

Passion for social work leads her to South Africa

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Leah Krandel's passion for addressing issues of diversity rings true in every word she speaks. For three months this fall, she took that passion to South Africa as part of her global field placement. Krandel is one of 91 students who graduated from the Tulane School of Social Work on Friday (Dec. 9).



Leah Krandel works in Phumlane Township of South Africa to implement a weekly feeding program. (Photo by Charles Sanderson, Child Welfare South Africa—“White River”)

Krandel worked with Child Welfare South Africa, the country's oldest non-governmental organization that works closely with the government to provide social services for children.

“I was excited to have the opportunity to explore South Africa because of my interest in issues of social justice and oppression, and I think my time in New Orleans gave me a unique perspective,” she says.

While working in White River in the Mpumalanga Province, Krandel assisted with a feeding scheme in one of the townships, co-facilitated a foster parent support group, worked with individual clients (both children and adults), led a self-care training series for volunteers at one of the victim empowerment centers, and facilitated workshops for her co-workers and parent agencies.

Krandel says one challenge in particular was working across language barriers. Not only did she work through translators, but she also had to ensure the translators used the clients' preferred language. She says it was an experience that made her reflect on her own privilege.

“It is really exciting to have the opportunity to be a part of new cultures and to see the kindness of people from a total different part of the world. It was a great opportunity to reflect on my privilege as an American, as a white person and as someone who is in higher education.”

Now that she is a [social work](#) graduate, Krandel plans to stay in New Orleans and continue her career by working with local community-based and social justice groups.

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