

Campus Breastfeeding Program Helps Moms

January 05, 2009 11:45 AM Madeline Vann

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The [Tulane Breastfeeding Program](#), a campus-wide initiative of Tulane faculty, staff and students, has identified six rooms for new mothers who want a private space to pump breast milk.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for at least the first six months of life for optimal infant and child health and development ? a challenging commitment for women who return to work or study after their children are born.

“There is a great body of evidence demonstrating a substantial benefit to the employer if the mothers breastfeed ? fewer sick days, more satisfaction and so forth,” says Dr. Jeanette Magnus, Cecile Usdin Professor in Women's Health and director of the Tulane-Xavier National Center of Excellence in Women's Health.

Tondra Netherton, assistant dean of students at the Tulane Law School, says her personal experience as a new mother with a full-time job spurred her to help with the lactation station initiative.

“I was determined to continue nursing after I returned to work from maternity leave, so every day I locked my office door and used a breast pump in order to maintain a supply of milk at home,” Netherton says.

A group of about 25 faculty and staff members and students, including the provost's office, has been involved and supportive in this effort.

While a student at Tulane, Marci Brewer, who received a master of public health degree from Tulane in 2008, worked with Sandra Adams of the Louisiana Maternal and Child Health Coalition to implement the GIFT program (Guided Infant Feeding Techniques), a breastfeeding certification program for Louisiana birthing facilities.

According to Brewer, who now serves as the statewide coordinator, “Breastfeeding is normal and women should feel welcome to breastfeed anywhere on campus. When direct breastfeeding is not possible, the second best option is a mother's pumped

milk. Providing space for mothers to pump their milk allows mother, infant, workplace and society the opportunity to receive the myriad of benefits of human milk. We hope these efforts will encourage and enable more women to breastfeed and provide breast milk to their infants. We also hope to encourage other workplaces in the state to provide more support to mothers.”

Netherton and colleagues identified a space in Weinmann Hall.

“We have furnished a private, cozy space that is available to all nursing mothers in the Tulane community Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.,” Netherton says. “The lactation stations spread throughout the campus are another example of Tulane's commitment to the well-being of our students, faculty and staff.”

Four lactation station/family rooms at Tulane are equipped with hospital-grade electric pumps, for which women can get personal accessory kits. They are located at:

- Law School ? Weinmann Hall (room 1RR1)
- School of Medicine ? 1430 Tulane Ave., mezzanine level (room M064)
- School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine ? 1440 Canal St. (room 1830)
- Mary Amelia Douglas-Whited Community Women's Health Education Center, 143 S. Liberty St. (second floor)

Additional space for pumping is available at:

- Reily Student Recreation Center (gender-assisted changing room)
- Student Health Center (patient rooms available for use upon request)

The Louisiana GIFT Program and the Louisiana Women, Infants and Children's Program provided support for the lactation stations.