



Bayou Community Foundation conducted a Community Needs Assessment August - October 2023 to better understand the emerging and expanding humanitarian needs in our service area since Hurricane Ida's landfall in 2021 and the COVID-19 pandemic, identify nonprofits engaged in filling these needs and gaps that remain, and explore possible nonprofit and community-wide collaborations that may help fill those gaps. Stakeholder surveys were administered to 150 grantees, donors, and other community partners and four focus groups were conducted with 41 participants representing Terrebonne, Lafourche, and Grand Isle to document personal reflections and professional insights on the biggest challenges facing our most vulnerable residents. The Needs Assessment also researched data from online sources. Bayou Community Foundation will use the findings of the needs assessment to drive its Annual Grants Program in 2024 and beyond.

Focus Areas Identified By Community Needs Assessment:



Housing Availability, Affordability and Recovery

Homelessness data reports that rates are up 11% from 2022, which is the largest jump since 2007. When survey participants were asked, based on their opinions or observations, what gaps in critical nonprofit services exist in Lafourche, Terrebonne, or Grand Isle, homelessness and housing insecurity was ranked #1 out of 9 gaps. "We don't have the resources to address this issue. Housing affordability is a real challenge - there are no homeless shelters in Thibodaux, only one in Houma, and there is a lack of affordable housing." - Focus Group Participant



Food Insecurity and Quality Nutrition

In Terrebonne Parish, 16,690 people, 15% of residents, lack consistent access to enough food for every person in the household, with the food insecurity rate among children at nearly 21%. In Lafourche Parish, 13,810 people or 14.1% of residents are food insecure, including 17.5% of children. Louisiana ranks 48 of 50 in food insecurity with a rate of 14.8% versus the national rate of 10.4%. Louisiana also has the highest rate of senior food insecurity in the nation at 13.4%.



Mental Health Care and Substance Use Disorder

From February 1 to 13, 2023, 39.1% of adults in Louisiana reported symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder. Drug overdose death rates have increased in Louisiana from 13.5 per 100,000 in 2011 to 55.9 per 100,000 in 2021. Our region has 63.8 mental health providers for every 100,000 residents. This is much lower than the state (138.5 per 100,000) and the nation (126.0 per 100,000). "We're in a mental health crisis. There are extreme waiting times for people to get help." - Focus Group Participant



Building Equitable and Resilient Communities Where Adults and Youth Can Thrive

According to the 2023 Kids Count Databook, Louisiana ranks 49th place in the "Worst" category. Louisiana ranks 50th in economic well-being, 43rd in education, 49th in health, and 49th in family and community. Particular needs identified in the Bayou Region include mentoring and academic enrichment for at-risk youth, non-traditional workforce development, early childhood education, and access to quality health care and affordable medication.



Nonprofit Collaboration and Community Resources

BCF has proven its ability to forge strong partnerships to tackle big problems. The success of the Hurricane Ida Housing Recovery Program and its partnerships with rebuilding volunteers and funders proves that BCF has the ability to focus resources and meet the most dire of needs.