

High School Student's Blue Bracelet Campaign Boosts Tulane Pediatrics

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A New Hampshire high school senior with close ties to New Orleans has launched a campaign to help some of the youngest patients at Tulane Medical Center.

Benjamin Karp, 19, is selling blue "Children of New Orleans" wrist bracelets to raise money to buy toys, video games and play equipment for waiting areas and patient rooms in the Tulane Hospital for Children and the Pediatric Emergency Department. A senior at St. Paul's School in Concord, NH, Karp says he came up with the idea as a way to help New Orleans children in a post-Katrina world where many families and institutions are still recovering from the storm and rebuilding.

"I have been thinking for the past two years what I could give back to the city in a direct way," says Karp who grew up in New Orleans and attended Isidore Newman School before Hurricane Katrina. He began boarding school in Concord after the storm, but his family still lives in New Orleans.

Karp has a personal stake in Tulane. Back in 1990, he was in a severe car accident that claimed the life of his mother. He credits the staff of Tulane Medical Center with saving his life. So far, Karp's campaign has raised more than \$1,400. The bracelets cost \$2 each and are available for purchase in the Child Life and Pediatrics departments of the hospital as well as shops throughout the city. Bracelets retailers are listed online at www.thechildrenofneworleans.com.

The program has created a following among doctors, says Dr. Samir S. El-Dahr, Jane B. Aron professor and chair of Pediatrics.

"The blue bracelet campaign has generated a tremendous reaction from the medical and lay community alike. I have received dozens of e-mails and telephone calls from friends, colleagues and others all wanting to know how they can contribute to the campaign. We are extremely grateful to Ben's efforts in raising these much needed

funds," El-Dahr said. "Ben Karp is a remarkable human being. His campaign is a symbol of generosity and giving back to the community."

Earlier this month, the Senate of the Louisiana Legislature approved a resolution by state Sen. Cheryl Gray commending Karp for his efforts on behalf of the children of New Orleans.