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Law School Reaches Out to New Orleans Law Students

- Law School waives tuition and fees for students from Tulane or Loyola in the hurricane-ravaged city
- Chapman 05 valedictorian escapes Tulane; back in class at Chapman Law

ORANGE, Calif., September 7, 2005 Almost as soon as the bad news started rolling in about the devastation in hurricane-ravaged New Orleans, Chapman University School of Law administrators were thinking of the students in the flooded Crescent City's two renowned law schools, Tulane and Loyola.

Once the students were safely out of the city, we knew that most of them would wish to continue their law school careers elsewhere, at least for this semester, and that it would be important to continue without a hitch, said Parham Williams, dean of the Chapman law school.

The administrators held quick meetings with Chapman administration, the law faculty Admissions Committee and the university's president, James L. Doti. They quickly received approval to admit to the Chapman law school, as transfers or visiting students, any Tulane or Loyola-New Orleans students in good academic standing with their respective schools. All tuition and fees for these students will be waived for the fall semester at Chapman.

Since the students likely will not be able to obtain letters of good standing until electronic communications are restored with Tulane and Loyola, we will permit the students to enroll and attend classes pending receipt of such letters, Dean Williams added.

-- Back in Class

One Tulane law student has already made it out of New Orleans and began classes at Chapman's law school today. Ren Bennett, who won the Cheverton Trophy (Chapman's equivalent of valedictorian) upon her graduation from Chapman last spring as a political science major, was admitted to Tulane and had just begun her fall semester there when the hurricane struck.

Evacuated with the rest of Tulane's students, Bennett who left all her belongings behind returned to her parents' house in Yorba Linda (Calif.) and was impressed at the speed with which Chapman admitted her.

They really moved heaven and earth to get me in, she said. It's been amazing one hour I was talking to one of the Chapman law professors and explaining my predicament, and the next hour I was admitted to the Chapman School of Law. Now I can keep up with my first-year law studies and not fall behind.

She urges anyone wanting to contribute to relief efforts to donate to the American Red Cross or go to www.networkforgood.com.