

Crawfest Rocks to Roots Music

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Sixteen thousand pounds of crawfish, 25 nonprofits, clubs and art vendors, 12 bands, 10 local food stands, 3 stages, 2 quads. The statistics at the fifth annual Crawfest on Saturday (April 16) were only part of what kept students, locals and visitors alike saying, "Only in New Orleans, only at Tulane."



Great weather, terrific music and fabulous mudbugs keep the audience jumping at Crawfest, the student-organized event held on the uptown campus. (Photos by Sally Asher)

Becky Sahm, a Tulane senior and chair of the 2011 [Crawfest](#) committee, learned how to organize this major campus event from the founders: three well-connected Tulane students who started the festival a mere five years ago. Sahm, along with a variety of other student volunteers, has worked since the end of Crawfest last year, diligently seeking sponsorships and booking bands throughout the summer and fall.



Crowds of students and New Orleans neighbors spread out their blankets to enjoy the fifth annual festival.

Sahm began her involvement with Crawfest as co-chair of music her sophomore year. She said that Crawfest is “ideal for New Orleans musicians” because it gives them an opportunity to perform in the city in a show that is free and open to the public.

Among the up-and-coming bands headlining at Crawfest was Givers, a band hailing from Lafayette, La. Givers, a “pumped-up indie band” recently signed to the same label as London folk favorites Mumford & Sons.

Highlights of the music performances at Crawfest included a rousing performance by Roots of Music featuring the Rebirth Brass Band. Roots of Music, founded by Rebirth snare drummer Derek Tabb, is a nonprofit music education program for elementary and middle school-aged kids designed as a “way to take children off the streets.”

Tulane students have been involved with Roots of Music by providing academic tutoring in reading, math and language arts to the young musicians, who are required to maintain a 2.5 GPA to stay in the program.

Tabb, a New Orleans native, stressed the importance of music in his city, as seen through Crawfest and Roots of Music. “New Orleans is different,” Tabb said. “We are musicians.”

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