

Director recounts revival of band in years since Katrina

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Only a few months after Hurricane Katrina, the new 25-member Tulane University Marching Band hit the streets for Mardi Gras 2006. The band is pictured here (with director Barry Spanier, left) participating in the 2006 Rex parade. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

In late August 2005, the revived [Tulane University Marching Band](#) held its first band camp after falling dormant 30 years earlier. Its resurrection was made possible through the combined efforts, enthusiasm and support of students, alumni and university administration.

The small assembly of 25 band students worked through a five-day camp before Hurricane Katrina interrupted the fall semester ? and the band's debut.

“When students evacuated in the fall of 2005, band members reunited in Houston to perform for the Green Wave vs. Rice football game on Nov. 12,” says Barry Spanier, director of bands at Tulane. “It was the only time that the band performed that year, but it provided a deep strengthening of the bonds of fellowship and school spirit that had taken root during that first band camp.”

By January 2006, the band had begun preparing for Carnival, the band's official New Orleans debut.

Ten years after the Katrina-year camp, the band has grown to include 90 students. The group has participated in 40 parades and covered more than 250 marching-miles while performing before 10 million fans along parade routes.

The band's résumé also includes appearances in the New Orleans Saints NFL Super Bowl victory parade in 2010 and a cameo on CBS's [NCIS New Orleans](#) in early 2015.

The band's story parallels the resilience that has brought Tulane and New Orleans back through the rebuilding effort.

“We are inspired by the earliest band traditions of Tulane, by our alumni and by our historical roots in the Big Easy to become one of the most unique college bands in all of America,” says Spanier. “We will continue to create opportunities for excellence, spirit, community and leadership, embracing the future and all that it holds.”

Here's to the next 10 years.

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