

Student-designed Skate Park Looking for Votes

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With the help of students in the Tulane City Center of the School of Architecture, Chloe Wicks, an alumna and staff member in the Tulane Office of Alumni Affairs, is working to create a space for young skaters to safely do what they love. Plans for the Skate Park at City Park have been drawn, and Wicks is now on a mission to find the funds to build it.



Chloe Wicks, an alumna and staff member in the Tulane Office of Alumni Affairs, is an advocate for the Skate Park at City Park, where skateboarders like her stepson, Jake, will have a fun, safe place to skate. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celantano)

"My husband and my stepson love skateboarding, and I am a big skater myself," says Wicks, who has refereed for the local female roller derby league. "When my 13-year-old wants to skate, we have to drive to a park an hour and a half away."

Wicks founded [skateNOLA](#), an organization with a mission to promote skating in the city. The group's first undertaking after incorporating in September was to throw its support behind the Skate Park at City Park project, designed by the students working in the architecture school's [Tulane City Center](#). The skate park is now included in the New Orleans City Park master plan.

The public outdoor skatepark and indoor roller-skating facility have been entered into a vote-driven competition sponsored by Pepsi, which plans to distribute millions of dollars in grants to develop "ideas that have a positive impact." Listed in the category of "health promoting" ideas, the Skate Park idea is currently in the running for one of two \$250,000 grants. The top two ideas with the most votes will be awarded a grant.

"There was a study we found that related exercise to a decrease in aggressive behavior in children and we know that exercise is helpful in fighting childhood obesity," says Wicks. "If there isn't a place for kids to skateboard, you find them doing it in places that are not safe."

Any person with a valid e-mail address may cast a vote for the Tulane City Center/New Orleans City Park skatepark by going to: www.refresheverything.com. Individuals may vote once per day. The deadline for voting is April 1.