

Feds Continue Support for Domestic Violence Clinic

May 20, 2008 2:15 AM New Wave staff
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The Tulane University School of Law has received a \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to support its domestic violence legal clinic. The grant was announced by U.S. Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey on a visit to New Orleans on Monday (May 19).



Tania Tetlow, associate professor of law, directs the Domestic Violence Clinic. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The funding comes through the Office on Violence Against Women's Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Justice. This is the fourth grant in continued funding to support the clinic's work in providing legal services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence in Orleans and Jefferson parishes, said Tania Tetlow, director of the [Domestic Violence Clinic](#) at Tulane.

The Tulane clinic has received funding totaling more than \$2.25 million from the Justice Department.

Larry Ponoroff, dean of the law school, said, "Since its inception in 2003, the Domestic Violence Clinic has served as an extraordinary vehicle for training our students in an interdisciplinary setting, and, at the same time, provided an urgently needed resource in the community."

The clinic's work extends beyond its role to provide legal representation to indigent domestic abuse victims, Ponoroff added.

"It includes supervising student externships in domestic violence in related placements around the city, training for judges and law enforcement, and research that will hopefully assist governmental officials to lead wisely and more effectively in addressing this serious issue from a systemic perspective," he said. Ponoroff praised the Department of Justice for its "steadfast support," which has made the clinic's work possible.

On his New Orleans visit, the attorney general reaffirmed the Department of Justice's commitment to rebuilding the city's justice system in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

He toured the New Orleans Family Justice Center, a public-private partnership modeled after the President's Family Justice Center Initiative, where victims of domestic violence find comprehensive services in one central location. Since the Justice Department opened the center last year, it has helped provide a total of 464 services to 139 individuals.

"The catastrophe that hit New Orleans caused incalculable pain and loss that we can never forget, but it also opened our eyes to the tremendous need for services," Mukasey said.

During the trip, the attorney general also observed reconstruction efforts in the Lower Ninth Ward and the 17th Street Canal, and toured the newly rebuilt New Orleans Police Department. He met with local, state and federal law enforcement officials to discuss the collaborative efforts in fighting violent crime and rebuilding the justice center.

Since Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005, the Justice Department has provided \$86 million in grants to the state of Louisiana, assigned six additional assistant U.S. attorneys and recently filled two victim witness specialist positions, to directly provide services to victims of crime.