

The National Organizers Alliance is pleased to announce the first two recipients of the **NOA Organizer Respite Award**, which recognizes the tireless organizing efforts and commitment of outstanding organizers and movement builders. This award is designed to honor those who are dedicated to organizing as a tool for social change; who strive to create community amongst other organizers; and who are in need of personal rest and recovery. Recipients receive a one week stay at a vacation area in Tennessee and \$1,200 to use at their discretion. The week-long stay can be structured however they see fit – with friends and family or independently. Deep gratitude to the **Southern Empowerment Project** for donating the property to nurture organizers.

Awardees: Cliff and April Albright



Cliff and April Albright are **leading social justice activists in Alabama.**

April Albright is a human rights attorney and founder of the

Justice Group, which provides legal services and support for communities in the Black Belt. Cliff Albright has helped hundreds of families move from renting to home ownership through his work in affordable housing.

As board members of the **Save Ourselves (SOS) Coalition**, April and Cliff work directly with Gulf Coast residents and internally displaced persons to educate, empower, and assist survivors in rebuilding their communities and strengthening their families. After Katrina they organized relief resources, trans-

ported families to safe shelter in the Gulf Coast region and assisted families in securing relief aid. They played a key role in creating a community-supported, long-term housing shelter called **Circle of Love Center** in Selma, Alabama and are working for families to receive on-going support and assistance from disaster recovery agencies.

In addition, Cliff and April work with the **Malcolm X Grassroots Movement** and have helped to organize youth leadership camps every summer for 200 low-income African-American youth. They played a pivotal role in organizing a community based political apparatus called the **Freedom Party of Alabama**, which has organized political forums, organizing training, and Freedom Councils in several communities in Dallas County, Alabama. The Freedom Party organized progressive candidates to run for office during the recent election cycle.

Cliff co-hosts a progressive radio talk show with JL Chestnut that provides a forum for Black Belt residents to share information and talk about social issues facing the community. April and Cliff are the proud parents of two small sons, Jay (6) and Tayari (7).

NOA's Mission:

NOA's mission is to advance progressive organizing for social, economic and environmental justice and to sustain, support and nurture the people of all ages who do it.

Awardee: Jearlean Osborne



Jearlean Osborne is a native of Alabama who has lived in Biloxi, Mississippi for the past 42 years. For thirty-five of those years Jearlean worked first with the

Moore Community House and now with the **Mississippi Low Income Initiative**, housed at Moore.

The historic Moore Community House, which serves low-income women and children in Biloxi, was completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. With their programs disrupted and their ability to pay women childcare providers through the state compromised, the Moore Community House moved quickly to get programs up and running in temporary quarters. Jearlean and the Director of Moore, Carol Burnett, have worked tirelessly to meet the needs of the Biloxi community and Mississippi's childcare providers **while raising the \$2 million needed to rebuild.**

In the immediate aftermath of Katrina, Jearlean's home served as the hub for her extended family and community. Jearlean worked around the clock to provide immediate material relief in the wake of the destruction in coastal Mississippi. She has since helped organize residents to fight for justice in rebuilding so that the broad community is served, not just the casinos and wealthy residents. Jearlean has assisted in the development of **Coastal Women for Change**, which addresses the needs of residents in the post-Katrina rebuilding effort, and now serves on their board.

Jearlean is using this award to take five additional women with her on retreat. The woman joining Jearlean during this retreat are Ethel Davis from the **Mississippi Low Income Childcare Initiative**; Annette Brealand who directs **Second Shift Parents**, a group supporting grandparents as advocates for children; and Sharon Hanshaw, Anna Gines and Essie Mitchell from Coastal Women for Change.

A special thank you to those that helped make this award possible:

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|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Elizabeth Barton | Page McCullough |
| Becky Bodonyi | Andrea Kirsten Mullen |
| Latosha Brown | Daniel Okun |
| Carol Burnett | Tema Okun |
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| William Darity, Jr. | Susanne Spielman |
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| Ray Eurquhart | Jane Stein |
| Samuel Hummel, Jr. | Thomas Stern |
| Jereann King Johnson | Andy Stern |
| Tobi Mae Lippin | Jeanette Stokes |

- Common Counsel Foundation
- Moore Community House
- Russell Carter Artist Management, Ltd.
- Indigo Girls
- Save Our Selves
- SEIU
- Southern Empowerment Project
- And the members of the NOA

Special Ask:
**Help build the Organizer
Respite Award Fund by
making a contribution today!**

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