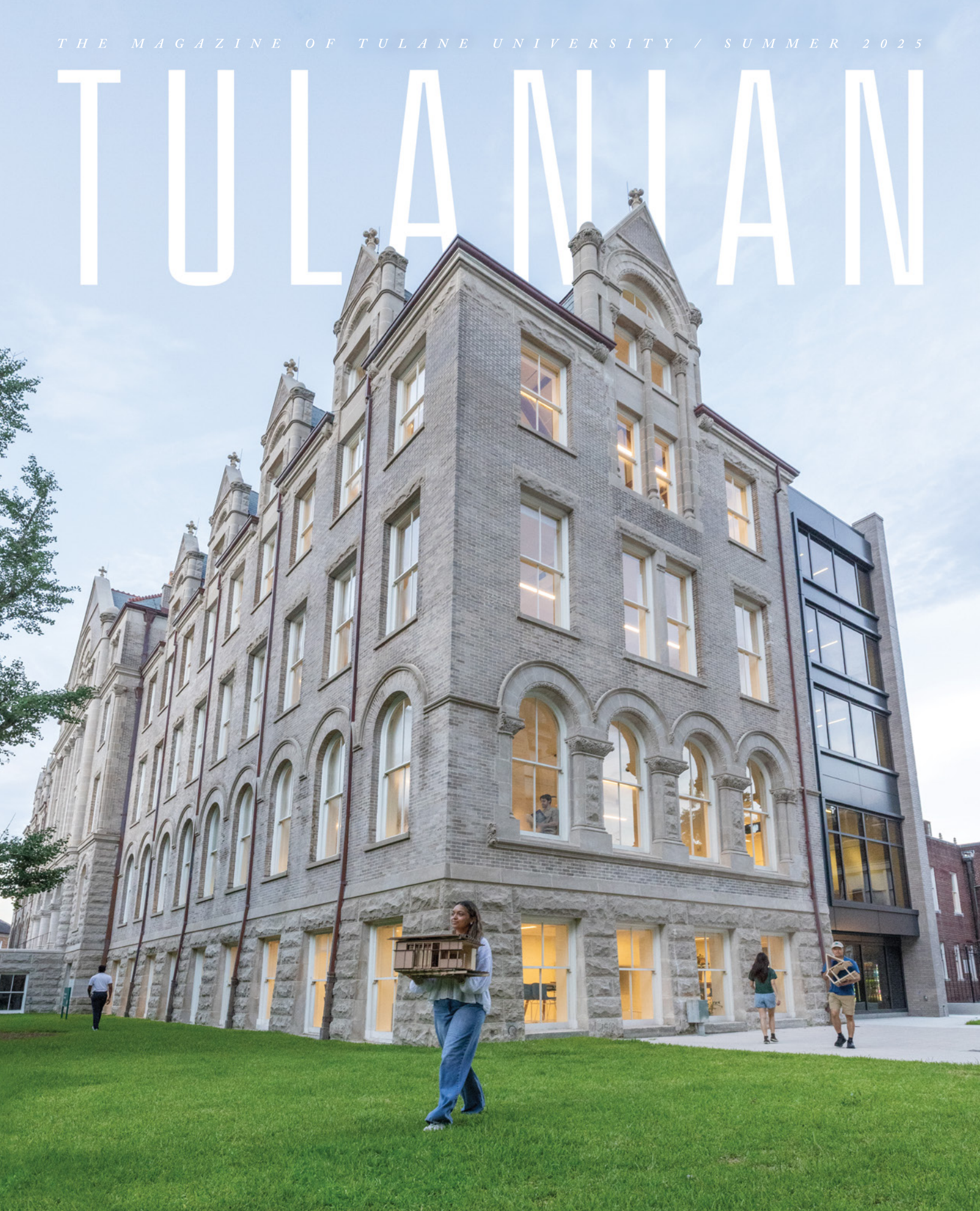
THE MAGAZINE OF TULANE UNIVERSITY / SUMMER 2025

TULANIAN



SUNSHINE SEASON

Dappled light filters through the oak trees surrounding Pocket Park, a favorite gathering spot for Tulanians on the uptown campus.

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

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TULANIAN

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DEPARTMENTS

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Front cover: Lancer Lan and Camryn Francis in front of Richardson Memorial Hall. Photo by Kenny Lass

TULANE UNIVERSITY

Up First

SWEET MOMENTS
Students beat the heat with artisanal treats from Big O's Original Pops at a popsicle pop-in.

CULTURE OF CONNECTION Pictured on page 3: The Crescent City Connection and the Caesars Superdome were aglow in green for Tulane's Commencement weekend. Below, top: Tulane's annual Wave of Green Day of Service on April 16 embodies the university's motto: non sibi sed suis — not for one's self, but for one's own. Below, bottom: Generations of Tulanians came together during the Alumni Family Graduation Celebration on May 15.

PHOTOS BY KENNY LASS, TYLER KAUFMAN AND THEO MITCHELL

Amelia Manning Named Dean of Tulane University School of Professional Advancement

Amelia Manning, former chief operating officer at Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), has been named Dean of Tulane University's School of Professional Advancement (SoPA), effective Aug. 1. Manning brings more than two decades of leadership experience in higher education, including an extensive track record of innovation and student-focused growth. At SNHU, she led strategic efforts that more than doubled student enrollment and implemented advanced systems for student support and retention.

"Amelia's career has been defined by a clear commitment to understanding what students need to thrive," Tulane President Michael A. Fitts said. "We are thrilled to welcome her to Tulane, where her leadership will help SoPA reach more students and support them in achieving their academic and professional goals."

Manning will lead SoPA's efforts to expand access to high-quality flexible academic programs that serve working adults, military-connected students and lifelong learners. The school offers in-person and online options for bachelor's degree completion, graduate study and professional certificates across a wide range of applied fields.

