

Swimming With Sharks and Anacondas

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A filmmaker, an environmentalist, a storyteller, an entrepreneur, a field producer, a one-woman film crew, an ocean explorer, a philanthropist: you name it and C line Cousteau is doing it. The Newcomb College Institute at Tulane brought the granddaughter of Jacques Cousteau to campus as part of its 2009 Powerhouse Speaker series.



C line Cousteau, center, talks with Tulane students in a small-group setting during her uptown campus visit for the Powerhouse Speaker Series. (Photos by Tracie Morris Schaefer)

"Tonight, I want to give you a glimpse into the work that I do," Cousteau told an audience of about 200 Thursday (Oct. 29) in the Lavin-Bernick Center.

"My family has been in ocean exploration for decades. My mother was an expedition photographer for 13 years," she said. "I never get tired of hearing 'I grew up with your grandfather.' "

Though she loved the family business, Cousteau wanted to test other career waters. With a degree in psychology and a master's in international and intercultural management, she started out as a therapist.

After working in Costa Rica for three years, however, she decided to return to her roots.



Two young fans enjoy meeting Cousteau at Tulane.

“Though I strayed away from what my family did, I came back to it,” she said during her 45-minute talk and video presentation. “I worked with my father [Jean-Michel Cousteau at Ocean Futures Society] for six years.”

In addition to swimming with sharks and anacondas, C line Cousteau has two new passions. She is starting a production company and is donating her time and money to produce videos for non-profit groups to use for fundraising.

“I'm not a scientist. I'm not a doctor. But this is what I can do to bring in the doctors, the scientists, and bring in the dollars [to help non-profits and indigenous people]. It's a whole new process and it's humbling.”

Tammy C. Barney is external affairs officer at the Newcomb College Institute, which provides academic and leadership programs for undergraduate women at Tulane.