

Bet on the buddy system

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College can be a scary place for students who are unfamiliar with the city and arrive to campus without friends. But those who sign up for peer-mentoring programs are believed to have a head start at excelling both socially and academically.



Pictured at the 2011 ceremony, Wil Crary, center, meets the students he would mentor that year, Julia Davis and Jonathan Guzman. (Photo from the Office of Multicultural Affairs).

The [Office of Multicultural Affairs](#) (OMA), together with the Office for Gender and Sexual Diversity at Tulane University pairs first-year students with upperclassmen through the [Ambassador Peer Mentoring](#) program. Formed in 1987 by OMA, the program has eased the transition to life on campus for hundreds of incoming students each year.

“Research shows that students who participate in mentoring programs have higher grades, are retained at a greater rate and have a better connection to the university,” says Desirée Anderson, associate director for multicultural affairs. “In addition, the mentors also develop a number of skills throughout the process.”

Before students arrive on campus, they are invited to sign up for a mentor. Once all applications are received students are paired based on the importance they give to

the following criteria: race and ethnicity, gender identity, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, major, career interest, personality and hobbies.

Wil Crary, a rising senior who has been both a mentor and mentee during his three years at Tulane, says the experience is highly beneficial.

“As a freshman, my mentor helped me with signing up for classes and recommending professors,” says Crary. “After meeting my mentee during my sophomore year, we spent lots of time studying together, going to lunch and sharing music. We were shocked to find how much we had in common.”

On Tuesday (Aug. 27), incoming students who signed up for the 2013 program will meet their mentors during the official matching ceremony in room 203 of the Lavin-Bernick Center. The ceremony begins at 6:30 p.m.