During her tenure at SNHU, Manning enhanced student success by developing internal capabilities in predictive analytics, course design and faculty development. She led the implementation of a new student information system. She oversaw the upgrade of customer relationship and learning management platforms, enabling more personalized and data-informed student support that contributed to increased student engagement, higher retention rates and growth in re-enrollment.

Manning will succeed Iliana Kwaske, associate dean for academic affairs and senior professor of practice, who has served as interim dean since January 2024 following the departure of former Dean Suri Duitch.

LOUISIANA PROMISE

Tulane University President Michael A. Fitts created Louisiana Promise in 2020 as a signature program to retain the best and brightest students in Louisiana and to make a Tulane education more affordable for students from the university's home state.

Through the program, Tulane provides grants and scholarships to make up the difference between what Louisiana families earning under $100,000 per year can pay and the cost of attending Tulane.

Tulane's Class of 2028 includes:

250+

FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS FROM LOUISIANA

Hailing from **32** parishes

Representing **14%** of the class

Up **10%** from last year

2x

the percentage of students from the start of Louisiana Promise, a possible university record achieved in just 5 years.

Q&A WITH COLETTE HIRSTIUS

BY MOLLY McCRORY

CONTRIBUTIONS BY KATE LORIO

Colette Hirstius (SSE '96), a Tulane alum who was recently appointed president of Shell USA, speaks about the future of energy and how her education shaped her work.

What role do you see Louisiana playing in the future of energy, and how does your work help shape that vision?
Louisiana has been at the forefront of energy for more than a century. As the industry evolves, we are committed to delivering affordable and reliable energy today while investing in lower carbon options for now and the future. Shell recognizes Louisiana's pivotal role in our industry and, in 2023, recommitted to basing our Gulf of America business operations in New Orleans. My goal is to create the next generation of energy right here alongside the partners and communities we've worked hand in hand with for decades.

In your view, what role can universities like Tulane play in shaping the future of energy?
Tulane has always impressed me because its leadership embraces a forward-thinking, multidisciplinary approach to learning and problem-solving — that is crucial to both our business operations and in preparing our future workforce. The energy industry looks to our partners, especially our partners in education, to help discover the next wave of innovation and to prepare future generations of engineers, geologists, commercial advisors and frontline workers to apply this same integrated mindset every day across our operations.

How did your experience at Tulane influence your approach to leadership and innovation in the energy sector?
I was born and raised in New Orleans. For me, attending Tulane offered the ability to receive a world-class education while staying close to my family. Walking onto campus, even within my hometown, opened a new world for me, of different ways of thinking and a comprehensive approach to problem-solving. I honed my skills in respectfully challenging others to improve concepts and collaborating with peers from different disciplines. These rich experiences were the foundation of the leadership I embody today. It's these same skills that I believe are vital to solving the dual challenge of meeting today's growing energy needs while adapting the entire energy system for tomorrow.

Why is multidisciplinary collaboration important in advancing the energy systems of tomorrow?
Over the years, one thing that has become clear to me is that the energy industry's most pressing issues cannot be solved in silos or by defaulting to our old ways of working. The complex and critical challenges facing our industry and our world require productive and ambitious collaboration from a wide variety of stakeholders and perspectives. I'm glad to say that since I joined Shell in 2003, there is now a greater appreciation for breaking down barriers across our functions and disciplines to work together to achieve our larger purpose. And our teams and businesses are better for it.

What is a misconception you think people have about the future of energy?
There's a persistent false dichotomy about energy and how it will be consumed in the years to come. There is no doubt we need to aggressively decarbonize our energy system, and the future relies on our ability to do so. This energy transition will occur over multiple decades. A complete shift from fossil fuels over the next 5, 10 or even 20 years would be devastating to the way of life we enjoy today and cost-prohibitive for most people. Our focus should be on ultimate energy efficiency within our current energy system, for both consumers and producers. In parallel, we must continue to invest in mitigating emissions today, with options like Carbon Capture and Sequestration, and investing in renewable infrastructure for tomorrow. Hydrocarbon production and development are a vital part of today's energy system, and our production from the Gulf has among the lowest greenhouse gas intensity in the world. We will always look for ways to further reduce our carbon intensity and improve the energy efficiency of our products and customer offerings.

What excites you most about the direction the energy world is heading?
For me, watching the new age of energy develop right here in New Orleans is extremely fulfilling. Whether it's advancing the latest technologies, helping to uplift innovative entrepreneurs or preparing the future workforce, Southeast Louisiana is at the forefront of the energy transition, and there are limitless opportunities for our region that go along with that.

2025 TEACHING AWARDS

BY BARRI BRONSTON

Tulane honored dedicated faculty members with university-wide teaching awards during the Unified Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, May 17, 2025, in the Caesars Superdome.

RANDY SPARKS
Clement Chambers Benenson Professor in the Department of History in the School of Liberal Arts

President's Awards for Excellence in Professional and Graduate Teaching

A member of the Tulane faculty for 25 years, Randy Sparks has advised dozens of graduate students, brought clarity and insight to difficult topics and published extensively. He also oversaw a complete revitalization of the history graduate program. One student described him as "a tremendous lecturer, a studious scholar and a most supportive advisor" who "provided a warm and welcoming environment."

CATHERINE O'CONNOR
Professor in the School of Social Work

President's Awards for Excellence in Professional and Graduate Teaching

Catherine O'Connor is lauded for putting her students first, building cross-disciplinary collaborations with faculty from other schools and creating opportunities for experiential learning and leadership. A doctoral student cited her "vibrant approach to teaching" and "the emotional support she provides without hesitation." A former student and recent graduate wrote: "I have received and continue to benefit from [Dr. O'Connor's] excellent, rigorous and compassionate teaching and mentorship."

KATHERINE RAYMOND
Senior Professor of Practice in the Department of Biomedical Engineering in the School of Science and Engineering

Suzanne and Stephen Weiss Presidential Fellowship for Undergraduate Education

Receiving the Weiss award marks a full-circle moment for Katherine Raymond. In 1999, she was among the bachelor's degree graduates when Tulane held its inaugural Unified Commencement ceremony. She ultimately earned her PhD from Tulane and joined the faculty of her alma mater. One student noted that "Dr. Raymond has made such a positive impact on every single student."

