



DUKEENGAGE IN NEW ORLEANS, LA

Promoting public health, public policy and human services

Dates: May 31 - July 27, 2019

(Dates subject to change up until the point of departure.)

Service Themes

- Health & Human Services
- Public Policy
- Children & Youth Services
- Race & Ethnic Relations

Program Focus

Volunteering with diverse organizations focused on issues related to health/human services, public policy, and children/youth.

Curricular Connections: While all students are welcome to apply, this program may be of particular interest to students studying Public Policy, Global Health, African American Studies, Economics, Sociology, Education, and Political Science. (See below for additional details about connecting this program to your academic work.)

Program Leader

Ashley Brown Burns, Assistant Professor, Tulane University. Dr. Burns studies social stratification and teaches courses on social stratification, public policy, ethics, and American government.

Program Overview

For over a decade, DukeEngage-New Orleans students have supported diverse organizations across the New Orleans metro area. New Orleans remains a unique and vibrant epicenter for the U.S. Its cultural heritage, economic significance, and historical impact on the U.S. is unmatched. The city has been in an era of growth, rebuilding, demographic shifts, and revitalization over the past decade. Students will work with various community organizations on a range of issues including disaster preparedness, domestic violence, youth education, public health, and community outreach. Students genuinely interested in addressing challenges related to health/human services, public policy, social justice, education, social stratification and the environment will be immersed in the spirit of the “City of Yes.” All of the DukeEngage-New Orleans partners strive to push forward agendas intended to serve the city’s needs and goals.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

By the end of DukeEngage in New Orleans, students will have begun to develop the following skills:

CRITICAL THINKING

- Identify problems in the community
- Uncover the root cause of a problem
- Generate alternative solutions to a problem
- Evaluate information for possible biases

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

- Be concerned about local community issues
- Plan to improve their neighborhoods in the near future
- Believe they can have a positive impact on local social problems

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

- Understand how the subject matter of this course can be used in everyday life
- See the connection between their academic learning and real-life experiences

Partnership Opportunities

DukeEngage-New Orleans students will volunteer with a broad array of organizations, many with a focus on public health. Past participants have worked with organizations such as:

- Children's Hospital and Touro Infirmary (public health support) – medical outreach, community and youth volunteer support, healthcare education, and community building
- American Red Cross (disaster response & outreach) - disaster preparedness and community-based educational outreach
- Covenant House (youth homelessness) - executive leadership support, financial and economic analysis & nonprofit community research
- New Orleans AIDS Task Force/CrescentCare (public health services) - organizational compliance, development, quality assurance, finance, community outreach, volunteer management, and healthcare education
- Southern Food & Beverage Museum (youth & public health outreach) - youth nutrition and fitness programming
- Child Advocacy Center (policy & advocacy leadership) - child abuse policy research and developing educational materials

Students will learn more about placement opportunities during the interview process for the Duke Engage New Orleans program. Once selected, they will discuss their interests and experience with program leaders. At the program director's discretion, community partners will review student resumes and conduct interviews. This process will shape final matching outcomes.

Students volunteer 35-40 hours a week, depending on the needs of their community partner. Typical hours are Monday-Friday 8am-5pm, although schedules vary slightly among placement sites. Some placement sites will consist primarily of office-based work, while others will require working hands-on with the population served by the organization. They may also call for off-site community outreach or fieldwork. Some placements occasionally involve evening or weekend commitments.

Program Requirements

Coursework: Academic coursework or interest in public policy, health care, economics, sociology, American history or race relations is encouraged but not required.

Other Skills: Previous independent research, project management, employment/volunteer experience, or public speaking is helpful but not required. Healthcare providers such as Touro and Children's Hospital may require TB testing, as well as updated vaccination records.

Personal Qualities:

- Ability to work productively on a supervised team or independently (Students have to navigate agency expectations, while being self-guided)
- Motivation and professionalism (Students will become fully immersed into organizational culture and community.)
- Empathy and cultural sensitivity (Students may interact with diverse populations.)

Curricular Connections

The New Orleans program is a great fit for students interested in such topics as public policy, health care, social stratification, urban politics, economic disparity, and community development. DukeEngage staff can help direct students to courses, research projects, and faculty members connected to the themes of this program upon students' return.

