



ITEMS FOR ACTION

COMMISSION ON VOLUNTARY SERVICE & ACTION

CVSA Headquarters Relocates to Los Angeles!

CVSA has relocated its base of operations from New York City to the Mid-City neighborhood of Los Angeles. In May 2017, after decades of operating in rented or donated spaces in New York City, a longstanding CVSA supporter made half of a duplex available in Mid-City, providing facilities in which CVSA can expand its operations. The new facility has enabled CVSA to focus on the critically needed strategic priority of developing its membership and instituting grassroots volunteer organizer training programs, the production of the next *INVEST YOURSELF* catalogue including expanded distribution, and to accelerate the mobilization of the nationwide Community Education Campaign for the Implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the U.S. that CVSA launched in 2015.

Mid-City has proven an excellent location, placing CVSA in close proximity to many large universities, downtown Los Angeles and centrally located to all areas of the city.

At the time of the move, facility upgrades were required to render the space suitable for holding meetings and incorporating full-time volunteers into CVSA's organizer training programs,

Continued on page 4



Photo: CVSA

Susan Angus, CVSA Executive Director with Robert Garcia, CVSA volunteer, showing off CVSA's new headquarters in the Mid-City section of Los Angeles, California.

UPDATES on CVSA's COMMUNITY EDUCATION CAMPAIGN for the IMPLEMENTATION of the 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS in the U.S. on page 6.

CVSA Brings University of Southern California Engineering Students to Texas to Develop Aids for Disaster Rescue & Recovery

In January, Commission on Voluntary Service and Action (CVSA) led a team from Viterbi School of Engineering at University of Southern California (USC) on a four-day field trip to disaster-damaged Hamshire, Texas. The Viterbi School received a grant from a long-time donor, the Min Family, to support engineering students as they build social entrepreneurship companies that provide technological solutions to benefit society. In 2017 the focus was on disaster relief and mitigation in the face of severe storms that wrought tremendous damage in a number of U.S. states as well as Puerto Rico and elsewhere in the Caribbean.

Continued on page 8



Photo: Robert Macias

Seventeen USC engineering and social entrepreneur students in Vidor, Texas with Gerri Brown (center), whose Harvey-destroyed home the team gutted. Steven Jones (fourth from right, front), Cajun Army organizer, led the work team.

ORGANIZATIONS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

United Saints.....	New Orleans, LA
Cajun Army.....	Baton Rouge, LA
Cajun Navy.....	Hammond, LA

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial: Organize to Leave No One Behind.....	2
Community Education Campaign for the 2030 SDGs Updates.....	6
Importance of Organization When Disaster Strikes.....	14
In Memoriam: Joy Cousminer, Martha Davis.....	16, 19

Editorial:

Organize to Leave No One Behind

Volunteers of all faiths, backgrounds, ages and abilities poured into Houston with boats, and then more came with hammers... Just as they poured into New Orleans after Katrina, and into the Rockaways and Staten Island when Hurricane Sandy hit New York. Just as Americans do in time of trouble — we volunteer, we give aid, assistance and comfort. Tens of thousands of us collect supplies, load them into trucks, drive thousands of miles to get them where they are needed and distribute them; many of us stay to do the clean up and start the rebuilding.

When the headlines are gone, the clean up and rebuilding have just barely begun and the volunteer efforts are needed more than ever. Both volunteers and victims with little or no savings before the disaster will be living paycheck to paycheck — if their job has not already disappeared. Volunteers will have greater and greater stress unless extensive resources can be brought from outside, yet experience has shown it will not come from government sources. It can take years to rebuild a house let alone a community. But many people will be left behind, without committed volunteers who have the support of a united community engaging in continuous outreach, publicity and fundraising.

When 78% of working people in the U.S. have little to no savings and carry mounds of debt from student loans, car payments, mortgages and health care bills, the majority of us have no ability towards “resilience” in the face of natural disasters. Scientists expect we will have more frequent, more powerful storms, floods, tornadoes and other extreme weather disasters in the near future, the likes of Harvey, Maria, Irma, the Midwest tornadoes, the western Louisiana floods and the California fires, all of which took place in 2017.

What is killing people during and after these events is actually less about the disaster itself, than it is the grossly inadequate and often counterproductive response from government — its failure to invest the resources and manpower to protect and aid people before, during and afterwards. It is a manmade disaster full of empty promises, announced and anticipated aid that is selective, exclusionary and often never comes at all, grants that turn into loans after the fact without warning and the bureaucratic red tape that many just can’t navigate.

When Harvey deluged Houston with 55 to 60 inches of heavy rain for 48 hours straight, and people were literally drowning, Cajun Navy — a volunteer force made up of people



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ITEMS FOR ACTION is published quarterly by **Commission on Voluntary Service & Action (CVSA)**, the voice for independent, nongovernmental voluntary service and action organizations serving people in need of systemic solutions. **CVSA** is the consultative and coordinating body of nongovernmental, voluntary service organizations based primarily in North America as well as around the world, and publisher of **INVEST YOURSELF — The Catalogue of Volunteer Opportunities**. **CVSA** interprets, extends, promotes and assists voluntary service and involvement programs, and works to expand the ability and right of individuals to donate their time and services to persons, groupings and communities in need, free of government restraint.

ITEMS FOR ACTION is **CVSA's** newsletter information service for organizational members. **ITEMS FOR ACTION** reports and provides analysis of news related to the voluntary service field on a national and international level, as well as political and economic developments relevant to the independent voluntary service sector.

Many volunteers and volunteer organizations learn the hard way, through their own experiences, using trial and error. We find that wasteful and contrary to the basic principle of organization: that the weakest organization is stronger than the strongest individual. Collective experience is also more powerful than a single individual's or, for that matter, a single organization's.

Your submissions to **ITEMS FOR ACTION** of information, news, advice, photographs and graphics depicting your work or simply your comments and concerns are instrumental to the process of growth and advancement of voluntary service as a whole. We always look forward to receiving them.

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Founded in 1945, **CVSA** has Special NGO Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 2013. **CVSA** is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable corporation with an all-volunteer staff. Volunteers are needed in all aspects of **CVSA's** work. Your financial contributions are also urgently needed and tax-deductible.

Contact CVSA:

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from Louisiana — did not hesitate for a moment. They made their way to Houston and outlying areas with hundreds of small privately owned boats. More than once these volunteers had to directly disobey the order of authorities not to enter the flood area — an order they knew was a death sentence for many, having heard the pleas for help over their CB radios for hours.


Independent, nongovernment-funded grassroots organizations such as Cajun Navy, United Saints and Cajun Army are determined to become better organized and prepared to respond to disasters, setting up better processes for mobilizing more volunteers to continue to help for the long haul. They have seen that if we wait for government aid to rescue, clean-up or rebuild, people die, and too many people are never able to recover.