JACQUELYNE THONI HOWARD
Professor of Practice in the Connolly Alexander Institute for Data Science

Suzanne and Stephen Weiss Presidential Fellowship for Undergraduate Education

An interdisciplinary scholar whose expertise stretches from history to data literacy, Jacquelyne Thoni Howard impressed the selection committee with her pedagogical engagement and her dedication to meeting students' needs to achieve better learning outcomes. A faculty colleague wrote that "she goes above and beyond consistently for students." A student wrote: "Every member of the Tulane community is indebted to wonderful teachers like Dr. Howard."

PHOTOS BY KENNY LASS

Researchers Brady Youngquist (left) and Tony Hu (right) introduced a handheld tuberculosis diagnostic device that can detect TB from blood, sputum or saliva in under an hour — no lab infrastructure required.

NEW SMARTPHONE-SIZED DEVICE CAN TEST FOR TUBERCULOSIS

BY ANDREW J. YAWN

Tulane University researchers have developed a first-of-its-kind handheld diagnostic device that can deliver rapid, accurate tuberculosis (TB) diagnoses in under an hour, according to a study published in Science Translational Medicine.

The smartphone-sized, battery-powered lab-in-tube assay (LIT) provides a cost-effective tool that can improve TB diagnoses, particularly in resource-limited rural areas where health care facilities and lab equipment are less accessible. Over 90% of new TB cases occur in low- and middle-income countries.

This point-of-care device is the first to detect *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* DNA in saliva, in addition to blood and sputum samples. Saliva is easier to obtain than blood or sputum, and the ability to non-invasively obtain samples that yield accurate results is critical for successfully testing children. More than 1 million children fall ill with TB each year, and more than half go undiagnosed or unreported, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Tuberculosis is the world's deadliest infectious disease, infecting an estimated 10 million people a year. The current resurgence of TB cases underscores the urgent need for effective, accessible diagnostic tools.

"TB remains a critical public health concern in low-income countries, and diagnosis using a cheap, simple test like we've developed is needed not only to treat patients with TB but prevent further spread of the disease," said senior author Tony Hu, PhD, Weatherhead Presidential Chair in Biotechnology Innovation and director of the Tulane Center for Cellular and Molecular Diagnostics. "An estimated 4.2 million TB cases were undiagnosed or unreported in 2021, largely due to limitations and costs of testing in areas with high disease burden."

Current testing devices are larger, expensive and require either extensive on-site technology or shipment of samples to a laboratory elsewhere. The LIT test is designed to offer a low-cost TB testing solution, with each device costing less than $800 and less than $3 per test. In comparison, another commonly used TB testing device costs at minimum $19,000, and the cost per test is around $100 in certain countries.

In the study, the LIT device demonstrated high accuracy in testing blood samples from children in the Dominican Republic, outperforming the more expensive machine — 81% sensitivity compared to 68% — and meeting the WHO criteria for TB diagnostics. Blood serum-based testing — testing that utilizes the liquid part of drawn blood after coagulation — is particularly important in children and patients living with HIV who often cannot produce sputum. The LIT assay results suggest that blood samples could be used to monitor TB treatment progress, as they closely align with the improvement in patient symptoms.

"This system reduces the expertise and equipment required for TB diagnosis which is essential for point-of-care application," said lead author, Brady Youngquist, a graduate student in the Tulane University Center for Cellular and Molecular Diagnostics. "Saliva-based testing for TB is particularly exciting because it can be easily obtained in all patients and can be used for portable testing without the need for blood draw. And sputum is often not produced in children and patients living with HIV, a common co-infection."

This study was featured on the cover of Science Translational Medicine.

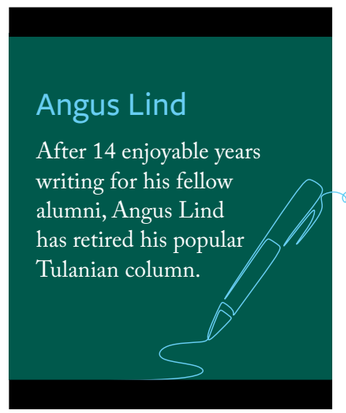
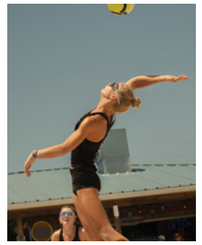


PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

STUDENT-ATHLETES WHO GRADUATED WITH HONORS

Through the generous support of Tulane alumnus Don Peters and his wife, Lora, every year Tulane Athletics recognizes student-athletes who graduate with honors. Their names are displayed on a "Graduated with Honors" wall in the Don and Lora Peters Academic Center. Don Peters graduated from Tulane in 1981 and has been a longtime supporter of the university.


Chun Jie K. Ricci


Emily Heintzelman


Raquel Shulman


Laura Fiabane


Samantha Green


Macy Turcotte


Emma Simons


Elizabeth Spearman


Jonathan Kahn


Rachel Casebolt


Katherine B. Theis


Patricija Ozolina

Chun Jie K. Ricci
Sailing
BA: Sociology
BA: Communication
summa cum laude

Emily Heintzelman
Beach Volleyball
BS: Exercise Science
summa cum laude

Raquel Shulman
Sailing
BA: English
BA: Sociology
magna cum laude

Laura Fiabane
Women's Volleyball
BS: Chemistry
magna cum laude

Samantha Green
Beach Volleyball
BS: Cellular and Molecular Biology
magna cum laude

Macy Turcotte
Women's Track & Field and Cross Country
BS: Mathematics
BS: Economics
cum laude

