



The Noble Architect Foundation

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Rebuilding Pass Christian, Mississippi

Bahram AzabDaftari, The Noble Architect Foundation



On August 29th 2005, Hurricane Katrina impacted the U.S. Gulf Coast demolishing coastal towns in Louisiana and Mississippi. New Orleans sunk by the violent overflow of water when levees shattered. Over 1800 people were killed, hundreds of thousands were displaced and hundreds of thousands more were trapped in the city without food, drinking water and many other basic necessities. Rescue efforts were slow, chaotic, and disorganized. Many residents were trapped in attics and on rooftops for days before being evacuated.

Rebuilding and recovery, too, have been sluggish. Citizens from around the country - through various local community and religious groups - have accelerated the reconstruction efforts.

Last week I attended a presentation by architect Leah McBride and her contractor-father, Matt McBride. Their team of six young architects work hard to restore hope to a devastated community, "one home at a time." When Hurricane Katerina hit Pass Christian, Mississippi - a beachfront town - (2005 population: 6400 pp), it was nearly wiped off the map. Only 500 homes were left habiable after the storm. Less than 100 have been rebuilt. This Northern Virginia team have brought new housing to six families there. To raise awareness of how architects can be involved in the reconstruction following such disasters, Leah and her father's team talked about their experience - and about how architects could help a devastated community.



They have paired with local volunteer organizations to ensure the completion of the homes and to allow the homes to be built at no- or low-cost.

Her father, Matt McBride, lead the rebuilding effort while Leah designed the prototype housing. What is, particularly, exciting about their program is their efficient design-build program that is supported by low interest rates from local lenders. To read their full story refer to their [website](#).

There are many families in desperate needs. Their volunteer program is one approach to help these communities rebuild their lives. Contact Leah, if you consider joining their October house-build. You may also contact local organizations such as [Architecture for Humanities](#) or [Habitat for Humanities](#).

Article content and pictures provided by Leah McBride



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Meet the Designers:

Left to right: Camilo Bearman, Thomas Pettin, Leah McBride, Matt McBride, Heather Grutzius, Tim Hill, Leo Salom. John White (not shown)

How you can become a part of this?

Go there. Devote a week or more with a group, or on your own. Everyone from unskilled laborers to highly skilled contractors can be put to use and accommodated.

Sponsor a project. Sponsor anything from a new roof on someone's home to an entire home. Or challenge a group to match funds.

Contact them:

[Leah McBride](#) - phone 703.785.1823

[Matt McBride](#) - phone 703.915.1235