As Stan Brock, founder of Remote Area Medical (RAM) based in Tennessee and a member of CVSA put it: “When bad stuff happens, we don’t have to have a long debate like up in Washington. We say, ‘Bad stuff just happened in Houston (for example), we’re going to go.’” RAM managed to get five mobile medical clinics with teams of volunteer doctors, dentists and optometrists into Puerto Rico to serve thousands of people in remote areas of the island in the month of December, when four months after the storm, the U.S. government had still not restored electricity or running clean water for the majority of the people.

These and the many other volunteer-based nongovernment organizations are made up of people who put aside their own comforts and daily life, often at great personal sacrifice, to be there for people in greater need than themselves and do the necessary work. They lead through example. They exemplify how our government should have responded. They demonstrate what government policy should be: leave no one behind. How much more they could do with access to the immense wealth in this nation that is currently in the hands of less than 1% of the

population (in 2016, owning a record high 38.6% of the nation’s wealth, according to the Federal Reserve)!

Until our government prioritizes putting the necessary resources into speedy response to disasters, leaving no one behind, and begins to prioritize the use of the nation’s resources to meet basic needs for housing, health care, decent jobs, environmental protection, protecting the people from onerous debt, poverty and hunger, we must master more advanced methods of organization while teaching this and involving more people in these nongovernment, grassroots groups who are saving lives and restoring communities with outstanding goal-orientation.

In the face of injustice and unmet need, ordinary people are becoming extraordinary leaders as they step forward, take charge and do the work. Please join us to make this movement stronger, involving more people and gaining more support. 

**This issue of ITEMS FOR ACTION
proudly introduces CVSA’s new logo
as CVSA achieves a
milestone of development with
the establishment of our new
headquarters in Los Angeles!**

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part of any educational experience.
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CVSA Headquarters in Los Angeles

Continued from page 1

as well as a variety of office functions. The beautiful new interiors were accomplished with the aid of CVSA friends including Ellie and Hans Spiegel, Advisory Board member Caryn Maxim, the late Joy Cousminer, Maria Quinones, Rev. Ed Kimes and Faith Waters, and the late Executive Committee member Martha Davis and many others.

In the initial days of the move, while improvements were underway, St. Peter's Lutheran Church in New York generously donated storage space for all of CVSA's files and supplies for several months pending arrangements for cross-country shipping. When the day for the ship-out came, St. Peter's staff members and three interns from the Unitarian Universalist NGO office and CVSA volunteers Akira Yawata and his mother Yusef Yawata all helped make the move possible. A supporter sponsored the shipping, cross-country and door-to-door, for all the items stored at the church to the new location in LA.

"The new facility provides us with an unprecedented amount of space," explained Susan Angus, CVSA Executive Director. "CVSA's programs are expanding to meet as member organizations' needs in the face of intensified climate change, disaster, poverty, hunger and lack of access to water faced by millions throughout the world.

The new space is facilitating CVSA's ability to effectively build solidarity between volunteer organizations working in varied but related fields, to provide training and to accelerate the Campaign to Promote the SDGs in the U.S. that CVSA launched in 2015 in the absence of government promotion of these goals, the first of which is to 'End poverty in all its forms everywhere.'" (See centerfold for full explanation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.)

The move to Los Angeles has brought new friends and opportunities for local CVSA support and volunteers, and expansion of resources needed for the volunteer service and action movement nationwide.

To promote CVSA's work and the SDGs, CVSA kicked off a public speaking campaign through LA area colleges, city churches, high schools and fraternal organizations, to offer and promote volunteer opportunities to invest one's self with CVSA or with any of the hundreds of community-based service and grass roots action organizations across the country. Hundreds of these organizations are represented in CVSA's catalogue of volunteer opportunities *INVEST YOURSELF*, all of which are playing a part in organizing for the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Building Alliances in the Business Community

Christina DeBono, long-time friend of CVSA and owner of the award winning audio-visual company ClearTech in

Altadena, California, joined CVSA's Executive Committee in December 2017 and has introduced CVSA to many Los Angeles area business owners and executives who are deeply concerned about the future of the economy, life of our communities and the sustainability of our planet. These introductions are fast becoming valuable alliances between CVSA's member organizations and concerned business people who want to become involved in the Campaign for the Implementation of the 2030 SDGs in the U.S.

At a meeting with business leaders who are members of Los Angeles Business Council (LABC), Angus presented CVSA's campaign to implement the 2030 SDGs and the LABC invited CVSA to participate as a cooperating organization in LABC's 12th Annual Sustainability Summit on April 20. Council members stated that they were eager to explore how the business community can promote the implementation of the SDGs in Los Angeles as an example to the state and to cities across the country.

CVSA Programs Continue Across the Country and at the UN

With CVSA's headquarters relocating to Los Angeles, Advisory Board member Caryn Maxim took on the assignment of East Coast Membership Coordinator and is providing the space for CVSA's ad hoc East Coast field office from Morristown, New Jersey. From there, Maxim is the liaison with CVSA's Eastern Region member organizations and volunteers, keeping communication with organizations that have joined the Campaign to Promote the SDGs in the U.S.

"CVSA's relocation to the West Coast has engaged us with volunteer organizations that will add depth to our representation at the UN as an NGO with Special Consultative Status



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Photo: CVSA

Volunteers Robert Garcia, (left) and Qing Liu (right) preparing for a work session on the production of the ITEMS FOR ACTION newsletter, with a briefing from Susan Angus, CVSA Executive Director.

to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations,” stated Angus. “We will continue to communicate with the UN through reports and statements, as well as visits to the New York/New Jersey area for important meetings and events at UN headquarters.” CVSA will attend the High Level Political Forum (HLPV) at the UN in July 2018 to bring reports from member organizations on status of implementation of the SDGs in their communities and constituencies.

CVSA Puts on the Finishing Touches and Calls for Volunteers

The new office still needs furniture items, computer equipment, and building improvements, but thanks to many long-time supporters, the major upgrades that were prerequisite to starting operations have been completed. “Our most urgent need now is for volunteers from the Los Angeles area to join our publications team for the production of the 2018 edition of *INVEST YOURSELF*, completing the distribution of the current edition, and to work on the nationwide Community Education Campaign for the Implementation of the 2030 SDGs,” explained Angus.

CVSA provides on-the-job training to volunteers in all aspects of grassroots organizing — how to conduct effective phone communications to hundreds of organizations; writing, editing, desk-top publishing newsletters, leaflets and CVSA’s catalogue of volunteer opportunities *INVEST YOURSELF*, speaking engagements, community outreach and more. Call CVSA today at 323-933-2872 to learn how you can volunteer with CVSA and join the movement to transform our world!