Emma Simons
Women's Track & Field
BS: Economics
cum laude

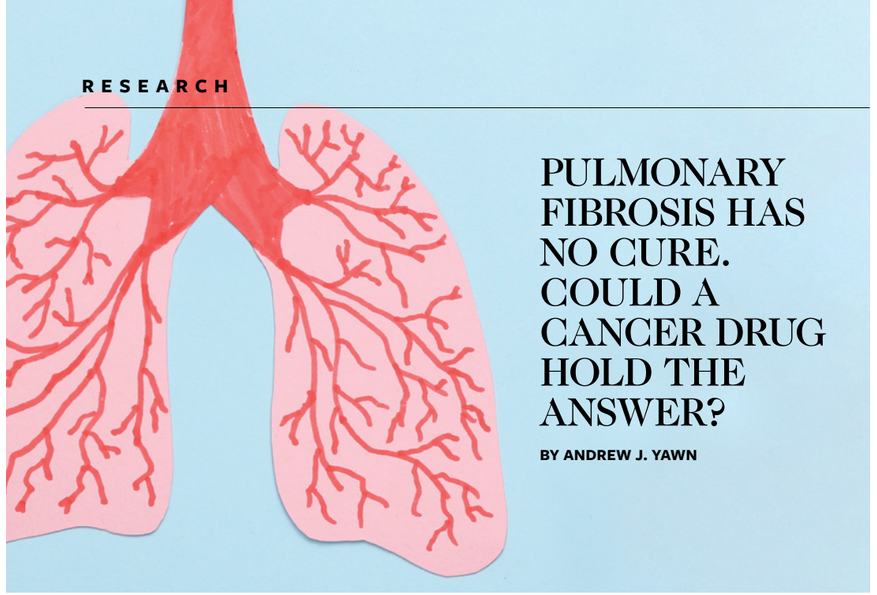
Elizabeth Spearman
Sailing
BS: Psychology
cum laude

Jonathan Kahn
Football
BA: Philosophy
BA: Homeland Security Studies
cum laude

Rachel Casebolt
Women's Swimming & Diving
BA: Political Science
cum laude

Katherine B. Theis
Women's Tennis
BS: Psychology
cum laude

Patricija Ozolina
Women's Track & Field
BS: Economics
BA: Health and Wellness
cum laude



PULMONARY FIBROSIS HAS NO CURE. COULD A CANCER DRUG HOLD THE ANSWER?

BY ANDREW J. YAWN

Researchers at Tulane University have identified a potential new way to treat idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF), a deadly and currently incurable lung disease that affects more than 3 million people worldwide.

IPF is rapidly progressive and causes scarring in the lungs, making it difficult to breathe. Approximately 50% of patients die within three years of diagnosis, and current treatments can only slow the disease — not stop or reverse it.

In a study published in the Journal of Clinical Investigation, Tulane scientists found that an FDA-approved cancer drug may help the immune system clear out the damaged cells that cause the lung scarring, potentially restoring lung function in patients with the disease.

In healthy lungs, specialized cells called fibroblasts help repair lung tissue. But in people with IPF, some fibroblasts and nearby epithelial cells stop functioning properly. These so-called "senescent" cells no longer divide or die as they should. Instead, they build up and contribute to stiff, scarred lungs.

Tulane researchers discovered that these senescent cells appear to accumulate when the immune system's natural ability to remove them is blocked. The culprit: a protein called CTLA4, which acts as an emergency brake on immune system activity.

By using ipilimumab — an immunotherapy drug currently used to treat various cancers — the researchers were able to block CTLA4 in mice. This released the "brakes" on certain immune cells called T cells, reactivating their ability to clear out the senescent fibroblasts. As a result, the mice showed significantly improved lung tissue regeneration and reduced scarring.

"The CTLA4 protein normally functions to prevent excessive inflammation by blocking overactive T cells," said senior author Dr. Victor Thannickal, professor and Harry B. Greenberg Chair of Medicine at Tulane University's John W. Deming Department of Medicine. "Too much of this 'blocker protein' may result in losing the 'good' inflammation that is needed to remove senescent cells. What we're doing is blocking the blocker."

The researchers zeroed in on CTLA4 as a potential therapeutic target when they analyzed both human and mouse IPF lung tissue and found unusually high levels of CTLA4 on the T cells in the areas where scarring was most prevalent.

Mice that received ipilimumab showed significantly improved lung repair ability and recovered faster than mice that did not receive the drug.

"This opens up an entirely new direction for potential treatment of IPF," said lead author Santu Yadav, PhD, assistant professor of medicine at the Tulane University School of Medicine. "Instead of using drugs to kill senescent cells, we are re-activating our own immune system to clear them out."

More research is needed to determine the efficacy of drugs that target CTLA4 or other so-called "checkpoint proteins" to rejuvenate the immune system. A primary concern is determining a safe dosing strategy that allows for the immune system to attack senescent cells without causing harmful levels of inflammation.

IPF is a disease of aging and is rarely seen before age 50. These findings also offer hope that this approach could work for other similar aging-related diseases.

Tulane University has the best graduation ceremonies I've attended. They know how to make their graduates feel EXTRA special
patrice_strongerthanlife_green

NOLA Book Fest at Tulane has easily become my favorite Louisiana festival. **The whole vibe is amazing. @nolabookfest definitely has rizz**
Muse Lotus Blossom

Looks like the family legacy continues. Guess all those years of Rick casually mentioning how amazing Tulane was finally worked.
5funmiles

It's official. Henry is going to Tulane on a Presidential Scholarship as part of their Honors Program. We just got back from an awesome family trip to New Orleans to participate in **Destination Tulane.**
aisforaction

ALTMAN PROGRAM CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND BUSINESS

BY MARK MIESTER

Above and on opposite page: Altman Scholars explore the world together, from Vietnam to South America to Europe, as part of a rigorous dual degree program.

"It's truly unlike any other academic experience at Tulane University," says Casey Love, "and, I might argue, at any other university in the United States."

