

## REACHING OUT TO NEW ORLEANS— THE CHADDICK INSTITUTE WAY

**T**he Chaddick Institute is helping a community based organization in New Orleans get back on its feet in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Through the work of Professor Gloria Simo and her MPS/Chaddick Team, we are assisting the Tulane-Canal Neighborhood Development Corporation (TCNDC) move ahead with strategic planning and accelerate its recovery.

Prior to Katrina, the organization served primarily as a source of various human services in the neighborhood, especially focused on assisting low-income families in making the transition from homelessness to affordable rental housing and home ownership, and a food pantry/kitchen for the homeless. The organization had to suspend its services after many of its board members were dispersed following Hurricane Katrina.

The Tulane-Canal neighborhood attracted a great deal of notoriety during the hurricane, largely due to its proximity to the Superdome. Dr. Simo answered the call for help from Father Perry Henry, pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Tulane Canal, in late 2005 and assembled a team of thirteen students from the Public Services Graduate Program and Chaddick Scholars to provide technical assistance to the organization and the neighborhood in which it works. The team developed an understanding of the organization's situation and completed a strategic plan in January, which helped to identify and catalogue the local organizations that could support its mission.

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**“Our work in New Orleans .... has been the most rewarding experience of both my public service and academic career.”**

Assistant Director Gloria Simo

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Dr. Simo helped the organization identify three major priorities: housing, health and human services, and economic development. After a return visit to support the work of the newly reassembled board, she arranged for a second team of fifteen members to assist TCNDC and other organizations pursue funding opportunities as part of a grant-writing class and workshop for members of the community. Another group of students will travel during summer to these same organizations to write business plans, while Dr. Simo will volunteer her time and professional services to help the TCNDC staff with administrative and organizational tasks to help implement the strategic plan.

The Institute is grateful for the financial support of the Chaddick Foundation, the Benjamin Moore Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation and the Vincentian Endowment for making this



*Sister Vera Butler (center), Director of the Tulane Canal Neighborhood Development Corporation describes the devastation felt in her community in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.*



*The Tulane-Canal Neighborhood was highly-distressed before the hurricanes, with an average per-capita income of just \$7000.*



*Gloria Simo's team worked on a variety of strategic directions, culminating in a focus group with neighborhood stakeholders.*