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CVSA Community Education Campaign for Implementation of the 2030 SDGs: Coast to Coast UPDATES

Los Angeles Business Council Endorses CVSA's Call for Implementation of the SDGs

On March 1, the Los Angeles Business Council's (LABC) Energy & Environment Committee voted unanimously to endorse the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) following a presentation by CVSA. Diane Coles-Levine, a CVSA volunteer and member of the Executive Committee of the International Facilities Managers Association, assisted CVSA Executive Director, Susan Angus with the presentation about the need to organize both grassroots community organization and business involvement with the implementation of 2030 SDGs in the U.S. Angus and Executive Committee member Christina DeBono, also a member of LABC, had previously met with the LABC president, Mary Leslie, in mid-January. In that meeting Ms. Leslie learned about the 2030 SDGs for the first time and recognized their importance.

LABC's mission is to unite the power of business with the power of government for education and advocacy to promote environmental and economic sustainability. Ms. Leslie invited CVSA to make the SDG presentation at the March 1 meeting and to become a Cooperating Organization with the 12th Annual LABC Sustainability Summit on April 20 where CVSA volunteers had the opportunity to talk with more business people, educators and other NGO leaders about joining our SDG campaign.

Soon after that initial January meeting, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti made a public announcement on February 6 at Occidental College endorsing the 2030 SDGs, pledging to achieve them in Los Angeles. Demonstrating

the city's efforts to achieve the 2030 SDGs was one of the International Olympic Committee's requirements for winning the 2028 Summer Games bid.

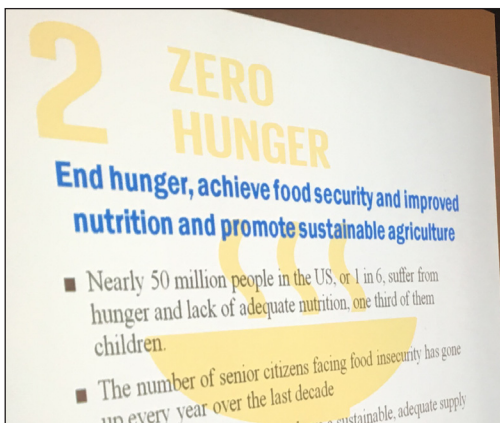
Angus' presentation to the LABC Energy and Environment Committee in March explained that one of CVSA's missions is to mobilize, at the grassroots level, involvement with the planning, implementing and monitoring of the 2030 SDGs to make them government policy. "To do this we seek to build alliances between concerned business people and community volunteer groups that work on the front lines of poverty in communities that lack access to the basic needs addressed by the SDGs. Without that partnership, people will be left behind," she stated. "Now that the Mayor has made this pledge, we need to hold him to it, and how we do that in Los Angeles could be a positive example for the rest of the country."

CVSA Member Inspires International Facilities Managers Association (IFMA) Conference to Promote SDGs

Diane Coles-Levine, a member of the Board of Directors of the International Facilities Managers Association (IFMA) and a CVSA volunteer, brought CVSA's SDG Campaign presentation to the IFMA Facility Fusion Conference in Chicago, March 20-22. Coles-Levine made the presentation to the Workplace Evolutionaries group. They were so excited about it that they designed and printed a postcard about the SDGs and distributed them to the whole conference the next day.

Coles-Levine reports that it became "all the buzz." The result is that the IFMA Workplace Evolutionaries community

Photo: CVSA



At All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena on March 4, a small but engaged group gathered with Julia Serrano, Senior Associate for the Office for Creative Connections at the Church (left in photo on the right) after morning service to learn about the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and how they relate to the Church's many social justice missions.

is now putting together a panel discussion event for the October 2018 IFMA Conference with CVSA on the panel along with architectural and facilities management professionals to discuss how companies can adopt these Goals and align their business strategies with them. They plan to begin by looking at each Goal, starting with "End Poverty..." and assess how their industry already relates to, or could relate to, each Goal.

Church Program Educates Congregants on the SDGs

Jeremy Langill, Senior Associate in charge of the Adult Education & Formation programming at All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena, invited CVSA to speak about the 2030 SDGs campaign on Sunday, March 4 during their Adult Education Program which seeks to make information available to the congregation about important issues and opportunities to get involved. Christina DeBono, CVSA Executive Committee member and long-time resident of Pasadena, and Executive Director Susan Angus made the presentation to the group followed by a discussion of how they could incorporate the Goals into their own professional work, which included the fields of architecture, education, social and psychological support services. All agreed this was the beginning of a longer conversation and they will arrange for another presentation to a larger All Saints grouping in the near future.

YMCA to Promote 2030 SDGs

On January 9, Caryn Maxim, CVSA Advisory Board member based in Morristown, New Jersey, presented CVSA's Community Education Campaign for the Implementation of the SDGs to the staff of the Vanderbilt YMCA in New York City, on the invitation of Robin Nathaniel, Youth & Family Director of the center. The group agreed to initiate holding open community meetings about the 2030 SDGs at the YMCA, to engage people in activities that promote the Goals in the community. They will be using materials in the SDG Toolkit produced by CVSA to aid organizations that join the SDG campaign.

Advisory Board Member Takes SDGs 'On the Road'

CVSA Advisory Board member Caryn Maxim and her husband Bernie took the Community Education Campaign for the 2030 SDGs to Yellow Springs, Ohio to the Economics of Happiness 2017 Conference Oct 20-22, sponsored by the Arthur Morgan Institute for Community Solutions, a member organization of CVSA and listed in *INVEST YOURSELF*. Community Solutions works to establish local and regional equitable economies through the lens of community. The conference was about creation of vibrant, local economies with a radically different paradigm focused on meeting real human needs through their ties to the community and nature. Maxim spoke to conference participants about joining CVSA's Community Education Campaign and incorporating the promotion of the



CVSA Advisory Board member Caryn Maxim and her husband Bernie at the Yellow Springs, Ohio Economics conference in October 2017.

SDGs in what they are already doing, to help build the groundswell of awareness for the SDGs and push to make them policy in the U.S. starting at the local level. CVSA's SDG Organizer's Toolkit was available to everyone interested.