Love, senior professor of practice in political science and associate dean for global education, is referring to the Altman Program in International Studies and Business, the dual degree program combining liberal arts, business, non-English language and studying abroad that graduated its 10th cohort of students this year.

For Love and Senior Professor of Practice in Finance Myke Yest, the program's founding co-directors, it was a milestone worth celebrating.

Since the program's launch, Altman Scholars have studied abroad in 30 different countries that speak eight different target languages. But even more impressive than the graduates' international adventures are their employment outcomes. Graduates have gone on to work for top companies like Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Amazon and Google as well as to the State Department, the Federal Reserve, leading foundations and non-governmental organizations. Eleven graduates have received Fulbright Scholarships, six have earned Boren Awards, and others have received prestigious, nationally competitive scholarships including Eisenhower, Marshall, Gilman and Rangel.

"The world really opens up for these students," Yest says. "They can go into traditional business, or they can go into policy, think tanks, nonprofits or graduate school."

The program was established in 2011 through a gift from Jeffrey Altman (B '88), founder and CEO of the investment advisory firm Owl Creek Asset Management, who envisioned a new kind of program, one that would prepare students for the increasingly interconnected world he was seeing in business.

Ana Lopez, a revered professor in the Department of Communication at the School of Liberal Arts and associate provost for faculty affairs who passed away in 2023, was charged with creating the program from the ground up. She turned to Love and Yest for their expertise. "Ana was our mentor, and the Altman Program is a big part of her legacy at Tulane," said Yest.

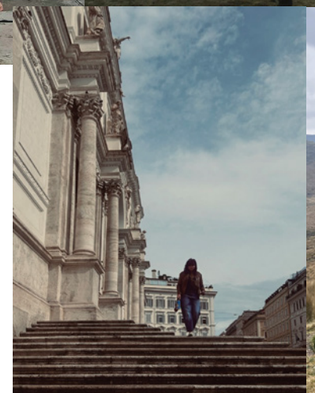
In keeping with Altman's vision, the program focuses extensively on the development of intercultural competence, including the ability to communicate across lines of cultural difference.

The curriculum isn't for the faint of heart. Altman Scholars earn two Tulane degrees — a BA in liberal arts and a BSM in business — and spend their entire junior year abroad taking courses in their target language. They also spend a month at the end of their freshman year studying in a Global South country. This year, the class traveled to Vietnam.

While programs at other universities combine liberal arts, business and studying abroad, Altman differs in one key respect: Students are admitted in cohorts of 20, and they remain connected to their cohort throughout the program.

"The cohort aspect is fundamentally the most important and distinctive part of the program," says Love. "That togetherness fosters a special bond between students. They develop a deep level of respect for one another as members of this intellectual community," she says. "There's a high degree of trust among students."

"Studying abroad even for one semester is really challenging, but when you have this kind of support system, you just go for it, and you're the better person for it," says Altman graduate Abbey Hochreiner (SLA '25, B '25), who joined J.P. Morgan in June as an equity research analyst. "You have so much more self-confidence and willingness to try new things. Yes, it's difficult academically — you're going to have to work hard — but what you get out of it is 1,000% worth it."



A BEACON OF INNOVATION + DESIGN

RICHARDSON MEMORIAL HALL REOPENS

After a transformative renovation, the Tulane School of Architecture and Built Environment returns home to a state-of-the-art facility that blends historic charm with modern sustainability, while showcasing the creativity of its growing student body.

BY BARRI BRONSTON

PHOTO © ALAN KARCHMER

From the Favrot Lobby to the Gallery, from the Powell Classroom to Thomson Hall, Richardson Memorial Hall was abuzz with activity as a flurry of students, professors and visitors marveled at the annual showcase of student work in architecture, design, historic preservation, real estate development and social innovation.

The presentations, which were on view April 17 to May 8, were part of the Spring 2025 Final Reviews and Exhibition, a signature event — and for many, a graduation requirement — of the Tulane University School of Architecture and Built Environment.

Projects ran the gamut from a subway station redesign in New York City to a multigenerational approach whereby communities are built to be accessible and welcoming to people of all ages. There were plans for an urban hostel, a mixed-use development, a shared urban kitchen and multiple projects incorporating clean energy, flood prevention and natural cooling solutions.

What set this year's exhibition apart from those of previous years was the reimagined setting in which the work was displayed — a thoroughly modern Richardson Memorial Hall. Though part of the same historic building, the space now boasts a completely refreshed look, thanks to a recently completed four-year renovation and expansion.

The project is part of the unprecedented momentum Tulane is experiencing in every aspect of university life, including academic and research excellence, record-breaking admissions and exponential physical growth. Highlights of the latter include The Village student residences complex, Mussafer Hall; The Malkin Sacks Commons; the Goldring/Woldenberg Business Complex expansion; and Steven and Jann Paul Hall, the new home of the School of Science and Engineering.

The new Richardson Memorial Hall introduced the school's first-ever review rooms, dedicated gallery space, new seminar rooms, a fully restored lobby and lecture hall, and much more — offering a revitalized environment that enhances both student presentations and experience.

"This beautiful space will shape all those who teach and learn under its roof for generations to come," Tulane President Michael A. Fitts said. "And then, in turn, these Tulanians will go on to design buildings and spaces that literally shape the future of our world."

He called the building a reflection of Tulane as a whole, a place that embodies the university's mission to drive innovation through collaboration, interdisciplinarity and societal impact.

A much anticipated homecoming

Analiese De Saw, president of the Tulane School of Architecture and Built Environment's Graduate Student Government, used one word to describe the feeling of students, faculty and staff as they returned to Richardson

Clockwise from above: The transformation of Richardson Memorial Hall includes 17,000 square feet of additions to the back of the building. The second floor's original spacious lobby with a grand Y-shaped staircase has been fully restored. Students prepare for final projects in one of Richardson Memorial Hall's many renovated studio spaces.

Memorial the week of March 10-15 after spending the past four years in temporary buildings on the Newcomb Quad: "elation."

