

The CIPA-New Orleans Professional Partnership

Formal Proposal

Cornell Institute for Public Affairs
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The CIPA-New Orleans Professional Partnership

Throughout the reconstruction process in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, there has been a persistent gap between services needed by citizens and services provided by local, state and federal government. This partnership between the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (CIPA) and select nonprofit organizations in St. Bernard Parish provides an opportunity for CIPA to use its unique resources and capabilities to fill this void while also presenting CIPA fellows with opportunities for practical application of the methods learned in graduate study. CIPA fellows will identify the needs of local nonprofit and government agencies and implement strategies to address these issues. To determine these needs, CIPA fellows will survey community organizations and use CIPA's external perspective to diagnose undetected issues and generate creative solutions.

The CIPA-New Orleans Professional Partnership Mission

To create a comprehensive program that integrates academic knowledge with practical application to build a sustained partnership between CIPA and organizations of St. Bernard Parish to revitalize the community.

Project Impetus

The leaders of the CIPA-New Orleans Professional Partnership (CIPA-NOLA) were participants in the original CIPA outreach effort to St. Bernard Parish, the 2008 Spring Break trip sponsored by CIPA's Women in Public Policy group. After completing a week of construction labor, meeting St. Bernard residents, and experiencing its one-of-a-kind culture, the trip's participants enthusiastically agreed to expand CIPA's relationship with the community.

Description of St. Bernard Parish

Before Hurricane Katrina, St. Bernard Parish was a community east of New Orleans of about 65,000 people of lower and middle-income status. About two-thirds of the parish is surrounded by water (Lake Pontchartrain, the Industrial Canal, the Mississippi River, and various wetland ecosystems), which generates much of the parish's economic base. Fisheries, agriculture, transportation, and government agencies provide much of the jobs for parish residents. The school system in St. Bernard Parish was damaged but not decimated by Hurricane Katrina.

The parish has a rich history. The Battle of New Orleans during the War of 1812 was staged in Chalmette in January 1815. Andrew Jackson's victory here against a superior British force enhanced his national reputation and helped propel him to the presidency years later.

For over a century the parish was relatively rural and unpopulated, but it experienced an industrial boom from the 1950s to the 1980s. The parish's population soared and its economy

transitioned from agriculture to industry. However, since the 1980s the parish's economic growth has slowed.

Hurricane Katrina affected St. Bernard Parish more than any other New Orleans parish. Of the many levy breaches in New Orleans on August 29, 2005, none were more devastating than the break at the Industrial Canal just beyond the parish's west boundary. Much of St. Bernard Parish was inundated with 15-20 feet of water. Because the city's pumps failed during the storm, ten feet of standing water submerged the parish for several weeks after the storm. On the one-year anniversary after Katrina, only about 10,000 of the parish's residents had returned, and only about one-third of the original 65,000 have returned as of late 2007.

Live St. Bernard and the St. Bernard Project

Live St. Bernard serves to attract and house skilled construction laborers to St. Bernard Parish. It provides volunteer housing that initiates interaction between volunteers and St. Bernard Parish residents, creating the cultural exchange that encourages volunteers to make a long-term commitment to rebuilding the area. The Live St. Bernard volunteer house is a three-bedroom home just east of the Lower Ninth Ward that was donated by the former homeowner in 2007. The Live St. Bernard founders used donations and volunteer labor to gut, de-mold, and rebuild the house. The CIPA WIPP Spring Break group was the house's first official volunteer tenant in March 2008.

The St. Bernard Project is a partner of Live St. Bernard. It is a nonprofit, grassroots organization that removes barriers for St. Bernard Parish families who wish to move back into their homes. The organization began rebuilding homes in the parish in August 2006 and since has rebuilt over 35 homes and worked on nearly 80 more (as of March 2008). The St. Bernard Project uses donations for building supplies and volunteer labor to rebuild homes for citizens of limited means. The Project runs a tool co-op, a small community center, and social groups for residents.

