



Lower 9th Ward
Homeownership
Association



We envision a diverse and thriving Lower 9th Ward community with record-setting African American homeownership rates through the **Community-Driven Revitalization** of our historic community.



Pictured above: flooding in the Bruzzi's yard. 17 years after the levees failed during Hurricane Katrina we are still dealing with excessive water in the Lower 9th Ward

The Bruzzi Family

"Shortly after purchasing our home on the North side of Claiborne in 2012 we noticed our yard and street flooded after each rain event. Then only a couple of years later we discovered that our porch was separating from the roof on the same side of our house. However, it wasn't until we participated in the L9WHA Education Series with the Urban Conservancy that we learned about Green Infrastructure (GI) & that the lack of naturally occurring plants in this area of our yard was simultaneously causing flooding and subsidence —the real cause of our porch sinking.

While this was a lightbulb moment for us, we still didn't know what to do. So when the Waterwise GI 101 class & GI 102 tours were offered, we jumped at the opportunity to learn more. And it was from this class that we, along with other Lower 9 residents, suggested doing a Work & Learn, so that ALL residents of our community could learn how GI could salvage our homes.

It was a true pleasure to welcome the L9WHA, Waterwise GulfSouth, 3 generations of Lower 9 residents & others to install a French drain, rain garden & naturally occurring plants to save our yard and our home! Our 4 year old daughter (pictured below) subsequently has invited all of the neighborhood kids to our yard to explain the GI that was installed and how it is impacting our house."

This is what Community-Driven Revitalization means to us!!!

Matt & Sarah Bruzzi, Lower 9 residents

Community-Driven Revitalization

When Gaynell arrived at the L9WHA in 2020, her focal point was resident-driven revitalization with the vision to install green infrastructure (GI) at the home of every resident in the Lower 9th ward— a vital part of our [Whole 9 Initiative](#). Therefore, **COMMUNITY-LED REVITALIZATION** at the L9WHA means **partnering WITH the community to develop programs, events, and beautification initiatives that will empower others in the neighborhood to get involved**. One example of this method in action is our GI work with WaterWise GulfSouth, Urban Conservancy, and SOUL. Each organization has partnered with the L9WHA to educate residents on the importance of GI and how it can help to reduce flooding in their yards after each rain event. **We know that educating our residents will give them the knowledge needed to lead others.** In 2022, we hosted workshops, hands-on learning events, and volunteer projects. And at our September 2022 green infrastructure class, one resident brought her entire block to attend the workshop.



Scan the QR code to hear from Ms. Catherine Phibbs—and the impact GI has had on her LEGACY of homeownership.

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Ms. Dorothy epitomizes the L9WHA idea of Resident-Driven Preservation. Through sharing her story and the resources she came across, 6 residents of the Lower 9th Ward preserved their LEGACY of Homeownership, including Ms. Bobbie—hear her story and others (in their own words) by clicking the link below

Resident-Led Preservation—Ms. Cook's Story

The L9WHA prides itself on being a one-stop shop of homeownership resources for Lower 9 homeowners. **However, we recognize the most valuable asset to our community-- is the people.** Our office is always open to homeowners, like Ms. Cook, to call or visit when they need services or to share information with other homeowners.

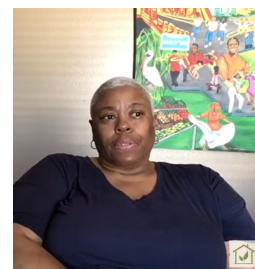
Early in 2022 Ms. Cook contacted the L9WHA when she needed assistance with repairs. After receiving her services, **Ms. Cook shared her success story with others in the community who are still fighting with insurance companies, and FEMA appeals post-Hurricane Ida.** Then in June, Ms. Cook visited the L9WHA to provide us with information on the new roof installation program provided by Rebuilding Together, a non-profit Organization in New Orleans. Our Client Services Specialist, Ms. Cynthia, contacted Rebuilding Together to verify the documentation needed to apply to the program and shared the information with homeowners in the community who she knew met their qualifications. **To date, 6 residents have received new roofs via the L9WHA and Ms. Cook.**

Things we look forward to in 2023

In 2023, after listening to our homeowners and conducting an assessment of current client services, we are expanding our services to include resources and funding for repairs. This will only strengthen our preservation work as we continue our work with successions, estate planning, disaster recovery (FEMA & insurance appeals), and lot abatement.

L9WHA Preservation in the community's OWN words

This year's preservation program has made a tremendous impact on our homeowners. Hear from Lower 9 homeowners and learn more about their stories by watching the videos on our YouTube Channel. Watch the videos by scanning the QR code to the right, clicking on the photo, or going to our YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@L9WHA>.



Ms. Bobbie

Partners

All the work we have accomplished in the community is because of our community partners, grantors, relationships with government officials, the guidance of the residents, and supporters like you. This year, we are happy to announce that we are also partnering with neighborhood corporations and small businesses that have committed to sponsoring or facilitating programs and events that will empower residents with the knowledge needed to lead the changes they want to see in the community. Some of these organizations include, but are not limited to: EMR,- Southern Recycling, Lower 9 Economic Development District, Chase Bank, Faubourg Brewery & MORE.



Pictured Above: L9WHA partner EMR—Southern Recycling sponsored the 2022 Rain barrel workshop at the new L9WHA offices, including the purchase and installation of the 12 rain barrels. These barrels will capture 504 gal of water in the Lower 9.

