

Tulane University Establishes Disaster Management Leadership Academy

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Tulane University has launched the Disaster Management Leadership Academy (DMLA), the first university program in the nation to offer training through the doctoral level in international disaster management.

"Studies show that more than 80 million people are displaced globally due to war, violence, urbanization and natural disasters. Moreover, the number of storms, floods and earthquakes have increased threefold over the past 30 years," Tulane University President Scott Cowen said. "This program is timely and unique in its global reach, systems approach, and its emphasis on providing current and future disaster management and humanitarian agency/program leaders with the analytical tools they need to lead robust, effective and efficient interventions."

The launch of the Disaster Management Leadership Academy is the culmination of a five-year effort by Tulane, which has a long history in the field of disaster management, not to mention firsthand experience through Hurricane Katrina, which flooded 80 percent of its campus and inflicted more than \$650 million in damages to the university.

Among other important partners, the U.S. Agency For International Development's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) provided a \$2.1 million grant to launch DMLA.

The academy will be an interdisciplinary academic center affiliated with Tulane's A.B. Freeman School of Business, School of Law, School of Social Work and School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. In addition to its doctoral program, the DMLA will provide certificate and master's degrees in disaster management.

The U.N. and humanitarian agencies around the country have signaled their enthusiasm for the DMLA.

"The support we have received from leaders in the humanitarian community has been tremendous," said Ky Luu, DMLA's senior director.

"It goes without saying that the World Food Programme welcomes the DMLA's efforts to ensure humanitarian leaders are trained to meet the global challenges of today and tomorrow," said Josette Sheeran, executive director for the U.N.'s World Food Programme.

Primary DMLA staff include: Luu, senior director of the Academy, who as former director of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and vice president of International Medical Corps, has extensive and intimate experience in the field of disaster management; Eamon Kelly, president emeritus of Tulane University and a renowned leadership management specialist; Nancy Mock, associate professor in International Health and Development and Technology Transfer at Tulane's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and an accomplished humanitarian response scholar; and Charles Figley, the Paul Henry Kurzweg Chair in Disaster Mental Health and director of the Tulane Traumatology Institute.