

Katrina: In Their Own Words

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The steps of the Reily Student Recreation Center look like a boat launch in the photograph taken days after Hurricane Katrina. The words of Tony Lorino bring the picture to life: "The floodwater didn't come until Tuesday. Sitting on the steps of Reily we watched it come up the street and watched it get higher and higher and higher."



Surrounded by floodwater days after the storm, Tony Lorino stands on the steps of the Reily Student Recreation Center. He is senior vice president for operations and chief financial officer at Tulane.

A new [Katrina Memories](#) section of the [Katrina Remembered website](#) features audio recordings from early 2006 of Lorino and nine other people who were senior Tulane administrators. Lorino, senior vice president of operations and chief financial officer, was among the team that weathered the storm on the uptown campus, much of which flooded when the levees broke after Katrina passed.

Capturing those memories was an important project in spring 2006, said Debbie Grant, vice president for communications and marketing, who was marooned on the uptown campus with Lorino, President Scott Cowen and others after the storm.

“In spring 2006 we realized that we had a treasure trove of information residing in the people who were key players in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina,” Grant says. Staff members collected the oral histories, which are now archived on the large [Katrina Remembered website](#) that was created to observe the fifth anniversary of the storm's landfall.

“Putting the stories on the website gives people the opportunity to hear about what happened before, during and after the storm as Tulane struggled to survive,” Grant says.

Other audio files that are posted include the remembrances of Cowen; Grant; Earl Retif, vice president for enrollment management and registrar; Yvette M. Jones, executive vice president for university relations and development; Anne P. Baños, vice president for administrative services; and Dr. Lee Hamm, executive vice dean, Tulane University School of Medicine and chair of the Department of Medicine.

The website, which also has a message board for anyone to share their Katrina memories, includes a detailed, multimedia Tulane timeline of Katrina moments and a listing of five-year commemoration events. Among those events will be a Katrina exhibit that will go on display at the Lavin-Bernick Center starting on Aug. 30.