

PEOPLE *to* WATCH



FACING UP Once a year we face the task of identifying our annual class of People to Watch. We define "People to Watch" as mostly new faces who are doing something interesting with their lives that's worthy of our awareness; or, in some cases, familiar faces moving in a different direction. To save face, we will concede that there are many other watch-worthy people out there. These are just samples. Nevertheless, we stand by the worthiness of those presented here. ▣



PROFILES BY AMELIE LEBRETON
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JEFFERY JOHNSTON

Lindsay Adler

General Manager, Tipitina's

It is really not hard to discern how Lindsay Adler came to be Tipitina's first female and youngest general manager in the landmark's history.

"Growing up, I always had a passion for music," Adler says. "My dad influenced my musical tastes from the beginning. He loved the Beatles, Steely Dan, Little Feat and singers like Ella Fitzgerald."

She claims it was this love for music and culture that brought her to New Orleans to attend Tulane University. Well, it must be true love because Adler came at age 18, hit the music scene with a splash and has no plans to leave. "I started going to Tipitina's a lot while I was in college. One day, I just showed up at the office and said, 'I want to work here.'"

From street promoter on up, Adler has dedicated her whole life to safeguarding this element of the city's history. As general manager, she lends her energy to the Tipitina's Foundation to help preserve local culture.

"Working with the Tipitina's Foundation has been one of the most rewarding things about coming to the club," she says. "Tipitina's holds a very special place in my heart, and it always will."

Marci Schramm

Executive Director, French Quarter Festivals, Inc.

After leaving her executive director position with the New Orleans Opera in January, Marci Schramm found another happy match for her production skills and love of entertainment – director of French Quarter Festivals, Inc.

"I can truly say I love my job. The rewards are endless. There is nothing more amazing than throwing a party for over 400,000 people."

Whether it's the World's Largest Jazz Brunch or second-lining at the Satchmo Club Strut, Schramm creates fun times for all. For the French Quarter Festival in April, she erected 18 stages of music, and then blended art, food and music during Satchmo SummerFest in August.

"Everything we do is celebrating all things local," Schramm says. "What I love most about my organization is the amazing sense of community spirit."

French Quarter Festivals relies on New Orleans' business, artistic and philanthropic communities to engage the entire city. With the support of local vendors and their amazing sponsors, these festivals can remain free to the public.

Schramm is now working on December's festival, Christmas New Orleans Style. "The French Quarter is the heart of this city," she says. "People love to use our festivals as an excuse to come down and rediscover their gorgeous and historic city."

Michael Sniffen

President and CEO, Touro Infirmiry

Not even a month had passed before Michael Sniffen's interim appointment as president and CEO of Touro Infirmiry was made official in May.

"Touro Infirmiry has been part of the New Orleans community for more than 156 years; I am honored to be part of the legacy."

Sniffen has over 30 years experience in hospital management. More than ever, he sees New Orleans as a city in need of "access to quality health care. Finding new and better ways to do that is what gets me up in the morning."

As with all things in the city, Hurricane Katrina has left a long list of obstacles for leaders. Sniffen has made the financial front his first target because of the crippling effects of escalated costs of labor, utilities, supplies and insurance. "We often lose money every time a patient walks through our doors."

The factors aggravating this issue are on every level from legislation on down. But Sniffen's energy is renewed by his work's purpose. "When a patient, family member or employee thanks me for what our organization does, it makes my day."

