

# UNITED HOUMA NATION

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## Youth Tribal Identity and Documentarian Exploration Project Tribal ID Project November 21, 2012

Following the August 20, 2010 Deepwater Horizon Disaster the United Houma Nation communities, which are dotted along the coast of southeast Louisiana was devastated and concerned that this latest disaster would be a severe blow to the culture and way of life that is closely tied to the natural environment. With livelihoods threatened, families were put under extreme pressure. Not wanting tribal youth to be overlooked, the UHN launched a comprehensive youth program that would encompass the 6-parish service area in order to give youth a voice in their post disaster communities. The framework of the UHN Youth Program is to put youth in the lead in making decisions and determining their own future.

The Tribal Identity and Documentarian Exploration Project (Tribal ID Project) utilizes photography, videography and audio recording as a means of offering young adults a vehicle to express themselves following the multiple disasters they have experienced. The project was launched this week with a group of 12 high school students to learn and explore the equipment, learn interviewing techniques and develop a plan for how they will use the technology as well as what messages and stories do they want to tell. Tribal Elders visited and shared stories of growing up, their educational struggles and traditional ways of life. Additionally the youth stayed at the USDA Plant Materials Center in Galliano and had the opportunity to explore and learn more about the work done there to address coastal restoration through plant sciences. They began filming and documenting this work and their involvement in helping restore their coast.

Moving forward tribal youth have developed a plan to use the audio/visual technology to create an archive of interviews with tribal elders and document tribal history. They also intend to develop documentaries, short videos through a website, radio pieces to share on KUHN and creating short videos to teach tribal youth language, tribal stories and legends.

This project is being developed in partnership with the University Of Arizona Bureau Of Applied Research in Anthropology and Virtual Reality Lab and the USDA Plant Materials Center. Funds to create and develop this project were provided by the Greater New Orleans Foundation's Coastal Communities Fund.