**WhyNOLA Quotes**

“I came for a maritime industry training and fell in love with the city: the people were so friendly, so proud to live here and share that with others. A few months later the Port of New Orleans job was advertised. There was a huge draw – the Port is very highly respected in the industry, it’s in a growth situation, and the cost of living difference from Southern California was a real positive. It was a great chance for me professionally and offered big advantages for my family.”

-Brandy Christian, COO, Port of New Orleans

“In New Orleans, people are more open to experience, creativity and leadership skills, and less interested in boxing people by industry. There’s an openness and an appreciation for new ideas and taking risks. You really have an opportunity to make your mark, create something new and grow here. As New Orleans grows in these new industries, I think we’re going to see more and more of that.”

-Brandy Christian, COO, Port of New Orleans

“Opportunities are as much driven by who you know in New Orleans as by what you know. You can accomplish a lot by picking up the phone and asking someone to get together. And when you do, you’re bound to run into someone else who can help you achieve your goal too. Developing and forging and nurturing relationships is how you prosper in this city.”

-Coleman Ridley, CEO, Business Council of Greater New Orleans & the River Region

“I’m very encouraged by the entrepreneurial spirit and the influx of talent into the city. And the barriers to entry are relatively low for entrepreneurs in New Orleans, unlike Austin or Portland where they’re so incredibly high.”

-Coleman Ridley, CEO, Business Council of Greater New Orleans & the River Region

“Young people are creating their own opportunities here. On the entrepreneurial side, they seem to be very able to attract their peers and to attract talent because of the considerable cultural appeal of New Orleans.”

-David Kerstein, President, Helis Oil & Gas Co., LLC

“The relationship between the more mature business community and the younger generation is emerging. I myself am making a very real effort to reach out to a younger community to make them feel more fully integrated into the community, so that as their businesses grow, they have a larger stake here. There’s a substantial group of emerging young entrepreneurs and business people who are interested in or becoming engaged in philanthropic and civic matters. It’s very encouraging and energizing. Among the more mature members of the business community, there’s a much more civic approach than we may have had in years past and that encourages me as well.”

-David Kerstein, President, Helis Oil & Gas Co., LLC

“New Orleans has such a good tech work environment. People are open and sharing, they’re interested in the success of others. It’s not the same in big markets - they feel hyper-competitive and it’s a war of attrition for funding.”

-Nick Jordan, Co-Founder and CEO, Smashing Boxes

“There’s such potential from a cultural perspective, especially in recruiting talent. You can’t replace the history, the arts, the music, the diversity of neighborhoods – each with its own personality. All the things that today’s workers love. It’s that “life” part of work-life balance that New Orleans does so well.”

-Nick Jordan, Co-Founder and CEO, Smashing Boxes

“New Orleans feels really on the upswing and I think it’s going to have more and more influence as s city. There’s an opportunity for way more business success – I can see it being one of the most significant cities in the South, a worldly city without being too, too big.”

-Nick Jordan, Co-Founder and CEO, Smashing Boxes

“New Orleans really feels on the upswing. I can see it becoming one of the most significant cities in the South. The key thing that’s missing here is a thriving economy and tons of jobs,” says Jordan. “But there’s a huge amount of commitment and collaboration to make the entrepreneurial system flourish. Bigger markets tend to feel hyper-competitive and there’s a war of attrition for funding. In New Orleans, people are very open and sharing, very interested in the success of others.”

-Nick Jordan, Co-Founder and CEO, Smashing Boxes

“We, as a company, believe that culture is what scales. Culture is what allows you to stay flexible, nimble, opportunistic, enables you to grow. In New Orleans we got that feeling in the culture immediately as we went around the city. People here have had to be adaptable for generations so it was an organic fit for us.”

-Nick Jordan, Co-Founder and CEO, Smashing Boxes

“In a city this size, the people who move the levers of power are the same as those necessary to entrepreneurs. We’re much closer to capital, to resources, to networks, to intellectual capacity in New Orleans than we likely would be elsewhere.”

-Courtney Williams, CEO, Torsh

“The people here have an amazing energy and friendly way that can only be understood when you visit. We’re proud to be part of the first wave of companies that will establish Louisiana as the next major high tech center.”

-Matt Findley, President, inXile Entertainment

“The combination of the creative atmosphere and the developing technology movement make New Orleans the perfect place for game development. Between those things, the difference in the cost of living compared to Southern California, and the welcoming attitude of everyone I’ve met, I was confident that this expansion would be a good step for us.”

-Matt Findley, President, inXile Entertainment

“What really excites me about New Orleans today is the number of mid-size and startup companies run by people who really care about the work they’re doing and the city they’re doing it in.”

-Lesli Harris, intellectual property attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“In New York, if you tell people you’re moving to New York, no one responds that they’re happy to have you. In New Orleans, when we’d tell people we were moving here, people thanked us.”

