

# The Art of Recovery in Mississippi

And How to Paint the  
Creative Economy  
with a Wide Brush

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# Vibrant Art Scene in South MS



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Ohr-O'Keefe Museum

Old Town Bay St. Louis



# Hurricane Katrina – 8/29/05



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# Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art



Old Town Bay St.  
Louis



**Bay St. Louis Bridge**



**Biloxi – Ocean  
Springs Bridge**





# Katrina's Impact on the Arts

- Many lost their homes and their livelihoods
- No art supplies, no where to buy art supplies
- No place to show and sell their work
- Part of the culture of the Mississippi Gulf Coast seemed lost forever

Rescue  
Reflect



Rebuild  
Recover



Hitch up our  
britches and get to  
work.

Governor Haley Barbour



# Business Recovery for the Arts

- Artists from around the country rallied behind the arts community in Mississippi
- Volunteers brought art supplies
- Volunteers helped MS artists find places to show work outside of the area – exposed thousands to the rich cultural offerings of MS for the first time
- Shared space obtained for local artists

# Business Recovery for the Arts

- Department of Labor – \$50 Million National Emergency Grant to Mississippi
- SMPDD/Twin Districts Workforce Council – convinced DOL that the arts economy was vulnerable
- Pilot recovery program was born for a 6 county area
- Departure from typical NEG programs

# The Partners

- Department of Labor
- SMPDD/Twin Districts Workforce Area
- Mississippi Dept of Employment Security
- Mississippi Arts Commission
- Mississippi Development Authority
- Small Business Development Centers

# Department of Labor

- Provided the funding
- Program allowable under NEG but required waiver
- DOL recognized the significance of the arts economy to Mississippi
- DOL recognized the art economy had not been sufficiently assisted post-Katrina

# Program Specifics

- Assistance offered to lower 6 counties, including the MS Gulf Coast
- Self-employed artists and craftsmen – those who receive a significant amount of income from the creation and sale of works of art/or craft and who lost income and/or ability to earn a living as an artist due to impact of Katrina
- No more than 20 employees

# Implementation of the Program

- MAC compiled list of potential clients
- MDES determined individual eligibility
- MAC operated sub-contract for hands-on tracking
- SMPDD/Twin Districts – primary oversight and monitoring; provided technical assistance and policy guidance to MAC

# Challenges

- Documentation Issues
- Carefree nature of artists
- Not so carefree nature of “government”