"The smiles that appear around corridors and in the classrooms are unmistakable, and infectious in the most beautiful way," said De Saw, who received her Master of Architecture degree in May. "For some undergraduates, their journeys as students began in this building, and they have been waiting years to go back. Their energy is contagious and can be seen on the faces of our professors and administrators."

Originally constructed to house the Tulane School of Medicine, Richardson Memorial was built in 1908 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. With its brick and limestone façade, the five-story, 45,000-square-foot structure has undergone modest improvements over the years, but nothing on the magnitude of the latest project.

The transformation includes 17,000 square feet of additions to the back of the building along with studios, review spaces, classrooms, offices and the Gallery to showcase both student and faculty work.

The first floor features expanded space for the school's Fabrication Labs, renovated faculty and staff offices, a food vending area and a graduate student lounge. The second floor's original spacious lobby with a grand Y-shaped staircase has been fully restored, and the school's main lecture hall on the second floor has been updated for major events, invited speakers and large gatherings.

In addition to the review rooms and dedicated gallery space, the second through fifth floors feature six renovated large studio rooms and three newly built seminar rooms. Those rooms can also function as pin-up spaces for reviews, a critical pedagogical tool used across the school's academic programs in architecture, design, real estate development, historic preservation, sustainable urbanism, landscape architecture and social innovation.

Robin Forman, provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs, lauded the design and construction of the building, saying it accomplishes exactly what school leaders envisioned.

"We've kept the elegant fine details of its original construction — those irreplaceable cypress wood windows, the gorgeous limestone and brick façade, and we've drawn upon all the strengths of our school including design, preservation, innovation and sustainability to create a living laboratory where students can experiment, collaborate and bring their ideas to life," Forman said.

Iñaki Alday, dean of the Tulane School of Architecture and Built Environment, said the new Richardson Memorial fulfills a decades-long dream of faculty, staff and alumni. He called the building "a place for creativity and community," where the next generation of architects, designers and innovators can collaborate and experiment in an incomparable and transformative setting.

"The renovated facility has exceptional studio spaces, where students and faculty spend dozens of hours each week working together, state-of-the-art Fabrication Labs to think with our hands, meeting spaces to collaborate, great classrooms with very refined technology and a variety of other working spaces," Alday said.

Dedication and donor support

While the building reopened for classes on March 10, the official dedication and ribbon cutting took place a few weeks later under the giant oaks of Gibson Quad in front of Richardson Memorial Hall. Before a large crowd of faculty, staff, alumni and students, Fitts expressed gratitude to the generous donors who made spaces like the H. Mortimer Favrot Jr. Lobby, the Josephine Lobby, the Fabrication Labs, studios, classrooms, review spaces and offices possible.

"The length of the list (of donors) is a testament to the incredible community of the School of Architecture and Built Environment," Fitts said.

The list included Henry and Pat Shane for the Shane Studio, Rick Powell for the Powell Classroom and Robert Dean Jr. and Robert A. Epstein for the Dean & Epstein Digital Fabrication Lab.

"This beautiful space will shape all those who teach and learn under its roof for generations to come."

The new Richardson Memorial Hall introduced the school's first-ever review rooms, dedicated gallery space and new seminar rooms.

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT): © ALAN KARCHMER, CATHERINE RESTREPO AND KENNY LASS

Dean, who graduated in 1968 and has been involved in the school both as a faculty member and a member of the Dean's Advisory Board, has fond memories of the old building, having been in the first class of architecture students to occupy it.

"We pursued our fifth-year thesis studies on the north end of the fourth floor in the wonderful dormer-lit space that is still there," he said. "As an instructor, I loved the building. I conducted most of my lecture classes in the large hall on the main floor. The studio spaces were almost ideal for teaching design studies. There were wonderful classrooms and an incredible two-story space on the third floor that was ideal for conducting design juries. The library space was also spectacular."

"Small renovations over the years kept the building functional for decades after I left," he continued, "but as time went on, it was definitely time for a major renovation and additions to accommodate the expanded pedagogy and larger student body."

Henry Shane, who graduated from the Tulane School of Architecture in 1961 and is one of Jefferson Parish's most prominent real estate developers, said he wouldn't be where he is today without the education he received at Tulane.

"My education at Tulane was foundational to my successful and rewarding career, and it is therefore a true honor to contribute to the renovation and expansion of Richardson Memorial Hall," Shane said. "I can never fully express my gratitude for the education I received at Tulane and the dedication of the professors who guided me through my studies. It is my hope that my contribution to this project will help inspire and equip future architectural success stories."

Designing with sustainability in mind

Trapolin-Peer Architects of New Orleans led the Richardson Memorial Hall project, with Broadmoor Construction serving as the builders. In the design of the building, one of the main objectives was to blend historic preservation with modern sustainability practices. The building is LEED certified at the Silver level, which means the construction has met certain standards related to energy and water efficiency, material selection, indoor environmental quality and more. LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the world's most widely used green building rating system.

"As someone studying sustainable real estate development, I especially appreciate the building's LEED Silver certification, which represents Tulane's commitment to sustainable design," said Lawanda Jackson, who received a Master of Sustainable Real Estate Development in May. "This project represents Tulane's investment in climate-conscious design, adaptive reuse and sustainable urbanism, all focal to our studies. It's not just symbolic. This space allows us as students to truly live, work and learn within an environment that puts those values into practice."

> "Students are excited to be able to be a part of this milestone. To finally be able to present projects on real walls in spaces that are meant for pin-ups and reviews is an exciting thing for students."

Byron Mouton, Lacey Senior Professor of Practice, faculty liaison on the project and a School of Architecture alumnus, said the renovation successfully balances historic preservation with modern updates, creating a space where the old and new can co-exist.

"It's proof that we practice what we preach," Mouton said. "The school is getting a great product. The project does a great job of preserving what was worth preserving, while bringing it into the 21st century."

That was a priority for faculty and students, who through surveys offered suggestions and ideas for the renovation. In addition, faculty designers collaborated with architects on the design of specific spaces.