Components of CIPA-New Orleans Professional Partnership

CIPA-NOLA will consist of five distinct components. Each of these components will allow CIPA fellows to participate in CIPA-NOLA in various ways. These components are:

- New Orleans Discussion Group
- Public Service Exchange Consultancy
- St. Bernard Spring Break Service Trip
- Summer Internship
- Professional Report

New Orleans Discussion Group

In preparation for the work to be done during the spring semester, the fall discussion group will serve as a introduction to fellows interested in the various facets of the rebuilding process in New Orleans. The discussion group will be an informal meeting or brown-bag lunch, open to anyone, that will meet approximately once per month in the CIPA Conference Room. Fellows will discuss what needs to be done to rebuild New Orleans. Professors who have worked in the city or who have insights on the rebuilding process will be invited to speak about their experiences. It will engage CIPA fellows and improve their knowledge about work to be done in New Orleans and beyond. It also represents a chance for CIPA fellows to connect with faculty in other departments around Cornell. This discussion group provides the opportunity for continuous engagement in the fall that connects the summer of one year to the spring of the next. Spring/summer participants in CIPA-NOLA could become the discussion group leaders in the fall. Potential themes for discussion include but are not limited to: the role of volunteers in rebuilding, the relationship between government, private sector operations, and volunteer sector initiatives, and possible careers for post-graduates in the area.

Public Service Exchange Consultancy

CIPA's Public Service Exchange (CRP 679.80) taught by Linda Haas Manley provides a structure and context within which one or more CIPA fellows may undertake a consulting project with partner organizations in St. Bernard Parish. The purpose of incorporating this partnership into the Public Service Exchange is twofold: (1) allows CIPA fellows to provide services to an organization or community in need of professional assistance; and (2) gives CIPA fellows an opportunity to develop consulting skills, including cost-benefit analysis, efficient resource allocation, nonprofit development and management best practices, fundraising, and volunteer development and management.

To facilitate this facet of CIPA's professional relationship with Live St. Bernard and The St. Bernard Project, a representative from one of the organizations will be invited to visit CIPA during the year to meet with interested students from the Public Service Exchange. (S)he may deliver a Colloquium speech and/or informal presentation about the role that public affairs professionals can play in St. Bernard Parish and New Orleans.

Fellows who participate in the Public Service Exchange Consultancy with St. Bernard Parish will be advised to participate in the St. Bernard Parish Spring Break Service Trip and will be candidates for a summer internship in St. Bernard Parish that would support one or two fellows.

Additionally, students interested in completing an independent study outside of the Public Service Exchange course by consulting a St. Bernard Parish or New Orleans organization may appeal for CIPA-NOLA and CIPA administrative support.

St. Bernard Spring Break Service Trip

In March of 2008, six CIPA fellows participated in a Spring Break trip hosted by Women in Public Policy (WIPP) and supported by CIPA. During this trip, the fellows had the opportunity

to work on two houses being rebuilt by The St. Bernard Project. In addition, these fellows were the first group of volunteers to stay in the Live St. Bernard home. The development of this proposal is a result of these fellows' experiences on this trip.

The Spring Break trip is an integral part of this proposal because it provides CIPA fellows with an authentic context to understand their academic work in nonprofit and public services. The Spring Break trip allows fellows to participate in service-learning and have the opportunity to witness Hurricane Katrina's continued impact on the community.

During spring 2008 the Cornell Public Affairs Society (CPAS) distributed questionnaires to CIPA fellows. The responses contained several requests to incorporate more service opportunities into the CIPA program. The Spring Break trip provides an excellent opportunity to meet those requests.

Up to twelve CIPA fellows will be able to participate in the Spring Break trip. This trip is not restricted to fellows participating in the Public Service Exchange or the Summer Internship. However, it will be required for all fellows who will be interning in St. Bernard Parish in the summer, and it is highly encouraged that fellows participating in the Public Service Exchange component attend. This trip will not focus on specific project research. It is an opportunity to provide direct service and understand the context of the work performed by Live St. Bernard and The St. Bernard Project.

CIPA fellows participating in the trip will be required to fundraise a certain percentage of the trip's cost. Due to these financial constraints, fellows will need to be recruited to participate in the trip during the fall semester. Outreach to these fellows will be discussed later in this proposal.

To publicize the trip among CIPA fellows, an introductory email will be sent in September over the CIPA listserv. The CIPA-NOLA leaders will also rely on word-of-mouth communication to generate enthusiasm. To choose participants, preference will be given to students who have committed to participating in the Public Service Exchange consultancy and who have attended the New Orleans Discussion Group meetings. After those spots are filled, the remaining participants will be chosen on a first-responder basis. To ensure students fulfill their early commitment to the trip, they will be required to meet certain fundraising levels by target dates. If they are unsuccessful, a list of alternates will be used to select those receiving the trip's final positions.

Internship

Much like the work fellows do in the Public Service Exchange class, internship possibilities stem from identifying the needs of local nonprofit and government agencies and applying graduate-level study to the issue to be addressed. There is a multitude of needs in the parish, and CIPA-NOLA anticipates that nonprofits operating in the area will require innovative methods to address them. For example, Live St. Bernard identified volunteer recruitment, strategic planning, fundraising, and volunteer orientation practices as potential starting points for an

intern. The research and implementation of these best practices could provide a fruitful internship for a nonprofit management concentration.

