

Team Boosts Crescent City's Psyche

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As New Orleans readies for Super Bowl weekend, the "Who Dat Nation" is nearing a football frenzy, which is having a positive impact on the city's well-being, both emotionally and economically. According to Tulane School of Social Work faculty members, this frenzy is not only natural, it's one of the city's healthier moments.

"The Saints *are* New Orleans," says Charles Figley, who holds the Paul Henry Kurzweg Distinguished Chair in Social Work. "They were born on All Saints Day in 1966, and they have been a part of the city's culture ever since. The team isn't just a professional football team; it's a reflection of this city."

Charles Figley, who holds the Paul Henry Kurzweg Distinguished Chair in Social Work at Tulane, talks about the unique link between New Orleans and the Saints in this video produced by Joseph Halm.

That unique connection makes the Saints' first trip to the Super Bowl a family celebration, says Jane Parker, a clinical associate professor and director of the Tulane [Institute for Psychosocial Health](#).

"This city is expressing the joy of being a winner," Parker says. "People are expressing the collective experience of being the 12th man and helping the team. Our Saints have provided an economic shot in the arm and a psychological restoration of hope for our city ... across generations and cultures, there is no doubt that the Saints represent this city's resilience."

While much of the national media has focused on the Saints and New Orleans story of rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina, Figley says that is just another layer of the Saints' complex and compelling story that began with the first game at Tulane Stadium.

"They are a football team that has stuck with the city through thick and thin, and

now we are all rejoicing in their success," he says.

Joseph Halm is marketing/communications coordinator for the Tulane School of Social Work.