

Student interns during an R&B night at Tipitina

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It's become abundantly clear over the past few weeks as an intern with the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra that certain perks are inherent to working behind the scenes with the "first and only performing arts institution committed solely to the development of an industry for jazz in the city that created it."



Davell Crawford performs with the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra at Tipitina's during Friday's R&B Throwback concert. (Photo by Josh Brasted)

What I did not realize until Friday night (Sept 20) is that eating pizza with jazz musicians backstage in the Tipitina's greenroom, or escorting the legendary "Soul Queen of New Orleans," Irma Thomas, across the stage by the hand would be included in those perks.

Friday night's concert, billed as the New Orleans Rhythm & Blues Throwback, starred Irvin Mayfield and his New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, featuring special guests Davell Crawford, Charmaine Neville (niece of the Neville Brothers) and Irma Thomas.

Throughout the event, awards were given to New Orleans R&B legends and innovators Art Neville, Frogman Henry, Fats Domino and Thomas for their contributions toward establishing NOLA as the home of rhythm, blues and jazz. Each award (usually accepted by a younger relative of the awardee, though Thomas accepted her own) was followed by renditions of several of that artist's songs played

by the 16-piece band and a guest.

Given that my internship is so fun, one might not expect that this opportunity exists through the NOJO's partnership with the Tulane [Center for Public Service](#), and that it fulfills both my [second-tier service requirement](#) and three hours of credit with the music department.

From what I've been hearing from my fellow students in the classroom portion of the [internship](#), others are gaining equally valuable and applicable experiences. So if you are an upperclassman and still need some service hours, look to the Center for Public Service and engage in the New Orleans community. You just might find yourself dancin'.

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