

Mobile Clinics Provide Health Screenings

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kbrannon@tulane.edu

On a recent sweltering Monday in front of the Alario Center on New Orleans' West Bank, dozens of people lined up to find out about assistance programs to help fishermen and others affected by the massive oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico. Steps away, two large Tulane University mobile medical units stood waiting to provide free medical care and screening to fishermen and their families.



Ngo Liem, left, talks with Dr. Tuan Nguyen on Monday (May 24) in a Tulane mobile medical unit during an event that offered various services to citizens affected by the Gulf oil disaster. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

"We're seeing a lot of husbands and wives come in," said Linda Do, a patient registration assistant at the Tulane Community Health Center, who provided Vietnamese interpretation services and diabetes screening for patients. She and others screened more than 100 people before lunchtime and referred several to the mobile unit for further testing.

Tulane University's community outreach staff participated in the all-day event, which was hosted by Congressman Anh "Joseph" Cao's office and community partners to provide services primarily to the city's Vietnamese community, many of whom rely on the fishing industry for their livelihood. Part of the event included oil cleanup training for fishermen who cannot earn a living due to the catastrophe.

Tulane's [Office of Community Affairs and Health Policy](#) coordinated the health services. The School of Medicine provided mobile buses and volunteers for health screenings and interpretation services. Staff from the [School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine](#) also participated.

Leah Berger, director of community health programs, planning and development for Tulane, said, "While no good can come out of the oil spill, at least we can use our lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and know the best way to mobilize resources and get them to the people that need them," she said. "It is wonderful that we have trained providers and resources like mobile medical units that can be used for events such as this and throughout the recovery."