

JSRI

JESUIT SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS

ESTABLISHED 2007

JSRI Supporters,

As we begin a new year at Loyola, we have so much to be grateful for and look forward to. I'd first like to take a moment to share some of our accomplishments.

Highlights from the first year of Loyola at Rayburn:

- Received over 200 applications
- Enrolled 40 incarcerated students and 15 correctional employee students
- Offered 9 courses
- Partnered with the Loyola Center for Ethics and Economic Justice to offer a personal finance workshop taught by Loyola undergraduate students in the prison
- Secured 2 million dollars in grant funding to support prison education
- Established the Rayburn Scholarship Fund and raised over \$40,000 in donations

Perhaps the most exciting highlight was a visit from Dr. Cole, Loyola's new President.



Dr. Cole, along with Law School Dean Madeleine Landrieu, City College Dean Paul Cesarini, Interim College of Arts and Sciences Dean Leonard Kahn, Loyola's new Vice President of Mission and Ministry Fr. John Cunningham, and JSRI staff made the long trip to Rayburn to meet with all of our students and learn more about the program.

Students wrote and performed original lyrics to the chorus of "Lean on Me" and shared their experiences in a

panel discussion. Dr. Cole also addressed the students and answered questions. The main questions that the students asked were, **“Are we really Loyola students? Would you accept us into your community?”**

Dr. Cole answered with an enthusiastic YES! He shared that he hopes that one day our students will be free and join us on campus to continue their educational journey. It's hard to overstate the importance of this commitment to our students at Rayburn. You can watch Dr. Cole's [reflection](#) on the Rayburn visit in his speech at Faculty and Staff Convocation.

Dr. Cole also shared his personal formation experiences with the Jesuits including an encounter with a college friend that was Jesuit-educated and dedicated to service. Our students have often reflected on not only what it means to be a Loyola student in prison, but also what it means to be a part of the Jesuit community beyond Loyola. After Dr. Cole's visit, one of our students wrote the following poem.

Lines for JSRI and a Jesuit-Educated Man, from a Prison Infirmary

By Craig, Loyola at Rayburn Student

They say one day Someone
will ask of you --

Did you visit them while sick?

Did you go to them in prison?

Did you help them eat

did you give them drink

when their hearts were famished

and their souls withered for thirst?

Did you share with them clothes

to wear in the heat and cold?

Did you take them into your home

when they were sick and estranged?

Let me tell you what to say:

You visited me in my heart

and mind and you took me in

to a place where chains become choices

and rainfall brings rainbows

You fed me with truth

and took me to the well

of wisdom where I drank

and learned to have faith in faith

You came to me and clothed

me with kindness and virtue

Raiment against the never-

ending day and never-coming tomorrow

Let me tell you what I'll say:

With my heroes I've always said,

"I want to be like you,"

but with you I say,

"I want to be like us."

Thank you to everyone at Loyola and beyond who has supported our students at Rayburn. If you are able, please [donate](#) to the Rayburn Scholarship Fund to cover program expenses for students like Craig!

Best Wishes,

Dr. Annie Phoenix

**Executive Director
Jesuit Social Research Institute
Loyola University New Orleans**

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