



New Orleans REALTORS® Rally Behind Proven REALTOR® Champion Mayor Landrieu to Help Him Win Re-Election – April 2014

New Orleans is a town that knows a little something about 'perfect storms.' In a rare tempest of the calendar earlier this year, the 4,200-member New Orleans Metropolitan Association of REALTORS® (NOMAR) found itself with precious little time to launch an independent expenditure campaign for Mayor Mitch Landrieu's re-election, thanks to an unlikely confluence of the date of its new trustees' installation and first PAC meeting, the Orleans Parish Election Day, and -- oh yes -- Mardi Gras.

According to Kelli Walker, NOMAR's Senior Director of Governmental Affairs, Landrieu (the brother of U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu, a longtime REALTOR® Champion, herself,) had worked tirelessly to improve the overall quality of life in the City of New Orleans and Orleans Parish, but was nonetheless facing a tough election on February 1st.

Of particular interest to REALTORS®, Landrieu had made blight reduction and access to quality affordable housing his priorities. He reduced the blight-count in New Orleans by over 10,000 properties in his first term, overhauling the city's Byzantine permitting office in the process. He also re-established New Orleans' Soft Second Mortgage Program, providing purchase and closing cost assistance to more than 500 low-income, first-time homebuyers. In 2013, 125 NOMAR members became local experts in the program through an Affordable Housing Certification Class.

"Mayor Landrieu has always been willing to work with our association on any issues of importance we needed to address, says Walker, "and we wanted to give him all the election support we could, in return."

But NOMAR's new trustees, whose blessing was required to pursue campaign funding from the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, were only installed on January 8. "Of course, they said 'go for it!'" recalls Walker, "but we had never conducted an independent expenditure campaign before, and I wasn't sure that anything would even be possible, with less than three weeks to go before the election."

She called Julienne Uhlich at NAR's Campaign Services division, who hit the ground running: in no time at all, NOMAR had itself an independent expenditure campaign valued at about \$65,000. NAR produced attention-grabbing door hangers and delivered a crackerjack squad of energetic young field teams in bright green t-shirts to canvass door-to-door in neighborhoods that were really going to count, all in the midst of the lead-up to Mardi Gras.

In the final week before the election, the teams fanned out across the city. "It was the most amazing and efficient operation I've ever seen," notes Walker. "The training was great, morale was high, and the teams sent non-stop reports about how many doors were approached, how many opened, and how many possible voters were receptive." It was just the ticket for a region that, especially during the Mardi Gras season, can tend to be somewhat complacent about elections, explains Walker. "It was just as important to



reach the people who already supported the mayor in theory, to make sure they were actually going to go to the polls." The overall voter turn-out of 30 percent was slightly higher than expected, and Landrieu won with 64 percent of the vote .

"Our members are very happy, and so is our board," says Walker. "We've built a great relationship with Mayor Landrieu, and we're all so glad he remains in office to continue all the good work he's started. We're so grateful to NAR's Campaign Services -- and we know the mayor is, too."

To learn more about how New Orleans REALTORS® helped re-elect the mayor who is hard at work strengthening the city's neighborhoods and promoting homeownership, contact Kelli Walker, the New Orleans Metropolitan Association of REALTORS®' Senior Director of Governmental Affairs, at kelli@nomar.org or 504.274.0705.

Volunteers Prepare to Canvas Neighborhoods with Landrieu Door Hangers:

