

Tulane partners with YouthForce NOLA

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The Tulane Department of Human Resources partnered with the YouthForce NOLA program to provide local high school students, including Aa'ria Jones, left, and Angel Irizarry III, with internships this summer. (Photo by Sally Asher)

Committed to extending the university's connection to local youth this summer, the [Tulane Office of Human Resources](#) (HR) partnered with [YouthForce NOLA](#) — an education, business and civic collaborative that prepares public high school students to successfully pursue future careers in high-wage, high-demand industries.

“This is a demonstration of our commitment to invest in the local community and to help expand the network of potential mentors for the youth of New Orleans,” said Shantay Bolton, vice president of HR.

“I’m very supportive of this program, and it is essential that Tulane maintain and grow it. It is important for a leading university like Tulane to provide opportunities for students from our local schools to experience what it means to work in complex organizations like Tulane,” said Patrick Norton, senior vice president and chief operating officer.

The participating students included Dominic Wiltz from Sophie B. Wright Charter School, Angel Irizarry III from Edna Karr High School, Jordan Celious from L.B. Landry-O.P. Walker College and Career Preparatory High School, Aa'Ria Jones from Warren Easton Charter High School, and Betty Williams from the New Orleans Charter Science & Math High School.

YouthForce NOLA granted each student \$1,200 for successfully completing 90 hours of training at Tulane, which took place from May through July.

“We tried to immerse them in realistic examples of what it’s like to work in HR,” said Bolton. “This program has also been very helpful in introducing the students to a plethora of career options and opportunities.”

While getting an inside look at the human resources profession, each student gained experience in other key areas of university operations, like payroll, student advising, talent acquisition, and marketing and communications.

Bolton says that the program encouraged students to cultivate essential technical and [soft skills](#) needed to help them land one of the 70,000 high-wage, high-demand jobs projected to be available in the New Orleans region over the next 10 years. Guided by HR supervisors, the interns developed abilities in problem solving, collaboration, planning for success, effective verbal communication, self-direction and social awareness — engaging in challenges from an empathetic perspective.

“I’ve heard nothing but positive remarks from the students,” said Bolton. “One even told me, ‘I think I have to consider a career in human resources.’ ”

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— Shantay Bolton, vice president of Human Resources