

National Urban League youth gather at Tulane

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One day ahead of the main National Urban League conference in New Orleans, the organization's youth division arrived at Tulane to kick off the 23rd National Urban League Youth Leadership Summit.



High school students from around the country gather in McAlister Auditorium for the National Urban League Youth Leadership Summit, including (from right) Tia Lewis, Herbert Perryman, Kaila Holloway, Yasmien Brown and Tia Cage. (Photos by Paula Burch-Celentano)

A group of more than 400 high school students gathered on Tuesday (July 24) in McAlister Auditorium where they were welcomed by National Urban League CEO and president Marc Morial, former mayor of New Orleans. The president of the local Urban League chapter, Nolan Rollins, also greeted them.



Urban League president Marc Morial, former mayor of New Orleans, addresses attendees at the kickoff event.

"When others look at this generation, we don't know what they see," said Morial. "But when we look at this generation of young people we see hope, strength, intelligence and talent. We see young people who are ready to be the next generation of leaders."

Robyn Ince, senior director of education and youth development for the National Urban League, explained that students attending the weeklong summit on the Tulane campus, which runs concurrent with the main conference, are involved in the league's youth programs.

"The students here are part of Project Ready, which provides academic and social support in preparation for postsecondary success," said Ince. "We have students present from as far away as San Diego and as close as New Orleans."

Members of the New Orleans chapter of Project Ready had the privilege of playing host to their peers by welcoming them to the city and participating in the development of this week's schedule.

To add a bit of New Orleans culture to the experience, the youth steering committee included New Orleans-style meals prepared by the chefs at Bruff Commons dining hall, Mardi Gras beads in the welcome packets and entertainment by a local high school marching band.

The students traveled to the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in downtown New Orleans on Wednesday (July 25) to hear President Barack Obama address the main Urban League gathering.