

Report from New Orleans



It has been an exciting two days. On Saturday, we made the journey to the Pittsburgh airport and boarded the plane bound New'awlens. The windy conditions translated into some minutes of turbulence on the plane and we were all grateful for the calm and warm weather when we landed.



*I liked not being the one to get us lost!
H.M.*



The accommodations are fine. We are staying in the upper garden district which is a very mixed neighborhood. One street is full of older and very elegant houses, while the adjoining street is part of a working class area. This area was under 4-6 feet of water during the flood. Most of this neighborhood has been restored; however, signs of the flooding are still in evidence. The church is an old brick building that is divided in two halves. One half is the Church and the other half has offices for community action groups, meeting rooms, a small gym and dorms. We are staying upstairs in the dorms. We had our first meal of red beans and rice from Diva Chef Jyaphia and it was delicious. We are looking forward to her cooking

Sunday we were sent on a self-guided tour of the city. We visited several areas that were prominent during the disaster; the Superdome, the levees, and of course, the 9th Ward. As we toured the city we began to realize how extensive the damage was and that the real culprit was not the hurricane but the flooding.



Above: Houses still in need of repair in the 9th ward
Left - Standing where the levee broke

Later in the day we had an introduction from the staff at the center and we all participate in a discussion on the effect of Katrina on the city. Stay tuned for more updates by the students this week.

*Today was a great second day! I really enjoyed our tour of the Ninth Ward. Although it was devastating to see all of the destruction, at the same time after seeing something like that in a way you feel closer to the city. I thought our dialogue talk was really eye opening. It filled in a lot of blanks for me and really made me realize that the aftermath of a natural disaster can effect a city in so many ways!
M. M.*