

Researchers helping NOPD find 'best fit' in new officers

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AROS logo at Louisiana Tech University. Credit: Louisiana Tech University

AROS, a research and consulting group comprised of faculty and students within Louisiana Tech University's industrial-organizational psychology doctoral program, is partnering with the New Orleans Police Department to develop an entry-level selection test battery and analysis tools to identify the best candidates for its police academy and future law enforcement community.

As the New Orleans Police Department is moving to a new community-based approach to law enforcement with increased neighborhood engagement, AROS is working with them to change the department's organizational structure and hiring processes in an effort to select people who will be a "best fit" for the new culture that is being implemented.

"AROS was originally contacted by the City of New Orleans Civil Service in 2014 as they were familiar with our work with the LSUS Center for Human Services and Public Policy (CHSPP)," said Dr. Frank Igou, coordinator of the industrial-organizational psychology master's program and associate professor of psychology at Louisiana Tech. "We had worked closely with CHSPP performing job analysis to redevelop entry-level selection and promotional procedures for Louisiana State Patrol."

The New Orleans Police Department is currently under a consent decree to correct civil rights and misconduct issues that had occurred in the past. In partnering with the New Orleans Police Department to gather data to assist with changing their internal methodologies and personnel selection processes, AROS students traveled to New Orleans to meet with a federal judge, attended a consent decree hearing, sit in on police academy sessions, ride along with on-duty police officers and conduct numerous interviews, focus groups and meetings with [law enforcement](#) officials of all ranks.

Igou says the experience was of great benefit to the AROS faculty and students, and speaks highly of the reputation and impacts that AROS can have on an organization.

"At Louisiana Tech and in the College of Education, we often take it for granted that many of our faculty members are not just good scientist, but they are also very experienced practitioners," Igou said. "I think this is reflected across the university in the activities of the faculty and staff, and the production of their students. We attract a high caliber of students who are able to make these projects happen. Although the faculty contribute expertise and experience from their areas, it is the student 'ownership' of the projects that really leads to their success."

Through experiences like those with the New Orleans Police

Department, AROS doctoral students are continuing to grow in their understanding of advanced psychological theories, sound research methods, and how to apply those fundamentals to real-world organizations. The group is managed by faculty and leverages the energy, enthusiasm and creativity of its graduate students.

AROS has executed projects for global, regional and local organizations across multiple industries in the areas of personnel selection, employee engagement, performance appraisal, and data analysis. They have worked with multinational organizations and Fortune 500 companies in the development of solutions to overcome organizational obstacles.

"AROS helps 'jump start' the careers of our program graduates," says Igou. "Instead of merely reading about the theory, concepts and research, they're able to take what is covered in classes and apply it in 'real world' situations and with actual clients. Students who graduate from Louisiana Tech's industrial-organizational psychology Ph.D. program are often able to hit the ground running with their first employer."

Provided by Louisiana Tech University

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