

We Tell Groups/Collectives/Community Media Centers

New Orleans Video Access Center (NOVAC)

Founded in 1972, NOVAC cultivates Louisiana's racially and economically diverse communities to become involved in television production and community-based storytelling. In the 1970s, New Orleans had the largest percentage of poor residents and the most inequitable urban income distribution of any city in the nation. Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), a government agency designed to help low income communities become self-sufficient, created a media center. With the Free Southern Theater, the Urban League, and Tulane University, NOVAC spurred a mayoral task force to involve the community in cable television. It has organized local filmmakers to create short documentaries on post-Katrina New Orleans, exceeding one million online views. Other participatory documentary projects include BetteR, on recovery from human and natural disasters in Baton Rouge, and Post Coastal, on coastal parishes innovating to combat coastal land loss. Since 2006, NOVAC has trained over 1,500 local low-to-moderate income individuals for entry-level jobs in New Orleans' film industries.