High School Seniors Can Join the Movement to Transform Our World

Louis Metoyer, Campus Minister of Cantwell-Sacred Heart of Mary High School in Montebello, California invited CVSA to present the 2030 SDGs to each Religion class of senior year students on October 2. Five classes with 20 to 30 students each engaged in discussing the SDGs with CVSA Executive Director Angus in the course of that day. At the end of her class period, one student asked, "What if they don't achieve these goals in time?" Angus responded that she was correct to be worried, and that the answer is to put that concern into action through the SDG campaign. She and her fellow students will inherit the problems of poverty, inequality, hunger, exploitation, war and environmental destruction that the SDGs are directed at changing. It is imperative that the youth join the movement for the 2030 Agenda to "Transform Our World." The Campus Ministry office has invited CVSA to return each year to teach the senior classes about the 2030 SDGs and how they can volunteer and be part of the work to achieve them.

UUA Webinar Reaches Envoys in Eight States

On September 26, at the request of Allison Hess, International Engagement Associate at the International Office of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) in New York, Susan Angus, CVSA Executive Director, conducted a one hour webinar for UUA-UN Envoys on how to build a local campaign for the implementation of the 2030 SDGs. Ten envoys logged in for live participation in the webinar, hailing from eight states (Louisiana, New York, North Carolina, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, plus District of Columbia and Toronto, Canada.) Everyone asked for and received a copy of CVSA's SDGs Organizer's Toolkit for their local use.



USC Students in Texas

Continued from page 1

Interested students sought crucial firsthand field experience in disaster relief and a closer look at the biggest problems faced by first responders, disaster victims, and disaster relief and recovery volunteers.

Several months prior to the trip, CVSA made a presentation to provide students with information about the many problems

low-income, working class communities face when hit by hurricanes like Katrina, Sandy, or Harvey, such as the need for inclusive mobilization of evacuation before the disaster lands; the need for expeditious rescue operations directly after the event that do not leave anyone behind; the lack of access to clean water in the days, weeks, or months after a storm; regaining communication systems when power is lost; the need for effective mold remediation available to everyone after the storm; and the lack of temporary housing for residents during home repairs.



Chris Schottland (right) of United Saints outlined each stage of obstacles faced by individuals and communities during severe storms. These stages are: 1) Preparing for the storm, 2) Surviving the duration of the storm, 3) Conducting clean-up and recovery work with minimal resources and people-power, and 4) Contending with government condemnation and takeover of now-"blighted" property.



Ms. Ray and her husband Mr. R.J., both members of First Baptist Church of Hamshire, discussed their experience as local Red Cross volunteers with the Water Purification Team. The Church hosted the Cajun Army and United Saints Disaster Relief volunteers for five months as well as the USC contingent.



Students rework their project plans based on their new understandings of the problems.



A Cajun Army volunteer and veteran of Standing Rock, known as Fuzzy Bear, always happy to answer questions.



Troy McGee, a water rescue volunteer with Cajun Navy Relief from Baton Rouge, who took a week off from work without pay to carry out rescue efforts, talks with students about their drone reconnaissance project for aiding rescue operations.



Steven Jones, Cajun Army organizer, discussed the problems of water pollution after Harvey and other storms with the Water Solutions Team.

Students from the Viterbi School of Engineering submitted proposals describing products they would engineer to solve these problems. The students whose proposals were accepted, traveled with CVSA for an immersive experience in the Port Arthur area northeast of Houston where they could engage directly with disaster aid workers to assess the feasibility of their proposed solutions and assist ongoing relief efforts in any way they could while on the ground.

CVSA partnered with United Saints Volunteer Recovery Project, based in New Orleans, to make this trip a success. United Saints has mobilized volunteers for ongoing disaster relief and recovery in New Orleans and other parts of Louisiana ever since Hurricane Katrina. They are now also engaged in sending teams to this part of Southeast Texas because, despite all the media attention on Houston when Harvey hit, few resources were reaching smaller towns in the area.

The trip took place over the four-day Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend of January 12-15. United Saints coordinated with the Cajun Army, another volunteer organization working in the area basing its operations out of the First Baptist Church in Hamshire, Jefferson County, which arranged for the USC group to be housed with them at the church for the four days. The largely working class and poor communities of Jefferson County were hit by Harvey even harder than the city of Houston because, when the storm moved out of Houston into the Gulf, it then came back on land with increased strength, quickly inundating some areas with four to six feet of water before moving into Louisiana. 70 to 80 percent of the housing stock in the town of Hamshire was damaged. Thousands of people in the region were still unable to live in their homes four months later for want of resources and assistance in cleaning, gutting, and rebuilding damaged homes.

CVSA Executive Director Susan Angus and Trina Gregory, a senior lecturer in computer sciences at Viterbi School of Engineering, led the crew of 17 students who traveled by plane to Houston and then by bus to Hamshire. Everyone slept on Red Cross cots at the church, and meals were prepared by the church volunteers.



Maddie Blumenthal (left), who came from Dallas to volunteer with the Cajun Army, and B.G. (right), a Cajun Army volunteer from Louisiana, answer students' questions about coordination and communication directly after the disaster.

Chris Schottland, Field Organizer with United Saints, and Steven Jones of the Cajun Army had arranged for the local constable of Jefferson County, the local fire chief, a FEMA assessor, local Red Cross workers, two Cajun Navy volunteers and several Cajun Army volunteers to talk with the USC students about all the problems faced in efforts to save lives and homes during and after the disaster. They told their stories about the effects of the disaster on the communities and gave the students valuable feedback on their engineering projects as to their usability.

The students came with projects they had already started designing. Of particular interest was the Housing Team's project of a low-cost temporary, pre-fabricated housing unit that could be constructed in three days next to one's existing house. The team learned from interviewing the FEMA contract worker that the federal government spends \$150,000 on each of the notorious "FEMA trailers" (small mobile homes), which FEMA has distributed to low-income homeowners and renters without housing after disasters since 1999 in response to Hurricane Floyd in North Carolina. (At the time this trip took place, FEMA had not filled the

Continued on page 12



Brian Werner (center), the Jefferson County Constable, with the team working on an early-warning home device for earthquakes. He described how the county was surrounded by water and isolated from help for several days, the damage done and the rescue efforts he participated in. He has intimate knowledge of the community and its struggles because he grew up in the county and knows all its residents.



Chris Schottland met with the Housing Team to discuss the needs of low-income homeowners. Even when their homes are uninhabitable, residents often stay in their homes, or in their car or tent nearby, to protect their homes and be able to start repairs.

Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda

On September 25, 2015, all 193 member nations of the UN, including the United States, voted unanimously to strive for the achievement of these Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in every country — developing and developed — as national domestic and international policy priority. Each country, including the U.S., signed on, stating: “On behalf of the peoples we serve, we have adopted a historic decision on a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centered set of universal and transformative Goals and targets. We commit ourselves to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030...”

From the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Preamble and Call to Action:

“...All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan. We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind.”

“... We can be the first generation to succeed in ending poverty; just as we may be the last to have a chance of saving the planet. The world will be a better place in 2030 if we succeed in our objectives.

