

NOLA verve and style

September 30, 2014 8:45 AM Sally Asher
sally@tulane.edu

Staff in the **CITY**



Wearing his Zulu Tramps outfit, Solomon Doyle demonstrates his technique on the zydeco rubboard, the instrument he plays with the Rebirth Brass Band. (Photo by Sally Asher)

It is not Solomon Doyle's intention to make Tulane University students late for class. But his weekly Tuesday night gig with Rebirth Brass Band at the Maple Leaf Bar, a popular hangout for students, sometimes goes into the wee hours of the morning, making some students struggle to stay awake in class the next day.

Doyle, a New Orleans native who works in Tulane University Facilities Services, has been [playing the zydeco rubboard](#) with Rebirth Brass Band for nine years. The

popular band does its share of traveling, but Doyle's favorite gig is a local one — the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, where he describes “the fun of the crowd” as “priceless.”

Of course, it's not all work. A highlight for Doyle and other Rebirth members was their 2012 Grammy win for best regional roots music album. The moment was unparalleled for the band, some of whom have worked together for 30 years and, as Doyle puts it, are “brothers from another mother.”

When Doyle is not playing in one of the city's most popular brass bands, he's marching with the Zulu Tramps, a walking group that leads the Zulu Parade on Mardi Gras Day. Like Rebirth, the Zulu Tramps are an essential part of New Orleans history, parading for over 100 years.

All of his activities keep Doyle humming, and living his life like one of Rebirth's most popular songs — “Do Whatcha Wanna” — which Doyle does with NOLA verve and style.

With the band's solid foundation in traditional brass with liberal doses of hip-hop and funk, it is inevitable that a Rebirth performance will leave students with a little extra syncopation in their step as they make their way across campus.

When Solomon Doyle is not working at Tulane or playing with Rebirth Brass Band, he's marching with the Zulu Tramps, a walking group that leads the Zulu Parade on Mardi Gras Day.