

Tulane receives grant to study social and health impacts of BP oil spill

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The [Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy](#) at Tulane University has received \$1.4 million from the BP Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (GoMRI) to collect new information about health, social well-being and economic impacts of the oil spill in three hard-hit coastal communities in Louisiana and Alabama.

Tulane's research will provide guidance to community leaders and policy makers in identifying actions they can take to more effectively mitigate disaster impacts.

Researchers will choose target communities based on oil spill impact, vulnerability to future oil spills and socio-economic indicators.

“With this funding, our faculty and students will work with consortium members to establish a clearer picture of the ways in which the oil spill affected the surrounding communities and develop evidence-based strategic planning and risk communication strategies for communities facing similar disasters in the future,” said Ky Luu, executive director of Tulane University’s DRLA.

To aid in the research, Tulane’s newly re-established Computer Science Department will receive an additional \$480,000 to develop a cutting edge Web tool that will help coordinate the display of information about the oil spill impacts and play a fundamental role in building resilience to future events.

Kristen Brent Venable, associate professor of computer science, will lead the effort, which aligns with Tulane President Michael Fitts’ vision of enhancing opportunities for interdisciplinary research.

Tulane received the grant as part of the Consortium for Resilient Gulf Communities, which was formed to assess and address public health, social and economic impacts of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

In addition to Tulane, the consortium includes the RAND Corporation, Louisiana State University, the University of South Alabama and the Louisiana Public Health Institute, who will share in an overall \$8 million, three-year grant from GoMRI. The consortium’s interdisciplinary research and outreach activities will focus on determining how communities can build resilience to future disasters.