

Longtime staff member has a crafty side

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John Steinbeck once wrote that “a journey is a person in itself; no two are alike.” Graci Rickerfor's journey to New Orleans from Honduras 55 years ago to learn English generated an unexpected relationship with New Orleans and with Tulane University.



Graci Rickerfor gives a little of herself with each necklace, bracelet and rosary she crafts. (Photo by Sally Asher)

She dated her husband, Lionel Rickerfor, while he was a student at Tulane and posed proudly with him in front of Newcomb Hall when he graduated in 1967. Twenty-eight years later, she started working as the assistant to the director of the [Newcomb Alumnae Association](#) office, where today she is the operations manager. She watched her son Patrick graduate from Tulane in 1998.

For the last 12 years, Rickerfor has made jewelry. It serves more than a decorative purpose, however. She is a founding member of [Crafty Ladies](#), an interest group of the Tulane University Women's Association that over the years has made various arts and crafts to donate to charitable organizations.

While Rickerfor sells some of her creations, she says any profit she makes goes back into giving to others. She makes rosaries for her church, St. Catherine of Siena; jewelry for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure; and a NOLA-themed necklace for every new employee at the Newcomb College Institute.

Rickerfor believes in the power of charity, saying, "It is important to always keep on giving. When you give something away you make, you give a piece of yourself."

This philosophy has helped her through the heartache over the loss of her husband two years ago. Looking to fill the time she formerly spent with him, Rickerfor started making "grief bracelets" and giving them away. These bracelets of numerous designs symbolize the healing power of charity and are a way to have pieces of Rickerfor's benevolent spirit all throughout Tulane and New Orleans.