As suggested by Tom O’Toole, CIPA’s Executive Director for Professional Development, CIPA could create a two-year agreement with a local organization that would allow a CIPA fellow to work in a specially designed program under adequate supervision of the organization while receiving a stipend from CIPA to cover living expenses.

The CIPA-NOLA leaders believe supplementing this internship with periodic hands-on service activities is imperative to understand the context of CIPA’s consultancy. Thus, interns are required to have participated in the Spring Break trip. Additionally, there will be minimal community service requirements during the summer internship.

Professional Report

A fellow’s involvement in the Public Service Exchange and/or through a summer internship in St. Bernard Parish may be furthered through a professional report to be presented to the organization with which the student worked upon the fellow’s graduation from CIPA. This would allow the student to extend his/her practical experience by researching a specific rebuilding-related issue in St. Bernard Parish or New Orleans. The professional report could be implemented by a St. Bernard Parish or New Orleans organization.

Budget

	Cost (\$)	Explanation
Start-up costs	100	Printing costs, publicity mats.
New Orleans Discussion Group	0	
Public Service Exchange Consultancy	400	Speaker from St. Bernard
Summer Internship (1 person)	2,500 (approx.)	Pro Bono Internship Stipend
St. Bernard SB Service Trip (12 ppl)	7,000 (580/person)*	Plane, House, Transportation
Professional Report	0	
Total	10,000 per year	

- * The \$580 per person Spring Break Trip expenses include:
 - \$300 for round-trip plane tickets, from Rochester, NY to New Orleans
 - \$100 for Live St. Bernard housing for one week
 - \$100 for rental of a 15-passenger van
 - \$40 for groceries
 - \$25 for transportation to Rochester airport
 - \$15 for gas

Calendar

Summer 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete official CIPA-NOLA Proposal Complete official CIPA-NOLA Project Charter Develop contact list for potential funders/grants Make initial contact with St. Bernard organizations Create CIPA-NOLA logo
August 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce CIPA-NOLA to first-year fellows at Fall 2008 CIPA Orientation Contact individuals to speak at New Orleans Discussion Groups Identify ongoing issues in the rebuilding process in St. Bernard Parish Apply for official student group status from Cornell University
September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announce Spring Break Trip to CIPA Create Spring Break Trip Planning Committee Send RFP's to St. Bernard Parish organizations Identify potential Ithaca partners Identify what other action Cornell University has taken in New Orleans Launch CIPA-NOLA website Reserve space in Live St. Bernard and The St. Bernard Project for March
October 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review proposals from St. Bernard Parish organizations
November 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate submission of proposals to Public Service Exchange instructor Make arrangements for speaker from St. Bernard Parish organization
December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback on New Orleans Discussion Group Draft MOU with St. Bernard Parish organization for internship
Fall 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly New Orleans Discussion Group meetings Fundraising in community, grant submissions Develop internship application for CIPA fellows
January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept internship applications Introduce CIPA-NOLA to first-year fellows at new student orientation Begin partnerships between PSE participants and organizations
February 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host speaker from St. Bernard organization Interview internship applicants
March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select intern Spring Break Trip Feedback on Spring Break Trip
April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select new CIPA-NOLA leaders for 2009-2010 school year Final projects and presentations for Public Service Exchange Develop reference list for potential thesis/professional report topics

May 2009	Handoff between old leaders and new leaders Feedback on Public Service Exchange Internship(s) begins
Summer 2009	Support intern(s) Summer meetings to prepare for 2009-2010 school year
August 2009	Introduce CIPA-NOLA to first-year fellows at Fall 2009 CIPA Orientation Commence operations for 2009-2010 school year Support fellows composing theses/professional reports on New Orleans-related issues

For the second year of the CIPA-NOLA: The leadership can act as a support group for fellows drafting professional reports on New Orleans-related issues.

Outreach to CIPA Fellows

To promote CIPA-NOLA, Sara Rudow, Nadine Skinner and Justin Villere will provide a brief presentation during the Fall 2008 CIPA Orientation to generate interest in the various facets of CIPA-NOLA. This will be followed in the fall by the discussion group series described above, which will prepare fellows interested in traveling to New Orleans to volunteer during spring break, and/or work on a consultancy through the Public Service Exchange or other core CIPA courses.

