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**DEKALB COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY HELPS
OVER 3000 HURRICANE KATRINA
EVACUEES**

Families express need for housing as first on their list

Decatur, Georgia – October 19, 2005 – In one month since Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, evacuees that came to the metro Atlanta area were met with open arms and real housing solutions with the Housing Authority of DeKalb County (HADC.) Approximately 3000 families –which is approximately 12,000 individuals (using a 4 per household estimate)— found a place to call home in the first month since losing everything they had to the category 5 storm that hit their region in late August.

“Right now, I’m just trying to find a place to stay...We’re only here by the grace of God...” said New Orleans evacuee Omeeka Spooner. She now resides in DeKalb County with her three children. After being rescued from the roof of their house by an airboat, Ms. Spooner and her family spent two days on the sidewalk and four days in the New Orleans Convention Center. “I’ll have to get back to New Orleans to salvage what I can, but we’re now going to live in Atlanta.”

Local churches came together to help with food and clothing. HADC residents helped with everything from dishes to furniture. With numerous housing partners working with the Housing Authority in DeKalb County, such as NuRock Companies (housing over 750 families), Norsouth Companies (with over 80 families) as well as private county residents and realtors, the newest Atlanta residents began to feel like there was hope and a tangible start to putting their lives back together.

“The Housing Authority in DeKalb County wants to make sure that families have a way to stabilize themselves and find sure footing again,” says HADC Chief Executive Officer Bettye Davis. “This is a natural disaster unlike anything that has happened in recent history and it is our duty to respond with compassion and real results.”

The Housing Authority of DeKalb County is serving the needs of Hurricane Katrina evacuees at their offices. They have also been a part of DeKalb County’s Disaster Relief Services Center, a one-stop shop approach to getting all needed services under one roof – eliminating a large amount of stress for evacuees trying to find assistance in an unfamiliar city.

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