

Post-earthquake Haiti: Focusing on the Future

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In an out-of-the-way office in University Square near the Tulane uptown campus, Ky Luu and the Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy are leading an international study on the continuing impact of humanitarian aid on the victims of last year's earthquake in Haiti.



During a planning visit to Tulane, Wilson Laleau, right, vice rector of academic affairs at the State University of Haiti, meets with representatives from the Tulane Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Luu and his Tulane team flew to Haiti this week to help lead the first in a series of workshops with 50 key Haitian government officials and representatives from the private sector, donor groups, nongovernmental organizations and the United Nations. The 18-month study is made possible by a \$780,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Joining Tulane in the evaluation is a delegation from the State University of Haiti, led by its vice rector of academic affairs, Wilson Laleau. The Haitian group spent the week of Feb. 14 in New Orleans, learning about the city's and Tulane's recovery from Hurricane Katrina and working out protocols for their study.

"We're looking at the impact of humanitarian aid on the resilience of the Haitian people," said Luu, executive director of the [academy](#), a program within the Payson Center for International Development in Tulane Law School. The Tulane study, says Luu, is guided by the Haitian people's need for the country to recover in four sectors ? economic livelihood, infrastructure, environment and social needs. Tulane faculty members are involved in each area of the study.

The research is extremely important to the Haitian people. "There is no other study like this one," Laleau said during his Tulane visit.

Thirteen months after the earthquake, more than one million Haitians remain in resettlement camps, according to a preliminary Tulane [assessment](#). The study will evaluate the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the humanitarian work and recommend how to improve human security and resilience outcomes in disasters.

Luu said the resilience shown by the Tulane community after Katrina can be an inspiration to the people of Haiti. "We're placing an emphasis on what the Haitian community can do for itself and how to build that capacity. We're focusing on the future."