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**How to Bridge America's Economic Divides Post-Katrina:
National Foundation to Release Report on Attitudes of Poor**

Seattle, Washington - **On October 18** at 10:00 a.m. at The National Press Club in Washington, D.C., Marguerite Casey Foundation will release “Different Incomes, Common Dreams”, the most comprehensive study looking at attitudes of Americans, particularly low-income families’ attitudes, before and after Hurricane Katrina. This is one of the largest and most inclusive nationwide surveys examining the attitudes, hopes, fears and dreams of nearly 2,000 American families living on both sides of the economic scale.

The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI) between December 9 2004, and February 12 2005, and Lake Snell Perry Mermin/Decision Research between September 30 2005 and October 3 2005.

“When we commissioned this study,” said Luz Vega-Marquis, President and CEO of Marguerite Casey Foundation, “We wanted to take the pulse of America’s poor and Americans in general. We wanted to hear the concerns of the public and what solutions they saw both before and after Katrina. What we found is that overall Americans continue to be optimistic about their future, and that of their families. However, that optimism diminishes as income levels drop. Katrina laid bare the hardships of America’s poor. Our hope is that this study provokes continued dialogue about one of this country’s most pressing issues – its poor.”

- **At least 9 out of 10 of all income groups think poverty is a problem in our country today.**
- **Since Katrina, 97% of families in America think that there is a gap between rich and poor; 79% think it’s a very big gap.**
- **55% of very low-income families are not able to fully pay their bills each month.**

The survey indicates that even after Katrina, Americans across incomes levels share many of the same hopes and aspirations for the future. However, most Americans agree that the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen. The majority of respondents supported a broad range of measures to help with poverty, such as increased wages, health insurance, education, job training and tax credits. Among the top reasons cited for poverty are low minimum wage, benefit cuts, too many part-time jobs and jobs being exported to other countries.

To further the dialogue about America’s families, Marguerite Casey Foundation will bring together leading experts in the areas of domestic policy and its grantees from the Gulf region to discuss the plight of low-income families in the wake of Katrina. This policy discussion will take place at the Russell Senate Office Building, Room 385, on October 19 from 12:15 –1:30 p.m.

Panelists include: Sophia Bracy Harris, Executive Director, Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (Montgomery, AL); Lorna Bourg, President/Executive Director, Southern Mutual Help Association (New Iberia, Louisiana); Liz Fowler, Principal, Health Policy Alternatives, Inc.; Robert Greenstein, Founder and Executive Director, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; Jennifer Marshall, Director of Domestic Policy Studies, Domestic and Economic Policy, The Heritage Foundation.



Headquartered in Seattle, WA, Marguerite Casey Foundation is a private, independent grantmaking foundation dedicated to helping low-income families strengthen their voice and mobilize their communities in order to achieve a more just and equitable society for all.

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