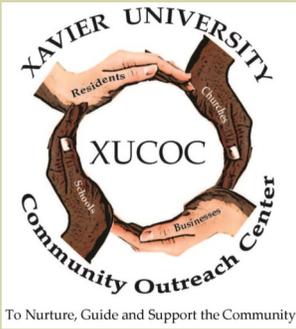


# The Educator

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## The Lady Behind the Center

Dr. Rosalind Pijaux Hale has been involved with the Outreach Center since the idea was conceived. The concept began in 2001 with State Farm Insurance Company giving a building to Xavier. State Farm had promised the St. Roch community, it would save one home for use by the community. Xavier was selected to oversee this project. Meetings were held with the community, as well as, surveyed to determine the critical needs of the area. However, the damage from Hurricane Katrina prevented that space from being used. Efforts were directed closer to home, within the Gert Town Community. Dr. Francis felt strongly about opening an all-day facility, a place where classes would be going on during the day but the community could use it at night and on weekends for community activities. As chair of the Division of education, he asked Dr. Hale to work with him in an attempt to get the approval. Although they were not successful and other decisions were made about that space, yet, another opportunity involving a vacant building presented. Dr. Hale suggested to Dr. Francis that the vacant building could be used for similar activities like the building that we had received from State Farm. This was an outreach service that we could now do right here in Gert Town!



When asked about her vision for the Center, Dr. Hale stated that “a place [XUCOC], where members of the community will feel safe to come and learn. If you look at the hands reaching out to each other and the mission listed, that says it all. Have we achieved that, not yet? But I know that will happen.”

“To Dr. Olatunji and others who will carry the torch, I say, God is with you. I am confident that the flame is still there and will not dwindle.”

## Welcome Dr. West-Olatunji



Dr. West-Olatunji came to Xavier University in 1998 after she received her Doctorate at UNO. While here, she was part of the faculty and served as Director of Counseling program for 4 years. Dr. West-Olatunji is returning to Xavier after being away for 13 years where she worked at the University of Florida and Cincinnati. She is continuing her research on traumatic stress and systematic depression. In addition to being a faculty member at Xavier, she is now the Director of the Community Outreach Center in Gert

Town. Her vision of the Outreach Center is based on four pillars: Xavier students, faculty, Gert Town community residents and community stakeholders. These four pillars will work together to help the Gert Town Community Outreach center to grow and become successful for the community. Her mantra is for everything to be WITH the community not FOR the community. Dr. West-Olatunji intends to empower and provide sustainability for the Gert Town community.

XAVIER  
UNIVERSITY  
OF  
LOUISIANA  
COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH  
CENTER

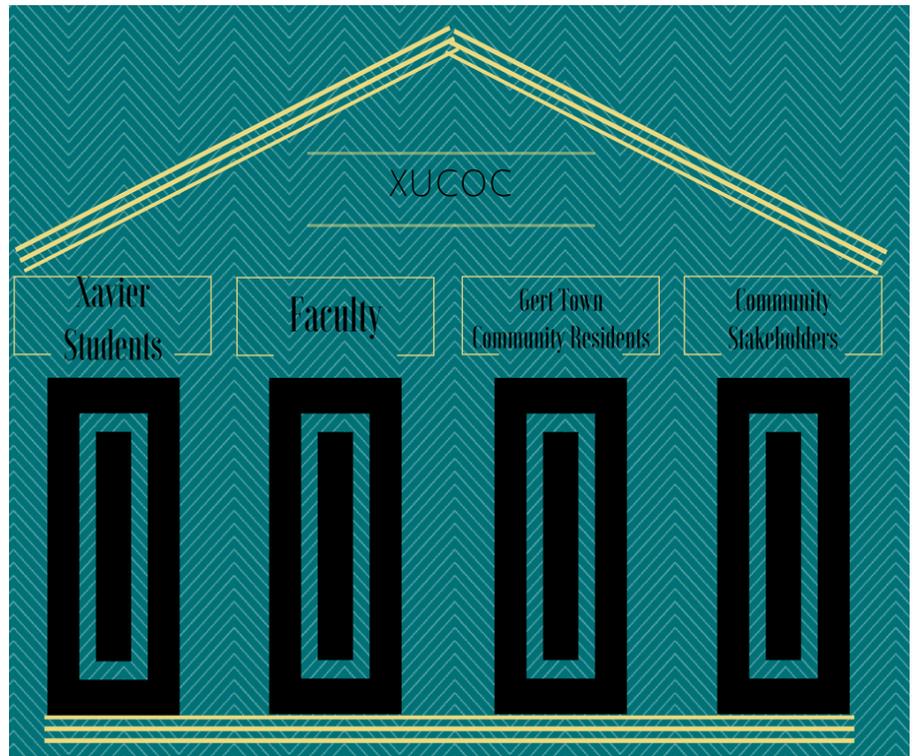
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## Four Pillars of XUCOC

The residents need to construct knowledge about their own lived experiences of what is the problem and how they can improve their lives. Efforts will be with the community, community residents must be involved so that they may take control of their own lives. Xavier University Community Outreach Center invites students and faculty to engage in outreach experiences aimed to facilitate research on what they think will benefit the Gert Town community to allow sustainability within the community. There must be evidence in what the students and faculty want to do or develop for the community so that their research will stay in the community beyond their involvement. Community stakeholders may provide assistance or sponsor events that support the Gert Town community. XUCOC strategically plans and invites the four pillars to join in work that promotes sustainability and community empowerment.



### Utilities & Rental Assistance

Funded by St. Rita of Cascia Catholic Church and managed by representatives from Total Community Action (TCA) & XULA, residents of Gert Town (70125 zip code only) may apply for assistance with their utilities and/or rent. Please note: There are eligibility requirements that must be met.

Day & Time of Operation:  
Second Mondays  
From 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 am

### Contact Information

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