

Class of 2028 kicks off Tulane journey with Hullabaloo Hello

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Members of Tulane's Class of 2028 visit Mardi Gras World as part of Hullabaloo Hello, a week-long orientation featuring move-in, programming and signature events. (Photo by Tyler Kaufman)

They visited, they applied, they accepted. And now the week that these newest Tulanians had been eagerly awaiting was finally here. From across the country — and the world — the nearly 1,900 members of Tulane University's Class of 2028 converged on Tulane's uptown campus last week for an orientation week filled with

playing, learning, eating, cheering, sweating and, yes, even second lining.

Dubbed Hullabaloo Hello, Tulane's orientation is organized by NTC (Newcomb-Tulane College) College Programs. The celebratory welcome encompasses move-in, programming and signature events, with students divided into krewes based on student interest and named for New Orleans streets such as Poydras, Burgundy and Decatur.

"It's significant in that it introduces students to the people, peers and places committed to supporting their transition to Tulane," said Cristina Lawson, assistant dean of College Programs.

While the first-year experience runs year round, with every program designed to help set students up for success, Hullabaloo Hello is all about that first introduction to campus for students, culminating with Convocation.

"Convocation is a time for students to come together as a full class to be officially welcomed by President Michael A. Fitts," Lawson said. "It encourages students to reflect on Tulane values and respond to the president's call to be thoughtful, intentional and proactive with their Tulane journey."

That journey officially began with move-in, continuing throughout the week as students rotated through various get-to-know-you sessions on such topics as advising, student success, and health. Each of Tulane's undergraduate schools held open houses, where students got a chance to meet faculty and learn about majors, minors and academic research opportunities. There were also a variety of activities specific to residence halls, such as floor meetups and learning the annual Hall Call cheer.

Mollye Demosthenidy, dean of Newcomb-Tulane College, held a "meet the dean" session at McAlister Auditorium to kick off the week, encouraging students to take advantage of everything Tulane has to offer, from study abroad opportunities to experiential learning.

"Be adventurous," she said. "Tulane is a place of opportunity and we want to make sure you're making the most of your time here."

Late-night sessions included Rock the Rec at the Reily Student Recreation Center, where students sampled fitness classes and sports challenges; Welcome to the

Wave at Yulman Stadium, where they learned songs and cheers; and HRL (Housing and Residence Life) Hub Takeover at the Small Family Collaboration Hub, where they could watch a movie, shoot pool or play shuffleboard.

Hullabaloo Hello was not limited to on-campus activities. Because New Orleans is such a significant part of the Tulane experience, students were treated to some of city's most popular tourist attractions, from Mardi Gras World and Vue Orleans to City Park and Audubon Aquarium of the Americas. Other outings included a swamp tour, a music walking tour and a tour devoted to the city's Creole and African American history. Museum visits included the World War II Museum, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience and the New Orleans Jazz Museum.

Just three days into the week, Jordon Potter of San Francisco, Lindsay Caslow of Long Island, New York and Chloe Payzant of Charleston, South Carolina, could safely say they made the right choice in choosing Tulane. Taking an ice coffee break at the Lavin Bernick Center for Student Life, the new-found friends shared what prompted them to apply to Tulane – and ultimately accept.

Potter, who plans to major in marketing or finance, wanted a mid-sized school that wasn't in California. "I immediately fell in love with it," she said. "I did the smile test when I visited, and everyone I smiled at smiled right back."

Caslow said she discovered that same friendliness when she toured Tulane, and nothing has changed since she arrived "Everyone is so happy," said Caslow, who plans to study health and wellness. "It was like being at Disney World with everyone cheering for you during move-in. And everyone on our floor is so nice. Everyone is so inclusive."

Payzant, an architecture major, said she was so impressed with Tulane during her visit that she changed her early-action application to early decision. "The vibes here are really great. I really wanted a school where people didn't know each other, where they came from all over the place."

Through the various field trips offered as a part of orientation, the three said they've also enjoyed getting to know New Orleans. Payzant visited Vue Orleans, where she saw the city from up high; Caslow went to Sugar Roots Farm, where she learned about sustainable and ecological agriculture; and Potter toured Mardi Gras World, where she learned the history of Carnival.

"We made masks with glitter, saw a video about the history of Mardi Gras and ate king cake," Potter said. "It was super cool."

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