

Former Businesswoman Turns to Social Work

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After 20 years as a successful businesswoman, 2010 social work graduate Leann Halsey knew something was missing, and she turned to social work. Halsey is among 80 students who earned master of social work degrees from the Tulane School of Social Work on Friday (Dec. 10), but for the former fashion merchandising and design rep, it was the first step toward fulfilling her calling.



Leann Halsey and other December social work grads hope to utilize their skills for the benefit of others. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

"I would come home from work thinking there has to be more than the idea of chasing the dollar," Halsey says. "I knew I wanted to be helping people. Social work is a large umbrella so you can work in so many different capacities to help other people."

Halsey plans to travel back to India next month to continue her work with the Louisiana Himalaya Association and Tibetan Women's Association. Her travels will include a journey to a remote refugee camp in southern India where she was instrumental in starting a pilot program called Tutors for Tibetans.

During her time at the [School of Social Work](#), Halsey also worked with [ERACE](#) to spearhead three diversity discussions via Skype between James M. Singleton Charter Middle School in Central City and Metairie Park Country Day School in Metairie, La.

“It was really cool to see eighth graders of very different backgrounds talking about the same topics. And the things they were saying really were not that different,” she says.

Halsey, a former sales representative and restaurateur, believes her business networking skills will help determine her future, whether it is establishing her own nonprofit or working for larger entities such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

“I know that I'm doing what I'm called to do now,” she says. “I believe the path will present itself, and I'll find where I'm supposed to be utilizing my skills for the benefit of others.”

Joseph Halm is marketing/communications coordinator for the Tulane School of Social Work.