Program Details

Description of Community: New Orleans is truly a city of conundrums. New Orleans continues to be one of the fastest growing U.S. cities. Yet it continues to struggle with a troubled legacy. For example, considering disparity, New Orleans is one of the worst cities in the U.S. for income inequality according to Bloomberg in 2016. In spite of its struggles, the city's economic engine has been growing, challenged to thrive upon shaky infrastructure. City leaders continue the challenge of improving social conditions as well. For example, in 2015, nearly 37 percent of New Orleans' children under 18 were in poverty, a drop from 2014 when it was 43.8. While, this is still much higher than the state of Louisiana or national trends, this is a notable improvement. While New Orleans continues to recover from the legacy of Katrina, Rita, and Isaac, the city offers students an incredible opportunity to immerse themselves in a rich, vibrant community. Former participants have volunteered in educational and nutrition programs, health policy research, child abuse advocacy, domestic violence awareness, environmental sustainability, children's health and well-being, youth mentoring, community outreach, HIV/AIDS advocacy, and in a range of other capacities.

Students will reside in the Uptown/Riverbend neighborhood of New Orleans, known for a rich student/college life with proximity to Tulane University and other local institutions. Audubon Park spans this area and offers great outdoor space for entertainment and fitness. Access to transit and day-to-day amenities are abundant. Students will be within walking distance to the streetcar, bus, local banks, churches, stores, restaurants, and entertainment.

Housing and Meals: For the last several years, students have been housed in suite-style apartments in at Loyola University. The units consist of a shared living room (common area), bathroom, and kitchen, and either two, three, or four bedrooms. The bedrooms are mostly single-bed accommodations. Students will have access to a laundry room and a TV lounge. There will be access to campus facilities like the library, post office, gym, and campus security.

Students will be given a stipend to cover the costs of purchasing groceries to cook their own meals. Grocery trips will occur on a regular basis and suites are equipped with full kitchens. Program staff will provide a weekly group meal. In general, there will be a broad selection and availability of food options.

If you do not eat certain types of food for cultural, religious or personal reasons, please contact the DukeEngage office, dukeengage@duke.edu, to discuss whether or not your dietary needs can be reasonably accommodated at this program site.

Transportation: DukeEngage provides or arranges transportation to and from service placements and all scheduled program activities, preferring public transportation where possible. In New Orleans, student receive an unlimited transit pass to facilitate travel to and from service placement sites and enrichment activities. Most student use this pass on a daily basis, commuting from 10 minutes up to an hour. A few students will be able to walk to their placements sites. Program leaders will coordinate transportation to some group service activities and weekly trips to a grocery store.

Communication: We assume all students will have a personal cell phone for program-related and emergency communication. Wireless internet access is available in all academic buildings and residence halls on campus. Program leaders utilize cell phones, email, and text messaging to coordinate the weekly schedule with students.

Local Safety and Security; Cultural Norms, Mores and Practices: DukeEngage strongly advises all applicants to familiarize themselves with the challenges travelers commonly encounter at this program site in order to make an informed application decision. We recommend starting with the [Diversity, Identity and Global Travel section](#) of the DukeEngage website.

Opportunities for Reflection: Students participate in weekly group reflection sessions with the program director and site coordinator on issues such as poverty, social stratification, disaster resiliency, and economic revitalization. They will consider the ethics and morals of service, community development and quality of life, neighborhood revitalization, and responding to natural disasters. Students are also required to engage frequently with the program blog.

Other Opportunities: Occasionally, students may have evening and weekend commitments with their service placements. DukeEngage students also have program commitments about two nights per week (reflection and a group meal). At weekly group meals, the group will interact with community members invited to share their personal and professional experiences. Students will participate in enrichment and service activities celebrating the transformation of this unique city, mostly on Saturdays. They will learn about the impact of Hurricane Katrina, rich cultural history, and the unique environmental features of Southern Louisiana. They will experience a range of experiences that reflect the city's unique blend of French, Spanish, and Caribbean roots, including music, the arts, and other cultural landmarks. Attendance at all group programming is required. The remaining time during the week and weekends will be free for students to relax or explore the city on their own. Open water swimming is not a sponsored activity in any DukeEngage program.

More Information

- Brinkley, Douglas. *The Great Deluge*. William Morrow. 2006.
- Eggers, Dave. *Zeitoun*. McSweeney's Books. 2009.
- Hartman, Chester, and Gregory D. Squires. *There is No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster: Race, Class, and Hurricane Katrina*. Routledge, 2006.
- Horne, Jed. *Breach of Faith: Hurricane Katrina and the Near Death of a Great American City*. Random House, 2006.
- "Trouble the Water." Tia Lesson and Carl Deal. Zeitgeist Films, 2008.
- "When the Levee Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts." Spike Lee. HBO Documentary Films, 2006.