

Social work school finds a new home

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Parker Sternbergh, an assistant director in the Tulane School of Social Work, spends the afternoon settling into her new office at 127 Elk Place. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

After 56 years on the Tulane University uptown campus, the [Tulane School of Social Work](#) has reached a historic moment in its history: it's settling in downtown New Orleans.

On Monday (Aug. 4), the school began a four-day moving odyssey with hundreds of boxes and more than 750 feet of bubble wrap that culminated at a new, state-of-the-art facility at 127 Elk Place.

“This is really an exciting moment in our school's history,” says Ron Marks, dean of the school. “We're moving into an exceptional facility that will better serve our needs both today and into the future.”

The nearly 20,000 square foot space covers the third and fourth floors of 127 Elk Place, which is located adjacent to the Joy Theater on historic Canal Street. The move nearly triples the school's space, and it puts

the institution in an exclusive group of only a handful of social work schools in an urban setting.

“Social work is a hands-on profession, and this move will put us closer to our community roots,” Marks says. “Our partnerships will flourish in this new setting, but we’ve also created a welcoming space in the heart of downtown.”

The former Elks Lodge and headquarters for Gulf Oil Co. was built in 1917, and the current multi-million dollar renovation headed by the Eskew + Dumez + Ripple architectural firm began in February. The facility will house “smart” classrooms including a 100-person lecture hall, while the two student lounges will provide ample space to study and socialize.

“The architects and interior designers have crafted a first-class space,” Marks says. “This facility is not only welcoming, but it will provide our faculty and students with a top-notch learning space. Our updated smart classrooms and interview spaces will enhance our student’s learning while our location will make us more accessible to our community partners.”

Classes begin in the new facility on Sept. 2.

Joseph Halm is marketing/communications coordinator for the Tulane School of Social Work.

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