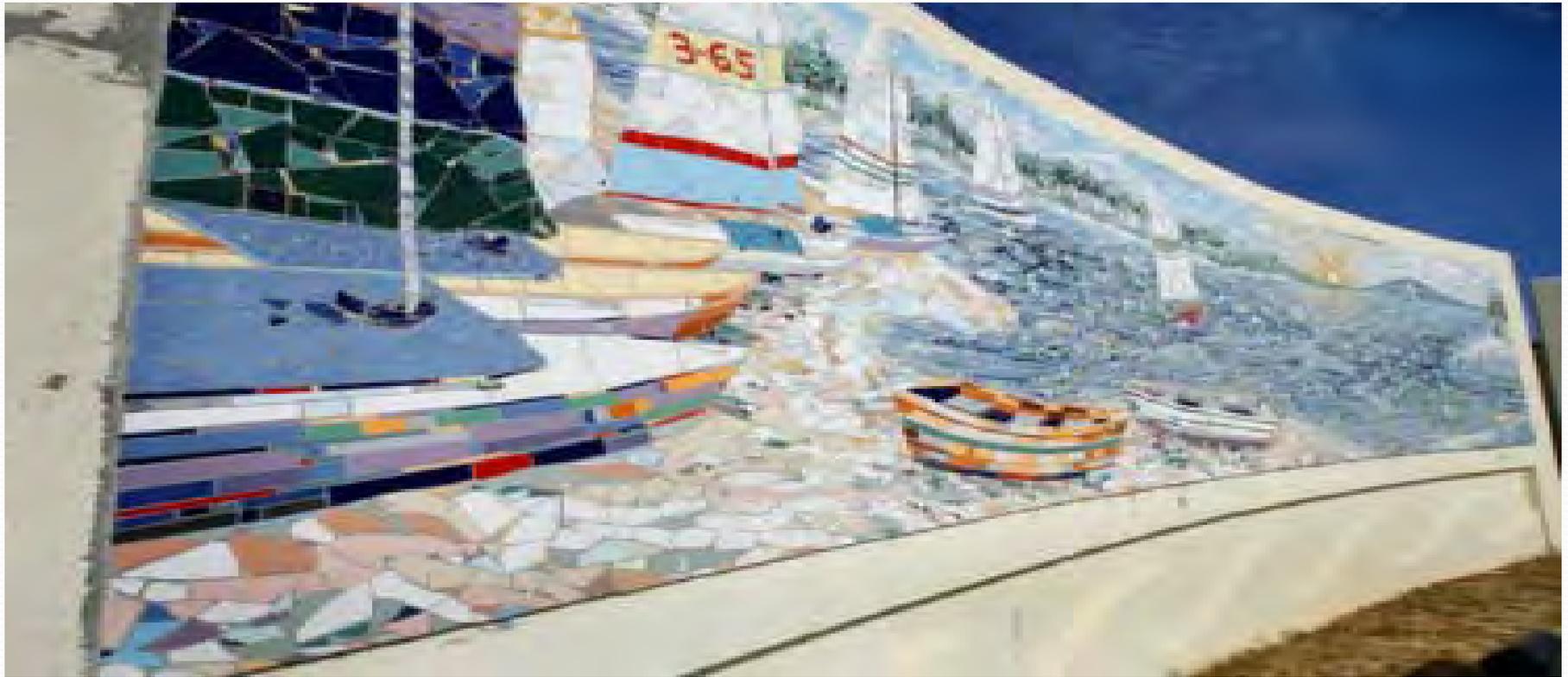
# Artists Benefits

- \$5,000 grant to purchase tools, equipment, supplies, or other tangible items necessary for the creation and/or sale of art or craft.
- Small business training – marketing, business plans and financing

# Results

- Nearly 800 individual artists were assisted
- Almost \$4 million given to individual artist in the form of \$5,000 grants for much needed capital
- Artists received micro-enterprise training and Arts Means Business was formed
- “Legitimized” artists as small businesses vital to the local economy
- Saved not only a business sector but a “culture”

# Ocean Springs-Biloxi Bridge



# Ocean Springs-Biloxi Bridge



# Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art November 2010 Grand Opening



# Bay St. Louis Bridge Fest



# Arts Alive on the MS Gulf Coast





# The Big Picture

Hurricane Katrina and the aftermath legitimized the arts as not only a viable business sector but also an economic driver.

Mississippi has now realized that the arts are part of an even larger economy -----

THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

# How to Paint the Creative Economy with a Wide Brush

A Statewide Initiative  
In Mississippi



What is the Creative Economy?

THE POWER TO IMAGINE  
AND CREATE NEW IDEAS  
AND HARNESS THEM  
INTO BECOMING A  
MAJOR ECONOMIC  
DRIVER

# Mississippi's Creative Resources

- Literary Arts and Publishing
- Visual Arts
- Performing Arts
- Culinary Arts
- Music
- Design
- Museums and Cultural Heritage

# Creative Economy By the Numbers

## MDA and MAC Study

- Mississippi's creative economy employs around 61,000 people in job sectors ranging from design to culinary arts to museums and heritage.
- The creative economy has shown solid growth from 2002 to 2008.
- The numbers dropped for the Coast in 2005, but statewide job growth increased for the creative sector in 2005.
- The study not able to capture secondary jobs or informal incomes in creative fields.

# Purpose of Creative Economy Initiative

To create jobs and prosperity and to increase our state's ability to compete on a global scale.

# 10 Steps Your Community Can Take Towards a More Creative Economy

1. Assess the creative economy as it exists in your community today (informally/formally).
2. Get business and community leaders and members of creative economy together as a committee to brainstorm ideas for development and implementation.
3. Assess current programs that are working well and see if they can be amplified.
4. Work regionally – talk to surrounding communities to see if working together may be an effective means to grow creative economy.

# 10 Steps Your Community Can Take Towards a More Creative Economy

- 5. Align with any state objectives or programs that might already exist – i.e. taking advantage of proximity to Blues Trail in MS
- 6. Conduct asset mapping exercise – if your state development agency doesn't do this, do it yourself.
- 7. Work with local, regional or state art, music associations to identify and catalog creative assets. (MAC in MS - could be tourism organization)

# 10 Steps Your Community Can Take Towards a More Creative Economy

- 8. Partner with anyone and everyone --- Main Street program, convention and visitors bureau, etc. --- to develop strategies to grow the creative sector
- 9. Involve media partners once a plan is in place.
- 10. Involve schools, community colleges and universities.

# Creative Economy Benefits

- Creates Jobs
- Generates Tax Revenues
- Stimulates Innovation
- Attracts New Residents
- Creates Visitor Attractions and Attracts Visitors
- Improves Quality of Life
- Allows MS to tell its story through our people, places and products