

SBP was founded by Zack Rosenburg and Liz Mc Cartney when they had come to the South with thousands of other volunteers in the post Katrina years, to rescue us. The scene was so dire that Zack a young Bostonian lawyer, and his then fiancée, Washington, D.C. native, and Boston College graduate, Liz Mc Cartney, a young teacher, decided to give up their careers and found what was originally called St. Bernard Project. Later they adopted a new name, SBP. Initially St. Bernard Project did most of their work in St. Bernard Parish (a county of Louisiana), hence the name. Now SBP is based in a purpose-built office on N. Broad Street, New Orleans. Their modus operandi is to coordinate volunteers who are supervised by AmeriCorps workers, who themselves are trained in the basics of house construction. SBP set out on the monumental task of fund-raising and obtaining sponsorship to enable their work. Now, they have case workers who help each family get whatever building permits and grants for which they might be eligible. These grants supplement whatever insurance money or private savings home-owners might have, to purchase the building materials, and help pay for the professional services like plumbing, and electrical work which cannot be done by volunteers. In cases such as the Andersons SBP has to fund raise for the entire cost. As each of the houses is ready for reoccupation there is usually a ribbon-cutting and welcome home party. AmeriCorps workers, volunteers and donors are usually invited to this celebration. SBP currently has as its motto to reduce as much as possible the time between a disaster and recovery. They also share their expertise with more recent disaster areas like Houston and Puerto Rico. They also purchase derelict houses, repair them and sell them to low-income families. Many building sites became available because of the numbers of homeowners who permanently left New Orleans post-Katrina. SBP purchases these sites and builds houses inexpensively and sells them to low-income families.

To mark fifty years of ministry in 2017 the Sisters of the Holy Faith, ministering in the Louisiana area initiated an effort to raise some funds to help bring a Katrina impacted family home. Margaret Aylward the foundress of the congregation in 1867 displayed extraordinary gifts of practical enterprise on behalf of the underprivileged of her day, initially as a Lady of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, and later as the foundress of the Sisters of the Holy Faith. The present Holy Faith Sisters serving in Louisiana felt the call to continue in this practical spirit of Margaret Aylward. We partnered in our initiative with SBP together with the Dominican Sisters of Hope and the Tucker family of California in raising the necessary funds to repair the Andersons' home. We thank our sisters, associates and friends who generously helped us in this anniversary project. You have helped to comfortably re-house one Katrina impacted family. May you be blessed.



The Andersons outside their home on March 5, 2018 with AmeriCorps members Hannah Roberts and Andrew Robie with Maura O'Donovan, CHF representing the Holy Faith Sisters. Hannah and Robie monitored most of the work on the Anderson home.



Getting ready for the Andersons' welcome home event April 16, 2018



Ceremonial ribbon cutting!



Bridget Anderson serving out some good food at the welcome home party!



Judy Zynda, O.P. representing the Dominicans of Hope and Maura O'Donovan, CHF representing the Sisters of the Holy Faith, together with Delia King representing SBP at the welcome home party.



A group from "Nuns Build" in November 2017. Annually, since Katrina, many sisters and their friends from all over the USA volunteer with SBP. The family being assisted here was a tornado-impacted family in New Orleans East.



The 2017 "Nuns Build" Group