Second year fellows are eligible to participate in CIPA-NOLA, even though they will not fulfill the internship facet of the program. Perhaps this program will inspire second year fellows to search for permanent employment in the New Orleans/Gulf Coast region. Program promotion at Orientation will obviously not reach second years, so the CIPA-NOLA leaders will incorporate a series of emails and possibly a statement to all of CIPA at the first Colloquium to reach this half of CIPA. Additionally, second-year fellows may be interested in completing an independent study on a New Orleans related-issue. Fellows may appeal for CIPA-NOLA and CIPA administrative support on a case-by-case basis.

Before the commencement of each phase of CIPA-NOLA, the leaders will send emails over the CIPA listserv to remind fellows about CIPA-NOLA and offer pathways for involvement. It is important for the leaders to build on the initial interest generated by the information session at orientation, the first Colloquium, and the first round of emails.

Assumptions

Much of CIPA-NOLA will be geared towards first-year fellows and fellows interested in participating in the Public Service Exchange. Second-year fellows obviously will not be able to participate in the internship stage of CIPA-NOLA. Additionally, some may not be interested in participating in the Public Service Exchange. If there are fellows who fit this description that are

interested in working with CIPA-NOLA, the leaders will do what is possible to incorporate and encourage their interests.

The CIPA administration has stated logistical support for the program after an introductory meeting between Director David Lewis, Ph.D., Thomas O'Toole, the Director for Professional Development, and the CIPA-NOLA leaders on May 13, 2008. The CIPA administration has made it clear, however, that CIPA's financial support will be minimal; any fundraising will likely have to come from an external source and from fellows.

The leaders believe there will be strong interest in the 2009 Spring Break trip. However, due to space limitations in the Live St. Bernard volunteer house, participation will be capped at 12 fellows.

There will be demand from the organizations and agencies in St. Bernard Parish to receive this support.

If outreach efforts are ongoing, informative, and enthusiastic, there will be sufficient excitement among fellows to engage several students in leadership positions for the 2009-2010 school year, ensuring the sustainability of CIPA-NOLA.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders of CIPA-NOLA are diverse. The most direct stakeholders include CIPA fellows who participate in the partnership, the nonprofit and public agencies of St. Bernard Parish and New Orleans, and the citizens of areas who benefit from the service. Secondary stakeholders include the CIPA administration who have stated support for the program and grant-makers and funding partners who choose to support the program financially. Finally, if CIPA-NOLA successfully partners with external members of the general Cornell and Ithaca community, they stand to benefit from CIPA-NOLA's successes.

Concerns about CIPA-New Orleans Professional Partnership

A primary concern is the cost of the program. There are no anticipated costs for the New Orleans Discussion Group in the fall. The anticipated costs for the Public Service Exchange would be minimal; if approved, it would include the cost of transportation for one representative to visit CIPA as a guest speaker. The St. Bernard Parish Spring Break trip will account for a significant portion of the total program costs, but participating fellows plan to fundraise to cover a share of the costs. The program leaders will also fundraise around the community, specifically focusing on service organizations that may have connections to the rebuilding process in New Orleans. If this fundraising effort does not significantly reduce the cost of the trip, there is a concern that fewer students will be able to participate. The internship's costs, as previously discussed, will be composed of a CIPA-funded stipend.

The timeframe for implementation is a secondary concern. The planned start date for this program is orientation for fall 2008. As of early August, program implementation was on schedule.

A central goal of this project is to provide St. Bernard Parish with a sustained and reliable partnership with CIPA. New Orleans has suffered from government failures and unfulfilled commitments before, during, and after Katrina. It is imperative that CIPA-NOLA fulfills its commitments and provides a model of an effective partnership. If not, CIPA-NOLA risks alienating organizations and their stakeholders, adding to the problem instead of being part of the solution.

It is important for CIPA to maintain independence in its consultancy with St. Bernard organizations. CIPA-NOLA is not meant to be another surrogate to advance failed policies in the area. CIPA fellows will provide original diagnostics and solutions while remaining sensitive to local politics, culture, and customs.

The work done by CIPA fellows must be of graduate-level quality. Fellows should not address issues that are not within the purview of the CIPA program and that do not challenge the participant to extend beyond his/her current abilities.

Because Ithaca, New York is over 1,300 miles from New Orleans, fellows working with organizations in St. Bernard Parish during the Public Service Exchange consultancy will not have the luxury of personal contact throughout the spring semester. To bridge this divide, fellows will have to sustain a commitment to email and telephone communication.

Lastly, it is important for all participants to realize the limitations of this proposal. It does not guarantee action. The responsibility for action lies with the fellows who participate in CIPA-NOLA. The leadership is confident that the foundations of the proposal will ultimately lead to success, but the only way to ensure CIPA-NOLA's success is through steadfast commitment to its operations. While school-work, the leaders' impending theses/professional reports, and other academic commitments will consume a great deal of time, the leaders must continue to appreciate the importance and opportunities within CIPA-NOLA.

