

Faculty Contribute to Hurricane Exhibit

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Tulane faculty members have lent their expertise to "Living with Hurricanes: Katrina and Beyond," a new exhibit that opens on Tuesday (Oct. 26) at the Louisiana State Museum in New Orleans. The exhibit is the result of a collaboration between the museum and scientists, university professors, news editors, meteorologists and others to tell the story of the Gulf Coast's recovery from the deadly hurricanes of 2005.



Shelley Meaux of the Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research checks out a new exhibit at the Louisiana State Museum, where the forensics of Hurricane Katrina unfold in innovative displays. (Photo by Mark Sindler, Louisiana State Museum)

The Tulane/Xavier [Center for Bioenvironmental Research](#) is one of the exhibit's partners. The center's deputy director, Douglas Meffert, serves as co-principal investigator for a \$1.4 million National Science Foundation grant awarded to the museum for the exhibition.

Meffert and the CBR's associate director, Richard Campanella, author of *Geographies of New Orleans: Urban Fabrics Before the Storm*, are the exhibition's science advisers. The center's Shelley Meaux conducted interviews of prospective attendees

and provided logistical support for the project.

Meffert says the exhibit will serve “not only as a beacon communicating the vulnerability and resilience of our community but also as a tool for formal K-12 education and informal learning for the general public, using the complex interdisciplinary issues surrounding natural and manmade disasters.”

The \$7.5 million [exhibit](#) is on the ground floor of the historic Presbytere on the French Quarter's Jackson Square. The 6,700-square-foot installation uses four galleries to tell the stories of people caught in the hurricane's wrath — rescues, recovery, rebuilding and renewal — with artifacts, sounds, videos and computer graphics.

The exhibit will go further than any other in explaining the hows and whys of hurricanes and documenting the Gulf Coast's rebirth, says Sam Rykels, museum director.

“With their experience and expertise, our partners have helped us document the story of Katrina and Rita, what happened and how Louisianans are now innovating their way to a brighter future,” Rykels says. “We really could not have done this exhibit without their participation.”

The Louisiana State Museum is part of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. The exhibit's hours are from 10 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday.