

Tulane opens flagship community health center

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Tulane University officials gathered with donors and supporters on Thursday (June 7) to dedicate the Ruth U. Fertel/Tulane Community Health Center and Brinton Family Health & Healing Center, a neighborhood-based healthcare facility built from an iconic Ruth's Chris Steak House.



The renovated, 11,000-square-foot center at 711 N. Broad St. in Mid-City New Orleans offers high-quality, cost-effective health care to residents, whether they have insurance or not. It is more than triple the size of the clinic's former location at Covenant House, including 13 exam rooms with a capacity of 1,500 patient visits per month.

The Brinton Family Health & Healing Center, which includes space for community events, meetings and group exercise, is a neighborhood hub for wellness care, providing counseling, social services and interactive health programming.

After the storm, Tulane physicians opened a makeshift clinic outside the French Quarter that eventually became its first community health center at Covenant House. In 2009, Ruth's Hospitality Group donated its Broad Street building to provide the center a permanent home.



At the ceremony, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, left, and Tulane President Scott Cowen said the new center symbolizes a renaissance in neighborhood-based health care that Tulane helped begin after Hurricane Katrina. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The project found its biggest private supporter in 2010 when philanthropist Mary Jane Brinton of San Francisco saw news coverage of the devastating Deepwater Horizon Oil spill. She was so moved that she wanted to do something to make a lasting difference in improving the health of New Orleans residents. Brinton, 88, died shortly after her gift to Tulane was finalized.

Her son, Bill Brinton, attended Thursday's ceremony, saying the center is a perfect capstone to his mother's lifelong philanthropy.

"The center fulfills my mother's vision of empowering New Orleans residents through the holistic treatment of their health and well-being," he said. "As a training ground for community healthcare workers who are passionate, thoughtful and culturally sensitive, the center also carries on her legacy of compassion and caring for others."

The [center](#) is open weekly from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., offering expanded hours till 7 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays.