CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY HAS HAND IN GULF OF MEXICO OIL SPILL CLEAN-UP

ATLANTA (May 24, 2010) — Seventy-five graduates of a training program co-sponsored by Clark Atlanta University and Dillard University are helping to clean the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, while at the same time promoting minority involvement in the construction and environmental industries.

Since 1995, the Clark Atlanta University Environmental Justice Resource Center (EJRC), in partnership with Dillard University’s Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ), has implemented the Minority Worker Training Program (MWTP) in Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and Florida. Funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, the program provides basic skills training, including academic remediation and life skills training, for residents of communities that are economically and environmentally disadvantaged.

CAU’s Dr. Robert Bullard, environmental justice watchdog and director of EJRC, said, “We are extremely proud of the graduates of this training program, utilizing their skills in hazardous waste management. In this critical clean-up effort, they are helping to make a difference in the lives of people today and far in the future.”

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One graduate, Barry Hereford, a 31-year-old former Georgia inmate, said that the greatest blessing he has received has been participating in the Minority Worker Training Program. He stated, “I never would have imagined in a million years that I would have been able to obtain so much in such a short time.” He says he is still in awe over the fact that he now has Certifications in Lead, Asbestos, HazMat and Mold Awareness, in addition to the OSHA and construction knowledge he has been able to obtain. Hereford has accepted a position with a local signatory company for Roofers Local #136 in Atlanta and is scheduled to begin in mid-June.

The training program has community partners. In Atlanta, they are the Atlanta Workforce Development Agency and the Community Improvement Association. In Savannah, Ga., it is The Harambee House, Inc./Citizens for Environmental Justice.

Formed in 1988 by the consolidation of two historic institutions, Atlanta University (1865) and Clark College (1869), Clark Atlanta University is the largest of the United Negro College Fund institutions with an enrollment of nearly 4,000 students. Clark Atlanta University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097: Telephone 404-679-4501) to award the Bachelor’s, Master’s, Specialist and Doctor’s degrees. The Carnegie Classification lists CAU as a Research University – High Research Activity. CAU is listed as one of the best southeastern colleges by The Princeton Review and has been selected to the Washington Monthly’s 2008 list of best colleges and universities. National business and consumer publications rank Clark Atlanta high among the best buys in American higher education.

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