With the building open 24 hours a day, having late-night access to food was also high on the priority list. So, a self-serve market offering snacks, sandwiches and drinks was included. The design also features circadian-aware lighting, a design approach that mimics natural daylight cycles, as well as what architects refer to as "enhanced wayfinding" with multiple means of circulation.

Alexa Trapani, who will graduate in 2026 with a bachelor's degree in architecture, said she is thrilled to be in the building. She and many other students began their first year at Tulane in one of the temporary spaces.

"Students are excited to be able to be a part of this milestone," she said. "To finally be able to present projects on real walls in spaces that are meant for pin-ups and reviews is an exciting thing for students. The morale boost that the new building offers will benefit studio culture and make students want to spend more time in studio together."

Students are also pleased to have a centralized location for fabrication. The school's Fabrication Labs is a network of shops and labs where students and faculty can use advanced tools and machines to design, prototype and build physical models and components. The labs serve as hands-on workshops where digital design meets physical production.

"We have been sharing several of our resources with Tulane's theater department, which we have been extremely grateful for," Trapani said. "But it will be really beneficial for students to finally have a centralized location and easier access to all the wonderful fabrication resources that the school has to offer."

A fitting finale

Kris Smith, who graduated in May with a bachelor's degree in architecture, said she is thrilled for current and future students.

"I think the building that an architecture school is housed in at any university is representative of the university's investment in the architecture program," she said. "Hopefully the renovation and being back in the building signals to prospective students that the Tulane School of Architecture and Built Environment is reestablishing its presence on campus."

That growth is already being felt, primarily due to the large incoming architecture classes and the addition of programs such as real estate development, landscape architecture and engineering, social innovation and sustainable urbanism. Since the renovation began, enrollment is up by more than 700 students.

"Preparing for our return, the school has multiplied its breadth and size in this brief period of enormous intensity," Alday said at the dedication ceremony. "We left four years ago with 280 students, and we have come back with more than 1,000, including undergraduate majors and minors, and graduate students."

De Saw was one of those students. "I am happy to end my journey as a grad student in the new building," De Saw said. "This was one of the outcomes the students really wanted for the end of this year, and we were able to coordinate with staff to make this a reality."

Jackson agreed: "It's been enriching. The building itself is a living example of what we study: preservation, sustainability and design that serve both people and the planet. It's a space that inspires, challenges and prepares us to carry those values into the real world."

The first floor of Richardson Memorial Hall features expanded space for the school's Fabrication Labs, which provide students with opportunities to enrich their three-dimensional design explorations while developing their education in fabrication technologies. Opposite page: The renovated home of the School of Architecture and Built Environment includes space for students to hone their design skills and learn through lectures.

PHOTOS © KENNY LASS

PHOTO © ALAN KARCHMER

A collaboration between Tulane professor Mara Baumgarten Force and restaurateurs Alon and Emily Shaya highlights the richness of Holocaust survivors' lives before the war.

BY ELIZABETH LAMBERT

A Recipe for Remembrance

Dining on a meal of roast turkey, potato circles, semolina sticks and walnut cream cake, Steven Fenves marveled at the spread before him. "What I tasted was really terrific," said the 93-year-old Auschwitz survivor, musing over the redolent flavors. "The semolina sticks were all very authentic."

Fenves had stepped back in time, savoring the taste of his mother's recipes for the first time in 80 years. The experience reconnected him to his childhood in Yugoslavia and awakened memories of a happy life before it was torn apart by World War II.

Collected in a tattered, cloth-bound ledger book, the recipes were almost lost forever. Rescued by the family's cook in May 1944 as Fenves, his sister and their parents were deported to concentration camps, the recipe book likely would have remained a dusty artifact in the collection of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum if not for the work of Emily Shaya (B '06, B '13), her husband, chef Alon Shaya, and their friend Mara Baumgarten Force, professor of practice at the A. B. Freeman School of Business at Tulane University.

Their discovery of the recipe book in 2019 set in motion an inspirational journey that has reenergized Fenves and put his family's long-lost recipes back on dinner tables. The Shayas and Force dubbed their effort Rescued Recipes.

"Generations of family histories and family traditions were obliterated during the Holocaust," says Force, whose grandparents were Holocaust survivors. "This project reanimates and gives life to that past."

As Director of New Projects at Pomegranate Hospitality, the restaurant group she owns with Alon, Emily Shaya sits at the helm of an organization that has garnered local and national accolades. In 2015, Alon won the James Beard Award for Best Chef in the South, and in 2016, he won the James Beard Award for Best New Restaurant in America.

Beyond their culinary success, the Shayas are also involved in a host of public service activities, including partnering with local nonprofits to educate young culinary workers and donating thousands of dollars to local charities.

"We can't just be off by ourselves," Emily says of their service activities. "It's really important for us to have a relationship with the New Orleans community."

FENVES PHOTOS COURTESY U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

Emily's relationship with New Orleans began in 2002 when she arrived from Calhoun, Georgia, as a first-year student at Tulane University. After graduating in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science in Management, she landed a job with Woodward Interests, a New Orleans-based development company.

Overseeing real estate projects may seem a far cry from managing restaurants, but Emily drew on that experience when she entered the hospitality industry. In 2017, she and Alon, whom she married in 2012, founded Pomegranate Hospitality. A year later they opened two modern Israeli restaurants: Saba in uptown New Orleans and Safta in Denver. "Really, those restaurants were real estate development projects," Emily says. "I took that real estate expertise and applied it to the first two restaurants we opened."

Following the success of Saba and Safta, the Shayas partnered with the Four Seasons Hotel in New Orleans to open Miss River and the Chandelier Bar. In 2023, they introduced another restaurant, Silan, at the Atlantis Paradise Island Resort in the Bahamas, and in 2024 they launched Safta 1964, a limited-run celebrity-chef residency at The Wynn Las Vegas. They plan to open Safta's Table soon in New Orleans' Lakeview neighborhood.

