Louisiana Anthology

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Hurricane Katrina

On August 29, 2005, the entire Gulf Coast was hit with the most destructive natural disaster that has ever occurred in the United States. People had evacuated their homes with hopes to come back a few days later; however the circumstances were far worse than anyone had expected.

The effect that the storm had on the residents of southern Louisiana was indescribable. Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana with wind forces over one hundred twenty-five miles per hour. By four o’clock that August evening, the levees that had been built in hopes of maintaining the great city of New Orleans’ structure, were breached and left more than eighty percent of the city under water. The storm took over 1,000 casualties and hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses. In addition, it left an astonishing number of 4,000 evacuees stranded with no place to go.

Even though Hurricane Katrina caused great damage to the entire gulf coast, Louisiana was the state that took the biggest hit from the hurricane. The economic destruction that Katrina had on Louisiana has still not been fully recovered to this day. When people thought of Louisiana, the city of New Orleans instantly appeared in their minds. New Orleans brought in the most capita for the state. After Hurricane Katrina, so many businesses were lost and so many homes were destroyed that it became extremely difficult for the city to restore the substantial economic elements from the ground up. Many people asked the same questions: Where would the money come from, who would do the labor, and would New Orleans ever be the same again?

With blame being bounced among the local, state, and federal governments, the exact reason for the slow reaction of help to the citizens of New Orleans was unclear. After much finger-pointing, complaints, and tears, the people of New Orleans finally pulled together and rebuilt their city. With help from FEMA for evacuees and many other volunteer organizations such as The Red Cross, the people who were affected by Katrina were aided in rebuilding their lives and their homes. New Orleans opened for business once again on September 30.

Although neither state of Louisiana-as a whole-nor New Orleans has completely recovered from Katrina, much improvement has been made. Being from Slidell, I can personally say that the impact that Hurricane Katrina had on my life was quite devastating. Although my home was undamaged, I had many loved ones and family members who lost everything they had to the storm. It was not easy to completely leave my life in Slidell and instantly readjust to a new city. I can say that Katrina had an emotional toll on many people in the state of Louisiana. We felt each other’s pain and need for assistance. We stood together as a state and helped rebuild all that was lost. No one will ever forget the tragedy of Katrina; however, no one can also ever forget how that same tragedy united us all as a people.

Sources Cited

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