

Julie Thompson

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I have been an Allied Health Advisor here at Delgado for over 9 years. Somehow, I became famous. I am "Miss Julie" and everywhere I go I see students, or rather, they see me. So for years, I have advised in restaurants and stores and in the frozen food aisle at Breaux Mart.

In early October, all of the advisors started advising on line to accommodate students from our remote locations post-Katrina. At first student inquiry e-mails were sent to us from the call center. Then, as more students found our how to get in touch, we got more and more e-mails. From the first week, I heard from students who just wanted to know if I was okay and if Delgado was okay. They wrote to me about their experiences and said they wanted to come back to school. They needed the normalcy of school to anchor their lives.

I arrived home October 17 and, the very first day, while standing in line at New Orleans Hamburger and Seafood, I heard, "Miss Julie, when will the Radiology applications be ready?" After that, I talked with students everywhere – in almost every store and restaurant I went to. Sometimes I didn't even go in; I saw them in the parking lot. Once, while getting chicken at Popeye's, I drove up to the window and the girl said "Miss Julie! Is that you?" They all wanted to know the same thing – when could they come back to school.

We have all heard the same thing over and over, "I can't wait to go home to Delgado!" Delgado has the reputation of caring and nurturing their students. Not only do they need us now more than ever, but we need them. When they come to you, let them tell their stories. Listen to them and let them know that you care what happened to them. Listen to your co-workers also. All of us have stories to tell. Some are horror stories and some are not. But, we have to get back to normal. I know how hard it is to leave a flooded house and come to work when there is still so much to do at home. Many of us will be distracted by events in our personal lives. The same is true of the students. Be patient with everyone. Be compassionate. And try to keep your sense of humor.