

## 'American Routes' honored in China

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newwave@tulane.edu

Tulane professor of anthropology, Nick Spitzer, and his syndicated radio program received an honor from a less than likely source this week. His show, "American Routes," was given the First Taiji Traditional Music Award from the Taiji Traditional Music Committee of the China Conservatory in Beijing on Thursday (Oct. 25).



Tulane professor Nick Spitzer, who produces and hosts "American Routes," was honored with a traditional music award from the China Conservatory in Beijing on Thursday (Oct. 25). (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Spitzer was not in Beijing to accept the award, but arranged for a performance by Carl LeBlanc and the Big Easy Street Band at the award ceremony, which was broadcast on Chinese National Television, marking a first for New Orleans traditional jazz.

While "[American Routes](#)" was being honored in China, Spitzer was hosting a contingent of Chinese folklorists as chair of the local program committee for the American Folklore Society 2012 Annual Meeting in New Orleans, with the theme of "Continuity and Creativity of Culture."

This year's meeting builds on the theme of New Orleans' recovery, addressing concerns for cultures and communities imperiled by economic decline, political oppression or ecological catastrophe. The meeting kicked off on Wednesday (Oct. 24) and runs through Saturday (Oct. 27) at the Hotel Monteleone.

The meeting began with a daylong Saints & Sinners tour with [Spitzer](#). That evening, Tulane Provost Michael Bernstein welcomed the conference attendees then, together with Spitzer, introduced the opening lecture by Michael White entitled "How New Orleans Traditional Jazz is a Metaphor for American Life." White, a jazz historian, clarinetist and bandleader who is a Tulane alumnus, is a faculty member at Xavier University.

"American Routes" will be continuing its commitment to cultural diplomacy by producing a program called "East Meets West: Routes to China." That presentation will address American music in China, explore Chinese and Chinese American traditional musical styles and present a variety of questions regarding cultural continuity and musical innovation in both societies.

A weekly two-hour public radio program, "American Routes" is produced in collaboration with Tulane University.