“...We the peoples” are the celebrated opening words of the Charter of the United Nations. It is “we the peoples” who are embarking today on the road to 2030. Our journey will involve Governments as well as parliaments, the United Nations system and other international institutions, local authorities, indigenous peoples, civil society, business and the private sector, the scientific and academic community — and all people. Millions have already engaged with, and will own, this Agenda. It is an Agenda of the people, by the people and for the people — and this, we believe, will ensure its success.

Read the whole 35-page document: Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015>.

CVSA’s Call for the Implementation of the SDGs in the U.S.:

CVSA calls on the U.S. government to carry out its pledge to implement the 2030 SDGs in the U.S. and form a national SDG Coordinating Council.

State councils should also be set up to oversee data collection, draw up implementation plans, coordinate policies and monitor the progress or implementation in their state and submit those to the national coordinating body. *Make the process public and open.*

Members on the councils at all levels should include representatives from nongovernment volunteer organizations, faith-based service organizations, social service administrators, educators, labor leaders, scientists, poor people’s representatives, family farm leaders, health advocates, legal justice specialists, environmental specialists, religious leaders, credit unions and community banks, small business representatives and other stakeholders.

In the absence of governmental action to date commensurate with the task, we call on CVSA member organizations to “take ownership” of the SDGs in your work. CVSA will provide consultation, coordination and tools:

- * Promote the SDGs in your community through the work your organization is already doing. Bring more people into this discussion and build alliances. CVSA can assist.
- * Make plans to advance the SDGs locally; monitor and keep government accountable to them.
- * Contribute information for CVSA to include in reports to the UN on status of implementation of these Goals in your area based on your organization’s direct experience.
- * Join CVSA in building this movement to increase our collective strength and transform our world, insuring no one is left behind.

30 Sustainable Development Goals



Goal 1. End Poverty in all its forms everywhere.



Goal 2. End Hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.



Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.



Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable, quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



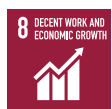
Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.



Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.



Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.



Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.



Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.



Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.



Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.*



Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.



Goal 15. Protect, restore, promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss.



Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.



Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for Sustainable Development.

* Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

Join CVSA's nationwide
**"Take Ownership of the
 2030 SDGs"**
 Community Education Campaign
 for the implementation of the 2030
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 the U.S. as well as around the world.

Call CVSA 323-933-2872
 to schedule a presentation to your
 organization, school, workplace or place of
 worship or in your community at large;
 and for a copy of CVSA's
 SDG Organizer's Toolkit.

July 9 to 18, 2018

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 the realities in the U.S., your proposals for
 solutions and the work your organization
 is doing to get there.

**Call CVSA today for deadlines
 and more information**

USC Students in Texas

Continued from page 9

requests made by the majority of people in Texas who had applied to FEMA for the trailers.) The USC team's project was a pre-fab housing unit, which would be better constructed, more comfortable, healthier, could be constructed in a few days right on people's own property and cost far less. The sympathetic FEMA worker agreed, but explained that getting FEMA to agree to purchase and distribute this alternative product and cancel the lucrative government contract with the company providing the current mobile homes would be an extremely difficult political battle. Funds to supply the housing unit would probably need to be obtained from other sources, according to the FEMA representative.

Other project designs the students came to Texas with included a pop-up cell tower that can be quickly installed when all other cell communication systems are down, a low-cost solar-powered individual water purification system, a home device that provides several seconds of advance warning for earthquakes and several projects involving drones for use in search-and-rescue missions. Each of the students' engineering projects was met with enthusiasm and well wishes by all those interviewed, who expressed hopes that they would become available for use.

The unanimous response from the local people was that every product the students were designing would save lives and be of great value to have. The main question was where the funding could come from to obtain the products once they were mass produced and available, given the very limited budgets of the local government agencies, the volunteer groups and the residents.

Qing Liu, one of the students who participated in the trip, and has continued to volunteer with CVSA, stated, "The trip to Texas made me realize how things really are. As an engineering student, we often design and build products basically based on what we've learned in school and what we've seen in the news. But the visit to Texas and conversations with local people, volunteers and organizations tells me more about what people really need. This trip changed my focus of design from a pile of high tech devices to something simpler but which could solve problems that actually affect people's lives."



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INVEST YOURSELF: A Guide to Action

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USC Students Experience Disaster Recovery, Hands-on

On the second full day of participation by CVSA and USC engineering students in Hamshire, Steven Jones of Cajun Army led the group in the task of gutting the home of 71-year-old Ms. Gerry Brown in the nearby town of Vidor. She was living in a trailer parked in her driveway. Her house was full of mold and everything she owned in the house was ruined.

Dozens of homes in Vidor were flooded after Hurricane Harvey had passed the area due to the decision of the Army Corps of Engineers to release waters behind the nearby levee into Vidor to prevent a local dam that was about to breach from flooding a more heavily populated and wealthier area nearby. Ms. Brown and others in the neighborhood had to be rescued by boat when the tsunami of water from the levee filled her house with four feet of water. She had been living alone for seven years and was about to sell her house when the flood destroyed the interior of the building.

Jones and other volunteers from the Cajun Army led the student team with the goal of completing the gutting down to the studs, so that Ms. Brown could proceed to sell her house to



Photos: Robert Macias

Steven Jones, Cajun Army organizer, provides a safety briefing for the USC students about muck and gut protocol.



USC student Qing Liu ready for a hammer and crow bar! The air-filter masks protect against breathing in mold spores.

a realtor and move closer to where her daughter now lives in another part of Texas. She had already disposed of the ruined furniture from the house, and another volunteer group had begun the gutting a month prior. The USC team, with the supervision and guidance of the Cajun Army, decided they would do their best to finish the job for her. By end of the day, a portion of the bathroom tiling was all that remained to be removed, which the Cajun Army took care of the following day.



USC students removing water-damaged floor tiles from Ms. Brown's house. The students worked all day to finish the whole interior gut job.



The pile of damaged, contaminated construction debris removed from Ms. Brown's home waiting collection by the town.



Ms. Brown giving hugs and thanks for a job well done prior to the USC students' departure.

Thank You Bryan and Julie Min



Photo: Ana Paula Mofarrej

Susan Angus, CVSA Executive Director (center), with Bryan and Julie Min at the 40th Annual USC Viterbi Awards Dinner on April 18, 2018 in Los Angeles, California.

CVSA is pleased to meet Bryan Min, USC Viterbi School of Engineering alumnus, and his wife Julie Min whose extraordinary vision is facilitating the creative ambitions of today's youth towards building a better future for the world with engineering. They established the Min Family Challenge (MFC) to support USC students who use engineering and technology to develop sustainable and effective solutions for global problems, positively affecting the greater society.

The Min Family decided that this year, in the wake of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Jose, and Maria and devastation from Mexico's strongest earthquakes in a century, the 2018 Min Family Engineering Social Entrepreneurship Challenge would focus on developing sustainable ventures to enhance relief and recovery efforts for the victims and mitigate impact of future disasters.

Their generous investment in the MFC students inspired the partnership between the Viterbi School of Engineering and CVSA to bring the students to Texas.

Bring the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals to your community.

We are building a groundswell across the country to make them a reality in the U.S. as well as the rest of the world.

Call CVSA to schedule a workshop, and ask for the CVSA SDG Organizer's Toolkit.

Call CVSA 323-933-2872

The Importance of Organization When Disaster Strikes

by Chris Schottland, United Saints Volunteer Recovery Project

Editor's note: Chris Schottland wrote this vignette to describe the process by which the United Saints' relief team effort came to Hamshire, Texas, where CVSA and USC Viterbi School of Engineering students had the opportunity to work with them in January of 2018.

Any ordinary time, the parking lot of the First Baptist Church in the small town of Hamshire, Texas would not have license plates from so many different states. Any ordinary time, there probably wouldn't be a car from outside Jefferson County. But the huge mounds of flood debris piled by the roadsides for miles around are not an ordinary sight either, and this is not any ordinary time.

Hundreds of thousands of people all over Texas are just beginning their struggle in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey and this church in Hamshire became home to something extraordinary. Over the course of a few months, pieces of the puzzle may come together, but first the church members had to take a chance and open their doors to the volunteers. That's how it begins.

There's no official name for these spontaneous volunteer centers that spring up and there's no template to work from, but there is a pattern. When Mac McClendon returned to the Holy Cross neighborhood in the Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans in 2005 after Katrina and found his warehouse flooded and the contents gone, he decided to put it to a new use. He found some cots and started feeding any volunteers that would stay to help his neighbors. They came two or three at a

time, then by the dozens and his Lower 9th Ward Village was born. Most stayed for a week or two. Some stayed for months. A few never left, choosing instead to weave themselves permanently into the fabric of the place they came to serve.

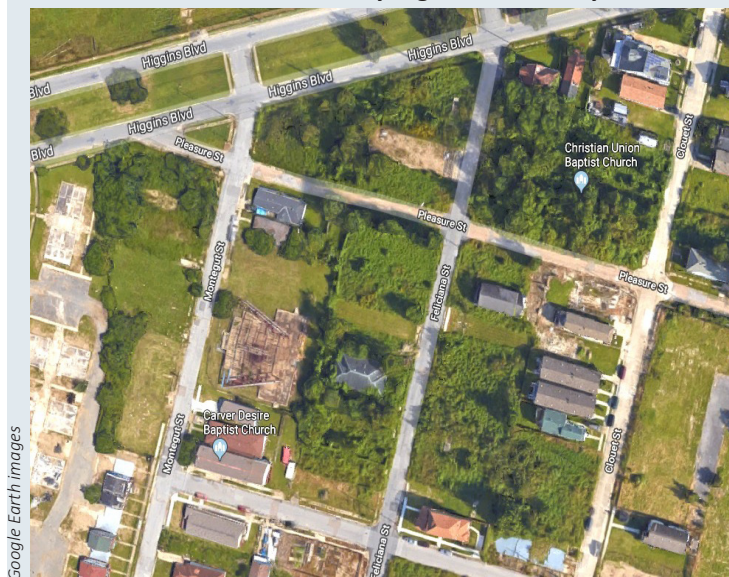
At about the same time, a young woman named Kellie Bentz arrived in New Orleans on behalf of the HandsOn Network. She had a chance meeting with the Reverend Lance Eden and he offered to open First Street United Methodist Church to house volunteers in Central City. They were able to scrounge together air mattresses, tools, and safety gear. Older members of the church volunteered to feed everyone and the newly christened Hands On New Orleans began the only recovery effort in that part of the city. More volunteers came, among them a roofer from Minnesota named Daryl Kiesow. He would volunteer two years of his life and then go on to create the United Saints Recovery Project, which serves Central City to this day.

From 2005 to 2008, dozens of these spontaneous centers sprang up all over New Orleans and St. Bernard Parish. Each chose a particular area or neighborhood to make their mission.

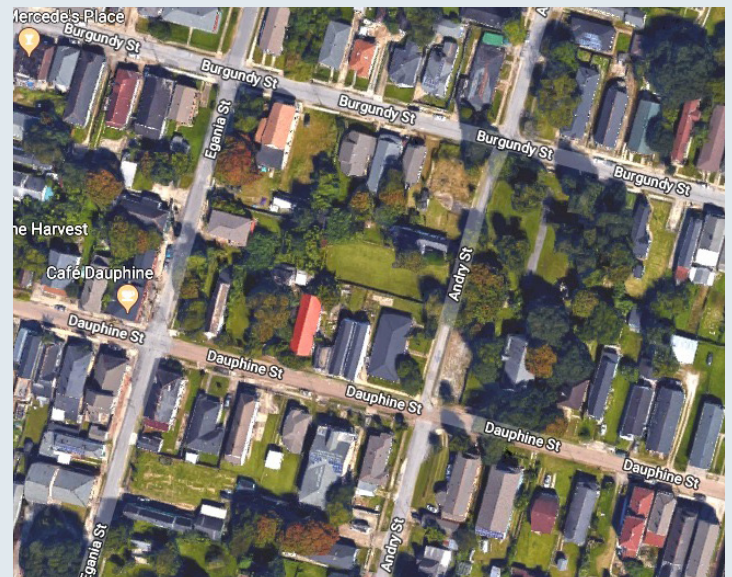
The difference between the areas that were home to one of them and those that were not are still striking even now in 2018. It is the difference between a neighborhood filled with more overgrown empty lots than occupied homes, and a neighborhood that recovers and most everyone returns.

This is why, a short time after Harvey made landfall, when the Cajun Army told us they knew a church in the

The Katrina-flooded Florida-Desire neighborhood in New Orleans that had no community organization – 10 years later



The Katrina-flooded Lower 9th Ward area that had community organization – 10 years later.



Golden Triangle region that was willing to work with them, we packed our vehicles and went.

When we arrived at the church in Hamshire, the sight of passenger vans, trailers, and campers made us feel strangely at home. It was all there: the improvised decontamination station by the door to the family life center, rows of rubber boots giving off the smell of powerful disinfectant, shovels upended and stored in garbage cans, piles of flatbars, stacks of bottled water, the brooms, the gloves, and the goggles. Inside, however, is where you feel the electricity.

