

'Gambit Weekly' honors Tulanians in 40 Under 40 list

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Assistant director of marketing and communications at Tulane University and founder of children's musical group the Confetti Park Players, Katy Hobgood Ray attends a banquet honoring those appearing on this year's 'Gambit Weekly' 40 Under 40 list. On Friday, Dec. 23, catch Ray and the Confetti Park Players performing at Celebration in the Oaks in City Park. (Photo by Sally Asher)

Honoring innovative professionals under 40 years old, local publication *Gambit Weekly* recently released its prestigious "40 Under 40" list. Katy Hobgood Ray, assistant director of marketing and communications at Tulane University and founder of children's musical group the Confetti Park Players, joined this year's class of movers and shakers.

Ray is listed beside numerous other Tulane community members, including J. Lowry Curley, Calvin C. "Trey" Fayard III, Dr. Vininder Khunkhun, Dr. Sonia Malhotra, Cecile Monteyne and Dr. Scott Schultz.

Born in Bogalusa, Louisiana, Ray grew up in a music-filled household and gained an affinity for local oral tradition from her grandmother, folklorist Gypsy Damaris Boston.

In 2013, Ray received a master of arts degree in musicology from the [School of Liberal Arts](#). That year, Ray also began holding impromptu sing-along sessions with children from her Algiers Point neighborhood, introducing them to both folk tunes and fun original songs inspired by Louisiana's rich culture.

"Being a mother turned my interest toward the childhood experience. I started collecting children's music from Louisiana when Louis was born, and I've enjoyed sharing these songs with my son and the kids in my neighborhood."

After securing space to practice at a local church, Ray organized the group as the Confetti Park Players, performing alongside them publicly for the first time at the Algiers Folk Art Fest in October 2014.

The group has since grown to include 30 kids, who also regularly contribute to Ray's [Confetti Park](#) podcast, which features interviews, local author story time and in-studio performances.

The group's whimsical Parents' Choice Award-winning first recording, 2015's *We're Going to Confetti Park*, features the talents of local artists like folk-pop duo [Ginger & the Bee](#), Dirty Dozen Brass Band saxophonist [Roger Lewis](#) and even a cameo from legendary local street vendor Mr. Okra.

"Our collaboration with [Mr. Okra](#) is, to me, destined to be an important piece of New Orleans sound someday. It just turned out so magical," said Ray.

"One of the best things about our group is the interesting mash-up of kids' voices and notable New Orleans musicians and characters."

— Katy Hobgood Ray, assistant director of marketing and communications at Tulane University