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The First Annual Lower 9 Festival

The L9WHA and Lower 9 Neighborhood Association have worked together to bring programs and events to the Community since the beginning of their partnership in 2019. In 2021, they combined efforts to develop a community resource fair for their neighborhood that was supposed to take place on the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina (2005). However, on August 29, 2021, Hurricane Ida hit Louisiana. Homes and businesses were damaged, but the community remained resilient. As such, this year we worked with L9NA to host an even bigger event. On August 27, 2022, staff



members and volunteers reported to Oliver Bush Playground. We set up the Lower 9 Fest and waited for the kick-off. By 11:00am, the sky opened up, and it rained heavily for over an hour. **In spite of the rain, participants and organizations continued to arrive for this inaugural event. We proceeded with the festival plan, and the event was a MASSIVE success.**

The L9WHA and L9NA's 1st Annual Lower 9 Festival kicked off with a traditional New Orleans secondline led by the Stooges Brass Band, 2022 King and Queen of Zulu, elected officials, and community leaders. The festival featured live music performances by local musicians, food trucks, kids activities, and a 50+ organization community resource area. **See the inset for more photos from the Lower 9 Festival.

2022 Lower 9 Festival participants Keith Calhoun & 2022 Original Big 9 Social Aid & Pleasure Club Queen, Cheryl Goffner

The 2023 Lower 9 Festival will take place on August 26, 2023.

"The worst thing in the world is going to a festival or event and only having one or two food options to pick from. I think it helped people stay longer and create a better atmosphere on a rainy day. It made me feel like, despite the rain, the L9 is a strong community and is willing to do whatever it takes to celebrate that." Jalen, Faubourg Brewery

Lower 9 Fest by Numbers	
90	Community Organizations, businesses & Government Agencies
30	Sponsors (businesses, organizations, & individuals)
45	volunteers
7	live music performances
6	Kids Activities
35	Businesses registered to sell products in the Lower 9 EDD village
500	Estimated attendance



The L9WHA is looking forward to 2023

- Resuming In-Person Homeownership Meetings (Jan 2023)
- Establishing L9WHA Community Advisory Committee (Jan 2023)
- Installing GI projects at homeowners
- Planting 200 trees in the Lower 9 with SOUL (Spring 2023)
- Monthly Education Series - w/Field Trips to the Civil District Court
- Follow our work on social media

Follow, Like & Subscribe to the **L9WHA**



Find us on these platforms by searching: L9WHA

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Our Team

"We (the L9WHA team) all have roots here; because of those roots, we are committed to making sure the homeowners' vision for the neighborhood is at the forefront of our mission and actions."

Cynthia Guillemet, L9WHA Client Service Specialist

The photo below illustrates our staff's commitment to the people and resources of the Lower 9th Ward. We are willing to get our hands dirty (literally) to make sure we eliminate every barrier to homeownership in the Lower 9th Ward. In 2023, our team will expand to include even more staff members, volunteers, and interns.



Referencing the Lower 9 Fest:
"DYNAMIC TRIO - you pulled off such a HUGE feat! Rejoice in the joy and light you have brought to so many families in this neighborhood and around the city!"

Eve, Lower 9 Resident

Scan the QR code here, or visit:

www.youtube.com/@L9WHA

to hear even more testimonials from Lower 9 residents.



Staff

Gaynell Brady

Executive Director

Cynthia Guillemet

Community Engagement &
Client Services Specialist

Sarah Bruzzi

Development Coordinator

Board

Tonya Boyd Cannon, President

Educator at Bricolage Elementary School

Professional Singer

Betty Bell (rotated off November 2022)

Department of Children and Family Services (retired)

Steve Marshall (rotated off October 2022)

Founder, Mass Timber Strategies

Charles Stern Jr, Treasurer



L9WHA Board President Tonya Boyd-Cannon shared her gifts and talents with all of us at the Lower 9 Fest.

Our current board members have worked diligently, even in the midst of a pandemic, to move the organization forward, including relocating us to a new building that can facilitate hybrid board meetings and professional development. Although some board members are rotating off this year, **the board of directors is excited to announce a cadre of new board members in January 2023 to carry on this growth.**



Partner with Us

Our work would not be possible without our partners!

Join us by:

1. Following us on Social Media at: www.facebook.com/L9WHA and www.instagram.com/L9WHA & www.youtube.com/@L9WHA
2. Telling your friends and family about the L9WHA
3. Becoming a sustaining donor today by visiting: www.l9wha.org/donate

Pictured Left: Waterwise Neighborhood champion Ms. Tribble & L9WHA Client Service Specialist Cynthia Guillemet celebrating the inaugural Lower 9 Fest.

Become a sustaining donor TODAY at www.L9WHA.org/Donate

Partnerships

Community Driven work in the Lower 9th Ward could not happen without you! Your individual contributions keep us inspired. We appreciate every letter, e-mail, phone call and message we receive. Our work continues in the Lower 9th ward because of your partnership through the years. **Thank you!!!**

2021 Sustaining Donors

Marge Anderson	Gail Maidenbaum
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2022 Grants

Ben & Jerry's Foundation
Enterprise Community
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HUD Sec. 4 Capacity-
Building Grant through
Enterprise Community
Partners
Pew Matching Grant
Waterwise/Kresge Foundation

2022 Corporate Donations

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HCNA
The Intersection
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Power Coalition
L9EDD
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Melba's Poboys
National Park Service
Lower 9th Ward NENA
Oak Street Health
Our Mammy's
NOLA Business Alliance
Port of New Orleans
Dr. Parker Dentistry
Shaklee Corporation—Donna Kuhns
EMR Southern Recycling
Tekrema Center for Art & Culture
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We've Moved!!!

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1235 Deslonde St. NOLA 70117

www.L9WHA.org **504-943-6000**

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Lower 9th Ward Economic Development District
Center for Sustainable Engagement & Development
Kermit Ruffins
Wake Up District E
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Michael's Photography
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Lower 9 Community Wellness Consortium
Lower 9th Ward Senior Choir

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