It's chaotic in its early phase with volunteers arriving in odd numbers all through the day and night and project leaders scrambling to put teams together each morning. At some point, a handful of determined individuals will step into this swirling cacophony and a loose order will coalesce around them. Someone will deputize themselves to manage supplies or greet incoming groups and assign cots. Someone will take care of the kitchen. Team leaders will emerge and decide to stay a little longer. It's so fragile at this point and that's why we're here.

Up until now, we've had a week-by-week relay going between United Saints Recovery Project, Hands On New Orleans, NOLA Tree Project, and Camp Restore. We came to Texas to assist home owners, but we can't stay long so there's something else we're looking for.

All four of us are Katrina-born organizations and all four of us began like this. If we can find one of those places where the magic spark has caught, we'll fan that spark, and hope it grows. This is how it begins.



Volunteers Still Urgently Needed

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[www.volunteer@unitedsaints.org](mailto:volunteer@unitedsaints.org)

Cajun Army

Boots on the Ground. Teams still working in Houston and the areas south and east to the Gulf.

www.thecajunarmy.com

Cajun Navy

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In Memoriam Joy Cousminer

February 14, 1926 – December 25, 2017

CVSA members and volunteers who learned about the history and principles of the credit union movement through Joy's unrelenting efforts to keep small community-based credit unions in low-income communities alive were saddened this holiday season when we learned of her passing on Christmas morning.

Joy joined CVSA's Advisory Board in 2012 to contribute to the strength of independent volunteer service and action organizations, knowing how the credit union movement itself had begun as an entirely volunteer effort.

A life-long New Yorker, Rowena Joy Landis was one of two daughters born to Eve and Herman Landis.

Directly after high school, Joy attended New York University receiving a Bachelor's degree, then earned a graduate degree from Columbia Teachers College. She married Harry Cousminer in 1947 and had three children Jeff, Debbie and David.

Immediately after graduating Columbia University, Joy chose to teach in the South Bronx, one of the most economically deprived communities in the country, helping single mothers on welfare achieve GED diplomas. Joy saw that, among many other problems, her students regularly ran out of funds at the end of the month, often resorting to pawn shops and loan sharks to get through the month, thus, always remaining in debt and in trouble. She met with Jose Rodriguez, a former Catholic priest who had experience in community organizing, to discuss solutions. He explained how credit unions work and how they could provide both safe affordable savings options and allow the women to develop credit in a financial institution that they own as members.



Photo: CVSA

After studying how credit unions worked, Joy launched the drive to establish a credit union and in 1970 gained a charter for Bethex Federal Credit Union, with her students and others in the community forming its initial membership and its volunteer staff. When Bethex was chartered in 1970, it was chartered by the Department of Agriculture. It was not until 1972 that a federal agency called the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) was established and began creating new regulations and requirements.

For the first two decades, the Bethex Credit Union staff was entirely volunteer and moved frequently. In 1989, it found a permanent home in the basement of a co-op apartment building in the South Bronx. Joy invested her life into Bethex, volunteering untold hours beyond her paid hours to grow this credit union and mentor others in building credit unions in low-income communities.

In 1989 Joy introduced a successful small and micro-business lending program, long before micro-credit became the popular concept it is today.

She also forged innovative partnerships between Bethex, check-cashing companies and international remittance firms to better serve low-income people's needs. After seeing that check-cashing businesses were very popular in the poor communities, partly because many were open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, hours that Bethex could not possibly keep, Joy designed a partnership in 1995 with over 100 cash-checking operations that allowed members to use the check-cashing outlets at a reduced fee and cash

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checks, make deposits, and open credit union accounts at any hour. Under her leadership, Bethex also partnered with a local high school to provide summer jobs and internships.

Honors and Awards for Her Leadership

In 2006 Joy received the National Federation of Community Development Credit Union's (NFCDCU) Herb Wegner Award for Individual Achievement, the credit union movement's highest honor, recognizing unwavering dedication to the movement's philosophy and ideals.

During Hurricane Sandy in 2012, Joy kept the credit union office open despite not having power or hot water in her own apartment, and the credit union's 23 staff members not having access to public transportation to get to work. During the entire recovery period of the disaster, Bethex FCU arranged carpools and offered to pay cab fares for staff who needed it to get to work.

In 2013, at age 87, Joy was inducted into the Cooperative Hall of Fame (CHF), recognized as "a woman of action and compassion who recognizes no boundaries for her age, nationality or gender" and "for consistently breaking down economic and educational barriers for those in need" and "introduc[ing] them to the cooperative idea of people helping people, and immeasurably strengthening the credit union and cooperative movement," as well as for her leadership and "trail-blazing ideas." The CHF said: "Her work embodies the ideals of community spirit, determination, vision, and

cooperation. She is a leader with a quintessentially cooperative spirit."

Joy Worked to Help Low-income Credit Unions Survive

However, when CVSA first met Joy in 2009, she was already talking about the danger ahead for small, low-income credit unions. When Joy participated in a CVSA event titled "Organizing Our Volunteer Power: Shared Experiences from Honduras, Guatemala, the Philippines and The Bronx on Methods of Grassroots Empowerment to Reverse the Trends of Poverty," held at a United Nations NGO conference in New York in August of 2014, she warned of the impending destruction of independent credit unions serving low-income and minority communities in the U.S. She pointed to increased federal regulations and requirements that were causing many to shut down. She articulated the positive role in fighting poverty in both rural and urban communities that small low-income credit unions have played in the past, enabling working class and poor communities to keep capital in their community and decide how it is to be used and to make it possible for low-income people to borrow and build credit.

To overcome some of the problems dozens of these credit unions in the five boroughs of New York were facing, CVSA worked with Joy in planning the creation of a loose alliance of community credit unions in Harlem, The Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island, New York in 2010 which

Continued on page 18

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on June 1, 2018

Join CVSA's Nationwide Community Education Campaign
for the Implementation of the
2030 SDGs in the U.S!



Joy Cousminer

Continued from page 16

she called “We Care 4 Credit Unions.” She organized monthly meetings, brought in experts and shared information and resources that enabled them to assist each other and better survive the growing new regulations and requirements being imposed by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) and other federal agencies.

As the CEO of Bethex for 47 years, she saw it grow from a small group of women on welfare who held bake sales to start the credit union to a 9,000 member credit union in 2010 with \$16,000,000 in assets, serving primarily people with low-paying jobs, retired and disabled people on low fixed incomes and small business owners.

