

# Six Tulane student groups awarded grants from Sprinting to the Front Lines

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*Using everything from art to delivering food and groceries these six Tulane student groups are rushing in to provide support for the New Orleans Community during COVID-19 (Photos by David Roston and NhuNgoc Pham)*

*Sprinting to the Front Lines* is a rapid funding mechanism for Tulane students to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak. Teams of current Tulane students were invited to submit a proposal that would directly impact the health and wellbeing of the New Orleans community during the COVID-19 outbreak. Projects were selected by a panel of three faculty at the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and the six were selected from 50 applications submitted.

Funding for *Sprinting to the Front Lines* was made possible by a generous donation from Celia Weatherhead and the Weatherhead Foundation. Celia Weatherhead is a graduate of Newcomb College, an emeritus member of the Board of Tulane, and a member of the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine Dean's Advisory Council.

The awarded students, their faculty mentors, and their projects' descriptions are listed below. Work began April 20, 2020. Look for updates on the projects on the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine's social media accounts. For questions about the projects or *Sprinting to the Front Lines* contact Janna Wisniewski at [jwisnie@tulane.edu](mailto:jwisnie@tulane.edu).

### **COVID-19 Emergency Response to Pregnancy and Postpartum**

To target the most pressing needs of the New Orleans birthing population, the COVID-19 Emergency Response to Pregnancy and Postpartum Project utilizes comprehensive strategies to address immediate needs by increasing access to essential resources, increasing the knowledge of our birthing population, and de-escalating stress and anxiety through linkage to a Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Navigator.

Student Team Members: Jesenia Angeles, MPH student in GCHB (IHD); Kiara Cruz, MPH, doctoral student in GCHB (MCH); and Tonye Fohsta-Lynch, MPH student in GCHB

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Maeve Wallace, GCHB

### **FarmToNOLA Fresh Food Delivery**

To deliver fresh produce directly from local farms to families in need. We plan to provide families with produce while continuing to support our farmers during this crisis. In coordination with local organizations, we aim to provide fresh produce to 100 families weekly for at least two months. We will coordinate directly with farmers to purchase produce and then organize and deliver food packages biweekly, focusing on families in the Lower 9th Ward and Westwego.

Student Team Members: Frances Gill, MD/MPH student in GCHB, Meredith Freeman, MD/MPH student in GCHB, and Karen Schaeffer, School of Medicine Student  
Faculty Mentors: Dr. Alyssa Lederer, GCHB, and Dr. Pia Chaparro, GCHB

### **COVID-19 Walk-Up Testing Pilot in Underserved Neighborhoods in New Orleans**

To address the needs of neighborhoods in New Orleans that had substantially lower rates of COVID-19 testing by supporting the efforts of New Orleans Health Department in implementing a pilot mobile testing strategy in underserved communities.

Student Team Members: Andrew Beron, PhD student in TRMD, and Sara Scates, PhD student in TRMD  
Faculty Mentors: Dr. Joseph Keating, TRMD, Dr. Lina Moses, TRMD, and Dr. Sarah Michaels, TRMD

### **Pass Dat Joy: A project in pursuit of creativity, joy, and community support in the wake of the COVID-19 global crisis**

To create “Pass Dat Joy” a family art toolkit with resource packets, which will be distributed to resource-insecure families via a school feeding site and pantry delivery service operated by our community partner, Homer A. Plessy School in New Orleans. These toolkits will be designed to alleviate some of the stress facing families by pairing creative materials for children alongside informational materials for parents. The artwork created by the students is to be exhibited and shared online via social media #passdatjoy.

Student Team Members: Shaymaa Abdalal, PhD student in TRMD, Johanna Nice, PhD student in TRMD and Program Manager of Highly Vulnerable Children Research Center, School of Social Work, Casey Last, master's student in Architecture, Abi Mbaye, master's student in English, and Brandon Surtain, master's student in

Architecture

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Lesley-An Noel, Phyllis M. Taylor Center for Social Innovation & Design Thinking and School of Architecture

### **SPHTM Service Assistance in NOLA to Seniors (SSAINTS) Program**

To ensure the health and well-being of an underserved and vulnerable population group, the Vietnamese American (VA) older-adults residing in the New Orleans Metropolitan Area, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. We will achieve this goal by developing and disseminating informational resources in Vietnamese on available COVID-19 services and programs, including assistance resources, discrimination reporting, disease prevention and risk mitigation strategies, and nutrition and meal planning during resource scarcity. We will also procure and deliver food/grocery and medications to VA older-adults based upon requests via volunteers called SSAINTS Navigators and connect VA older-adults with local NGOs serving the VA community to navigate the processes to obtain response assistance resources.

Student Team Members: NhuNgoc Pham, PhD student in GCHB, Lidan Zhang, MPH student in GCHB, MiguelAngel Lopez, PhD student in GCHB, and Trang Nguyen, Post-Doc Fellow, Center for Studies of Displaced Populations, GCHB, Cam-Thanh Tran, Assistant Director, Center for Studies of Displaced Populations  
Faculty Mentors: Dr. Mai Do, GCHB, and Dr. Pia Chaparro, GCHB

### **Ensuring Sexual Health Equity in the COVID-19 era**

To purchase and distribute sexual health resources to New Orleanians facing barriers to acquiring sexual health supplies due to COVID-19 disruptions. Our target population is community members who are experiencing such access barriers, including members of black and African American neighborhoods, people experiencing homelessness, those with income disruption, survivors of domestic violence, and LGBTQ+ youth.

Student Team Members: Megan Clare Craig-Kuhn, PhD student in EPID, Austin Jones, MD/PHD student in TRMD, Sooni Shirazi, MPH student in GCHB (MCH), Frances Gill, MD/MPH student in EHS, and Hali Ledet, MPH student in GCHB (MCH)  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Françoise Grossmann, GCHB, Dr. Patricia Kissinger, EPID