

## **Newcomb Conference Provides Two-Way Mentoring**

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Fun and learning were the main ingredients of the annual Newcomb Leadership Conference for Middle School Girls held March 25â€“26. Hosted by the Alpha Sigma Sigma Chapter of Mortar Board with help from the Newcomb Scholars, the 2011 conference offered an extra day of activities and was open to a number of special guests.



Caroline Sampson, right, a first-year Tulane student and Newcomb scholar, enjoys a tour of Audubon Zoo with middle school students participating in a Newcomb leadership conference for girls. (Photo by Claire Barry)

In past years, the conference has focused primarily on middle school girls from the New Orleans area, but the this year's conference also welcomed 15 students from the Leflore County School in Itta Bena, Miss.

Stephanie Rubin, a [Mortar Board](#) member and leadership conference committee chair, says the conference was organized so that the girls could receive mentoring along two tracks.

“Our first program was centered around leadership and self esteem, and the second program was based on communication and teamwork,” says Rubin, who was most excited about the conference course on [“Alice”](#) ? a 3D graphics program that teaches introductory programming skills.

Preconference activities were organized for the young students from Mississippi, with the [Newcomb Scholars](#) welcoming the out-of-town guests.

Briah Fischer, a Tulane sophomore and Newcomb Scholar, helped organize a trip to Audubon Zoo, a walk through Audubon Park and a tour of the Newcomb Art Gallery.

“We planned activities that would introduce them to New Orleans and introduce them to Tulane,” says Fischer. “We wanted to empower them and let them know that they can do anything they want.”

The weekend also provided inspiration to the Tulane students.

“While we are talking to these girls about their plans and what they want to do, we also are evaluating our plans and how we've gotten where we are,” says Fischer. “It gives us a chance to tweak things that could help us reach our own goals in life.”

The annual conference is funded by the Siragusa Foundation.