-Bryant York, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“New Orleans has got to be on the radar of anyone getting priced out of New York or San Francisco and values the things you value with age and maturity. Now people want to have a fuller life, and that’s possible here.”

-Bryant York, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“Doing business socially, like people do in New Orleans – there’s a greater degree of accountability and reliability than in a larger city. You have higher visibility in a small city like this – if you don’t play fair, word gets out. If you do, you can do great things.”

-Elizabeth York, Governance Specialist, NASDAQ

“The New Orleans community is like a fractal, you make one connection you get five more. I had a conversation with one firm while I was down here looking for a job and not only did they talk about their own firm, but they opened their networks to me. That would never happen in New York.

-Bryant York, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

New Orleans is a highly interconnected town. There’s a real graciousness in the way people are willing to help you. There’s a real pride here and an emphasis on encouraging folks to move here.”

-Bryant York, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“It’s not a big town, but it has an outsized influence in the national and international imagination. There’s a welcome and an opportunity to participate in the community that is impossible in other places.”

-Bryant York, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“New Orleans is unique. You can build something from nothing. And people here have a tendency to want to help you, whether you’re part of the incubator culture or working for a large company. If you get here and people see you want to be a legitimate part of the community, people will surround you to help you succeed.”

-Elizabeth York, Governance Specialist, NASDAQ

“If you’re willing to commit to this city, the city will commit to you.”

-Elizabeth York, Governance Specialist, NASDAQ

“New Orleans is one of the few American cities with its own language. And you need to learn this language, with all the historical and cultural influences and cross currents that have informed the social lifeblood we now get to experience. We get to learn that new language, and amazingly, the people who speak the language *like* watching you learn it and want to encourage you to learn it.”

-Bryant York, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“New Orleans presented itself to us at the perfect time for us. It’s a small city, with a better quality of life. We thought we’d have the opportunity for nonprofit work that felt meaningful and work hours that allowed us to do it.”

- Elizabeth York, Governance Specialist, NASDAQ and Bryant York, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“New York is full of tons of people with as excellent school credentials as I have, every bit as smart and hardworking, but comes down to who’s willing to sacrifice themselves the most to the firm or the company. In New Orleans, there’s a lot more green space, literally and metaphorically. There’s no entrenched hierarchy of people who’ve already paid their dues and who are going to make sure you pay yours.”

-Joshua Cox, attorney, Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Law Firm

“Quality of life matters to me, and it’s clear to me that quality of life matters to people here as much as professional opportunity does. I’ve lived in several cities and I can see it in the way people approach their jobs and their lives in New Orleans. People here prioritize things that add meaning to life.”

-Joshua Cox, attorney, Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Law Firm

“I’d say my choice to live here boils down to what you value. What my counterparts value is working for the most prestigious firm in New York and doing more prestigious, more complex work. I’m farther along in developing my skills as a lawyer, preparing to practice on my own than they are, despite being in Washington, DC or New York. After two degrees, why do I need to chase more prestige? It’s time to chase happiness.”

-Joshua Cox, attorney, Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Law Firm

“Every dollar I earn in New Orleans is worth more. I did the math – it’s more than double what the same dollar would get me in New York.”

-Joshua Cox, attorney, Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Law Firm

“Every day I go to work and I’m absolutely blown away. The strength and resilience of the kids in my school is unmatched anywhere else I’ve been. I consider it an extreme privilege to work with these kids. The vibrancy, the resilience of the people, the culture – this city completely blew me out of the water.”

-Kelly Cox, school social worker, Carver Collegiate Academy

“It comes down to value and values. I did the math – every dollar I earn in New Orleans is worth more than double what the same dollar would get me in New York. And you can just be happier here.”

-Joshua Cox, attorney, Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Law Firm

“Here, we work hard. Achievement really motivates us and we want to be the best at what we do. But we want to enjoy our lives, the people we’re around, the traditions. In New Orleans, you don’t have to make a choice between these two important things. It’s a city that values work-life balance.”

-Kelly Cox, school social worker, Carver Collegiate Academy

“Being so close to people and having a chance to spend time with them are things I wouldn’t trade for anything and we couldn’t get that a lot of other places. We want to feel part of building something and feel we’re excelling at what we do. That’s really possible here.”

-Kelly Cox, school social worker, Carver Collegiate Academy

“New Orleans cultivates people to be leaders. That’s facilitated by being thrust to go get your clients, go do your work, go create your practice. The same is true for startups here.”

-Lesli Harris, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“I would say to anyone who hasn’t been here before or hasn’t been since Katrina – you should come visit. A lot has changed in a very positive way. We’re still building those places that were heavily damaged, but the city is really vibrant and there are very exciting things happening in New Orleans.”

-Lesli Harris, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm

“If you want to cultivate a business, there is a system and a network for doing that here. Once you get into it, you’ll be supported and you can really get to know people who can help you. There are just two degrees of separation in New Orleans. It may take only two phone calls to call the mayor in an administration trying to push for good growth in the city.”

-Lesli Harris, attorney, Stone Pigman Law Firm