Future Possibilities

As CIPA-NOLA continues to develop, there are many possibilities for the program to be further integrated into the CIPA academic experience. Two programs that would connect well with CIPA-NOLA are *Point of View*, CIPA's once-a-semester television program, and *The Current*, CIPA's once-a-semester academic journal. *Point of View* and *The Current* allow CIPA fellows to develop their academic and professional interests in a shared medium. CIPA-NOLA can be integrated into these programs with a *Point of View* episode or *The Current* issue dedicated to awareness of the rebuilding process.

Furthermore, CIPA-NOLA provides a model for integrating practical experience into other CIPA concentrations. CIPA-NOLA is currently best suited for the Public and Nonprofit Management

concentration. However, it can serve as a model for integrating practical experience into other CIPA concentrations. CIPA has eight concentrations: Environmental Policy, Finance and Fiscal Policy, Government, Politics and Policy Studies, Human Rights and Social Justice, International Development Studies, Public and Nonprofit Management, Science and Technology Policy, and Social Policy. For example, there is a potential for this program to develop Environmental Policy, Social Policy and Finance components. This could occur through further involvement with St. Bernard Parish and New Orleans organizations in these fields. A finance concentration would certainly gain useful knowledge by working with the St. Bernard Finance Department for the summer as it struggles to obtain federal funding, reinvigorate its tax base, and encourage private investment in the community.

Other concentrations, such as Human Rights and Social Justice and International Development Studies, can use CIPA-NOLA as a template to create an international experience for CIPA fellows. These programs can be integrated into the Cornell in Nepal program or as part of the SEEDS-BILD Bosnia program.

Current Fellows' Commitment to CIPA-New Orleans Professional Partnership

Developing CIPA-NOLA will take a coordinated effort between fellows, faculty, and the organizations in St. Bernard Parish. We would like to expand upon our personal commitment to this project and agree that it will be our responsibility to do the following:

Coordinate New Orleans Discussion Group

The CIPA-NOLA leaders shall be responsible for coordinating and publicizing the discussion group. The leaders will decipher the frequency of these meetings. They will choose topics, compose the agendas, and coordinate guest speaker appearances. They will obtain feedback from participants and evaluate the success of the forums, which can be applied in the fall of 2009.

Arrange Public Service Exchange Consultancy

CIPA-NOLA shall be responsible for initiating contact with Live St. Bernard and The St. Bernard Project. CIPA-NOLA will work with these organizations to develop and submit a proposal to Linda Haas Manley for class approval. CIPA fellows will arrange for representatives from the St. Bernard organizations to visit CIPA to meet with CIPA-NOLA participants. In addition, CIPA fellows will attempt to coordinate with the CIPA Colloquium Committee to arrange a colloquium on these organizations.

Arrange Summer Internship Program

CIPA-NOLA shall be responsible for coordinating with chosen organizations in St. Bernard Parish and New Orleans. The leaders will assist in the establishment of the Memorandum of Understanding to be created by Tom O'Toole. The leaders will also aid in the selection process of interns.

Organize St. Bernard Spring Break Service Trip

CIPA-NOLA shall be responsible for planning the trip. This includes but is not limited to: publicity, arranging fund raising opportunities, assisting fellows with flight planning, and making arrangements with Live St. Bernard and The St. Bernard Project. In addition, CIPA fellows participating in the trip will agree to make available photographs and written materials for CIPA use.

The CIPA Commitment

CIPA faculty and administration can support CIPA-NOLA in a variety of ways. Linda Haas Manley will provide support to one or more fellows in the Public Service Exchange undertaking a consultancy with Live St. Bernard and/or The St. Bernard Project.

Tom O'Toole has offered to coordinate with CIPA-NOLA to shape a pro bono internship that provides one or two fellows with a valuable professional development experience. In addition, he will draw up a Terms of Reference to maximize the advantages to be gained by fellows and partner organizations through a summer internship.

Faculty and administrators can provide further support by advising as to whether funding will be available to provide transportation for two or three of our New Orleans partners to visit Cornell to enhance CIPA-NOLA, to support a pro bono internship for one or two fellows, and the extent to which funding might be available for the spring break volunteer trip. Additionally, faculty and administration can support fundraising efforts undertaken by fellows to bolster the spring break trip and other outreach efforts. This might include attending, when possible, CIPA-NOLA events and assisting quantitative and qualitative analysis projects undertaken by fellows.