Federal Government Steps In – Not to Help Out, but to Close Down

Her pioneering accomplishments and national recognition, however, did not stop the federal government in 2014 from embarking on a drawn-out, disruptive, on-site investigation of Bethex, on the basis it was “at high risk for illicit activity,” looking for suspected money-laundering because the credit union served a largely immigrant community and offered remittance services (sending money home to family in another country) at lower fees than large commercial services, through partnerships she had forged with local remittance service companies. *The investigation, in the end, found no wrongdoing and filed no charges*, but the entire process cost Bethex hundreds of thousands of dollars in fees, legal costs, purchases of new high tech products used by large credit unions, now required by NCUA for all credit unions, and loss of investments and revenue.

At the August 2014 CVSA panel discussion at the NGO conference at the UN, Joy had said, “As we speak, credit unions across the country are being over-regulated and liquidated...” She detailed how only one new credit union is being chartered annually by the federal government now, while 350 are being closed each year or merged into larger corporate ones. She said, “This is not good for sustainable development if we are seriously looking at reversing the trend of growing poverty in the U.S. ... for those who might consider credit unions as a means for eliminating some of the cause of poverty – there is a gorilla in the room – and it’s the federal government!”


On December 18, 2015 NCUA found Bethex to be insolvent, liquidated its assets and merged the membership into a large corporate credit union based in Connecticut. It was the tenth federal credit union to be liquidated that year. One of the members donated the balance in her Bethex Credit Union account to CVSA, in respect for Joy, rather than have her membership moved into a corporate account.

The National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions (NFCDCU) said, “The loss of this iconic credit union is a significant blow to our shared mission of helping low-income consumers achieve financial independence.” NFCDCU had “...engag[ed] NCUA at multiple levels to express their concerns, to question the review process and seek more transparency in future review processes,” and urging steps be taken by the NCUA to meet its obligations to preserve minority credit unions.

Soon after the NCUA closed Bethex Credit Union, Joy’s health began to decline. She celebrated her 90th birthday with a music-filled party (highlighted by an a cappella doo-wop quartet singing “Joy to the World”) at her apartment on West 14th Street, crammed with people from all walks of life and several states whose lives she had touched.

Joy kept up with CVSA’s endeavors and hosted a CVSA meeting at her apartment that brought Remote Area Medical (RAM) based in Tennessee and Coalition of Concerned Medical Professionals (CCMP), based in Brooklyn – two CVSA member organizations – together. She moved north to Massachusetts in spring of 2016 to live with her devoted son Jeff and his wife Kathy for the care she needed.

Some of Joy’s efforts to support small community-based credit unions, including carrying on the continuity of the We Care group, are being continued by the National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions, based in New York. Numerous publications of the credit union industry have paid tribute to Joy since her passing.

Joy is missed by her two sons and daughter, Jeff (Kathy), David and Debbie, by her Bethex Credit Union staff, and by the thousands of people she inspired and whose lives her work improved. CVSA is proud to carry on her activist and visionary legacy in fighting injustice, poverty, prejudice and ignorance through our work in strengthening the abilities of independent volunteer nongovernmental organizations serving communities in need, dedicated to succeeding in winning the systemic change Joy’s efforts were reaching for to foster sustainable development and leave no one behind. 



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In Memoriam

Martha Davis

April 25, 1932 - January 14, 2018



Photo courtesy of Davis Family

Martha Davis, a member of CVSA's Executive Committee since 2004, died on January 14 peacefully in her West Village apartment, in New York City at the age of 85.

Martha began volunteering with CVSA in New York City in 2003, when the office was just four blocks from her home on Union Square, until the effects of a minor stroke made it too difficult for her to come to the office.

She continued to provide needed support by making her apartment available to CVSA's full-time volunteer staff, kept up with monthly consultations on CVSA's strategic growth, did copy editing for CVSA's catalogue *INVEST YOURSELF* and articles for *ITEMS*, the membership newsletter. She was very happy about CVSA's move into new headquarters in Los Angeles, even though it meant less in-person contact with her.

Martha was born and grew up in Westchester County, New York. Soon after receiving her Bachelor of Arts from Vassar College in 1954, Martha moved to Manhattan to work for the City of New York as a city planner, a job she held until retirement. In 1973 she received a Public Service Award through the Fund for the City of New York for her work as the Director of Capital Budget, when she worked in Mayor John

Lindsay's administration. Part of Martha's job in the 60s and 70s was to consult local neighborhood groups on where new schools should be built. She lamented the current situation of communities having to fight to keep schools open.

In 1976 Martha jumped at the opportunity to tour several cities of China with a delegation of city planners from various U.S. cities. The memories of this experience of Chinese culture stayed with her for the rest of her life. When CVSA Executive Director, Susan Angus had the opportunity to visit Jiangxi Province, China for a month in 2003, Martha stepped up to make that trip possible by helping run the office in Angus's absence. Subsequently Martha supported CVSA's efforts to send volunteer oral English teachers to the schools in Jiangxi that CVSA had developed partnerships with.

Martha was always eager to hear positive news from CVSA about the accomplishments of member organizations in organizing for change in the U.S. and about CVSA's NGO work at the United Nations, she had hope that the youth involved in grassroots organizing now will succeed in building a better future for us all. In the last decade of Martha's life, she was disturbed by the continued U.S. military aggressions around the world and the poverty she saw growing in the U.S. She tried to keep up with national and international news from as many different sources as she could.

She is greatly missed by CVSA organizers, by her surviving brother and five nieces and nephews.



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Organizer Training & Education

All CVSA volunteers and staff of CVSA member organizations are welcome to participate in our organizer training programs which include on-the-job practical training as well as classes in history, strategy and methods of organizing and current world affairs.

Publications Production

On-the-job training is provided through work sessions to produce CVSA's publications: *INVEST YOURSELF*, the catalogue of volunteer opportunities, and CVSA's membership newsletter — learn to write, edit, proofread, do desktop publishing and Photoshop. If you have these skills, you can become one of the trainers!

Community Outreach Events

Volunteers participate in information tables and speaking engagements, CVSA's most valuable means of connecting with people from all walks of life looking for meaningful and productive volunteer opportunities.

Membership Organization Communications, Consultations and Training

Volunteers participate in our site visits, consultations, and training workshops with member organizations of CVSA, help maintain and build more arenas of communication with member organizations around the country and collect news for the newsletter.

Nationwide Community Education Campaign for the Implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals

Volunteers learn to give presentations to community groups; coordinate the collection of reports to be submitted to the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development at the UN; do research and develop tools for CVSA member organizations; mobilize community groups, businesses and faith-based groups to build a groundswell of involvement for implementation and monitoring of the 2030 SDGs in the U.S. On-the-job training provided.

There is all this and more to do at our new headquarters in Los Angeles. You can also volunteer with CVSA from wherever you are, take on special projects and assignments. Call us at 323-933-2872 for more information on how you can participate in and support CVSA's efforts.