

## The New Orleans I watched suffer from afar is the city I now proudly call home

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Tulane University President Mike Fitts leads the President's Convocation at the start of his first year as president in 2014. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Today *The Guardian* published an opinion piece by Tulane University President Mike Fitts. Read an excerpt from the piece below:

People I talk to in New Orleans have understandably mixed feelings about the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. For some, it's an important outlet for reflection and expression. Some are glad to see attention still drawn to this history-altering event and the many issues it exposed. Others are hoping to pass the anniversary in peace, not wishing to relive the grim days of late summer 2005. As for me, I'm honored fellow New Orleanians welcomed me so warmly and recently to join this still-unfolding story. I arrived last year, looked around, observed the remarkable social fabric of my new home and was immediately moved by what I saw.

When Katrina hit, I experienced it the way most of us did, watching from far away, horrified, helpless, at a loss for what to do. In the bleakness of that time, my imagination dulled by the shock of it all, I couldn't see how New Orleans, one of the great cultural and economic treasures of America ? indeed, the world ? would carry on. But because of the way the people of New Orleans and of Tulane University responded after the storm, it became the most compelling of destinations, compelling enough for me to leave my lifelong home of Philadelphia to join Tulane as president last year.

The resilience and perseverance of New Orleanians post-Katrina are the accomplishments of a generation. They created a place tuned for civic engagement and innovation, the kind of place that draws people interested in confronting the big problems in the world. Katrina itself, the infrastructure failures it laid bare and the resulting flood delivered nothing but ruin and misery. With the storm's physical threat long gone, what remains is the deepened community engagement, forged by citizens and friends of New Orleans in the aftermath...

**Read the entire op-ed piece on [The Guardian](#) website.**