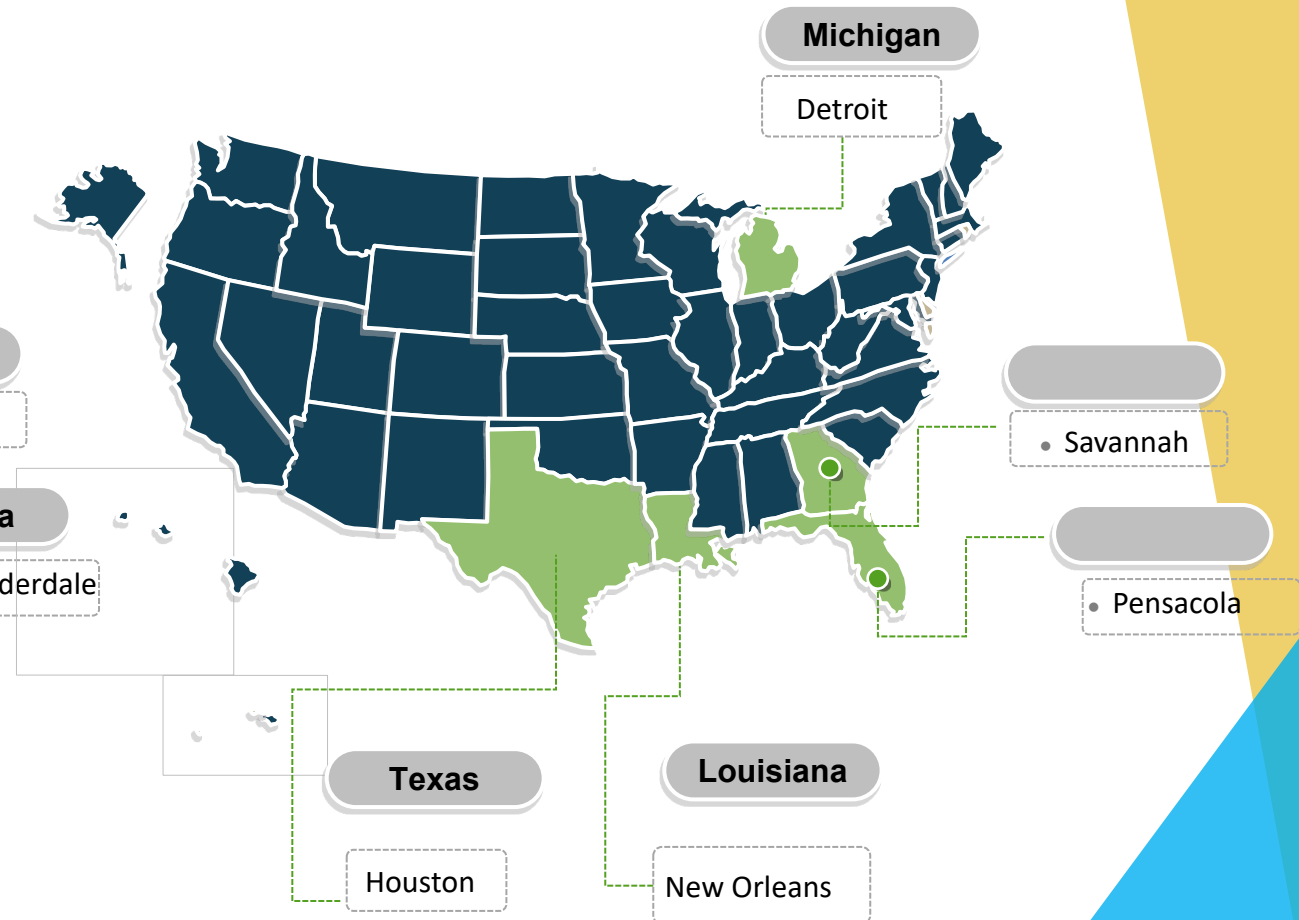
The Center's ECWTP, formerly known as the Minority Worker Training Program, has engaged universities and communities successfully over the last 22 years.

DSCEJ Minority Worker Training Program

Previous Training Sites



Current Training Sites







Comments or Questions

Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

The **Deep South Center for Environmental Justice** was founded by Dr. Beverly Wright in 1992 in collaboration with community environmental groups and other universities within the southern region to advance environmental justice. Since that time, the center has become a powerful resource for environmental justice research and education as well as health and safety training for environmental careers.



About This Presentation...

This presentation was created by the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice under its worker training programs grant number 5U45ES010664 as funded by the National Institute for Environmental Health Science.

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THANK YOU