

Students Seek Spring Break Alternatives

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A group of 12 Tulane students opted to go to Buenos Aires, Argentina, for spring break. It wasn't the lure of a seaside vacation that attracted them. It was a Tulane Hillel trip focusing on public service.



Tulane student Rebekah Pool plays with children who live in a shantytown of Buenos Aires, Argentina, while on an alternative spring break organized by Hillel. (Photo by Corey Smith)

Accompanied by Corey Smith, a staff member with [Hillel](#), the students worked with Iladeinu, an organization that cares for neglected and abused children in the Jewish community of Buenos Aires, and Project Life, which provides basic services and supplies in the city's shantytowns.

"I think the students took away an understanding of bigger issues faced by the world and a strong connection to the global Jewish community," Smith says. "That's powerful to have that experience."

Projects organized by the student group Tulane Alternative Breaks took on a variety of challenges. Students Adam Pacsi and Kevin Morgan Rothschild organized a trip

that brought 22 students on clean-up missions to Florida's Biscayne National Park and Everglades National Park. Brittany Peacock and Tobin Fulton organized a group of 10 students who worked with the Manna Project International in Ecuador and 14 who worked in Costa Rica, teaching English, helping with public health classes, working in the library that the project created last year, and helping build infrastructure in a village community. Crystal Fryman and Bradley Bloomfield led a group of students who worked with Savannah, Ga., Junior Achievement courses. Matt Holmes and Chris Dalia led a student group of 11 that performed public service at Zilcker Park in Austin, Texas.

All of the above projects received support from the [Tulane Center for Public Service](#).

In addition, [HelpNOLA](#), a program of the Tulane Center for Public Service, assisted 375 students from 15 universities and high schools from around the country with their alternative spring break trips.

"More than four years after Katrina, some local organizations still find that more volunteers are interested in working with them during spring break than they are prepared to accommodate," says Bridget Smith, senior program coordinator for campus-community partnerships. "The HelpNOLA program helps spring breakers find volunteer opportunities, housing and supplemental educational activities."