In running Pomegranate Hospitality, Emily's business mindset complements Alon's culinary focus. While Alon oversees menus and food production, Emily makes hiring decisions, supports staff and develops partnerships to advance the company's philanthropic goals.

Each year, the Shayas host a fundraiser to benefit the New Orleans Career Center, whose culinary program provides career training for students entering the hospitality sector. Emily and Alon also support up-and-coming restaurateurs through the Shaya Barnett Foundation, created with Alon's mentor Donna Barnett, which offers educational opportunities for students looking to work in the food and beverage industry.

"What Emily is doing in her businesses is an extension of the service-learning we teach here at Tulane," says Force, "and it's fantastic to see."

When she's not laying the groundwork for future Pomegranate Hospitality ventures, Emily oversees the minutiae that make for a memorable dining experience. "The way people feel when they're in the restaurants is really important to us," she explains. "And it all boils down to the finishing touches."

"With everything we do," adds Alon, "there's meaning and a story behind it."

Stories are served in abundance at their restaurants. Saba's name, Hebrew for grandfather, calls to mind paternal stories passed down between generations. Dishes like matzo ball soup, lamb kofta and tahini hummus evoke Alon's youth in Israel, where he lived until he was four years old. Miss River tells a different story, one that begins much closer to the couple's present-day home. The restaurant draws inspiration from Southern culinary traditions and Emily's Georgia upbringing, with a menu boasting everything from Emily's red beans and rice to butter-fried beignets.

Roots of recollection

Perhaps the most important story the Shayas have helped to tell is that of Steven Fenves.

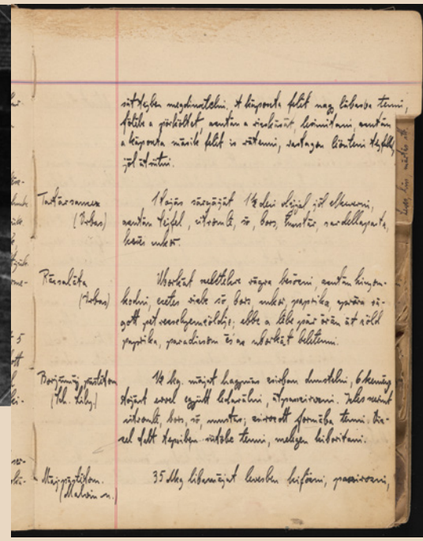
Born into a wealthy family in Subotica, Yugoslavia, in 1931, Fenves enjoyed a happy childhood until he was 10 years old. Axis powers invaded Yugoslavia, and Subotica was annexed by Hungary. In March 1944, German troops occupied Subotica, and the Fenves family were sent to concentration camps. As neighbors looted their home, the family's cook Maris sneaked in.

"She was a hero," Alon says. "She went into the Fenves family apartment when they were being taken out and sent to Auschwitz. She went in and saved the family cookbook."

At Auschwitz, Fenves worked as an interpreter for the German Kapo, later being forced into slave labor at an aircraft factory. As it became clear that Germany would lose the war, Fenves and his fellow inmates were sent on a death march to Buchenwald. The morning after his arrival — April 11, 1945 — American troops liberated the camp.

Fenves and his sister Estera survived, but they later learned that their mother and grandmother had died. Their father died a few months later.

Years later, after Fenves immigrated to the United States, Maris found him and returned the cookbook. Instead of keeping it, he donated it to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.



Previous page, left: the Fenves family recipe book. The cover reads "Receptek," Hungarian for "recipes." right: Emily and Alon Shaya at Saba. This page: Steven Fenves, center, with his mother, father and sister in the late 1930s. Opposite page: A page from the recipe book. Steven and his sister, Estera Fenves.

Meaning through memory

In fall 2019, Mara Force was speaking at a Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans event when she shared the story of her grandfather, Misha Meilup, a Lithuanian Holocaust survivor. One of the few possessions he brought with him to America after the war, she said, was the spoon he had used to eat with while imprisoned at Dachau. On Jewish holidays, Force's family uses it as a serving spoon to remember their shared history and celebrate the life they now enjoy.

Alon Shaya also attended the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans event, and he immediately approached Force to tell her a story of his own. He had recently visited Yad Vashem, Israel's national Holocaust museum, where he'd viewed one of its best-known artifacts, a flag from a concentration camp bearing the hand-written recipes of inmates. Alon was struck with inspiration: What if he were to cook those long-lost recipes to celebrate the life and spirit of those brave prisoners?

He reached out to Yad Vashem, but the museum said it wouldn't be possible.

"I told him it was the most beautiful thing I'd ever heard," Force recalls. "I told him I have a relationship with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., and I'm sure they won't shoot you down."

Force reached out to the museum's Jed Silberg. A few months later, the four of them — Force, Silberg, Emily and Alon — were at the museum sifting through artifacts when a tattered book caught Alon's attention.

"We came across this cookbook called 'The Fenves Family Cookbook,'" Alon recalls. "The staff at the museum told us Steven was still alive, so we reached out."

Fenves quickly became friends with the Shayas and agreed to translate the Hungarian recipes. Over Zoom and Facebook, Alon and Fenves explored the recipes, discussing their flavors, textures and appearances as Alon adapted methods according to Fenves' recollections. Finally, he was ready to put his work to the test.

"We wanted him to taste his mother's cooking," Alon says. "So we began sending dishes to him packed in dry ice."

Almost immediately, Emily noticed a change in Fenves' demeanor, as if the flavors had unlocked something. He regaled them with stories of going to the market in Subotica with his mother, pickling vegetables and watching Maris prepare family meals in their kitchen.

"He lit up," she recalls. "He started telling us his childhood memories."

In fall 2020, the Shayas partnered with Force and the Holocaust Memorial Museum to host a fundraiser on Zoom highlighting their effort to preserve the Fenves family's recipes. The event ended up raising $50,000.

From that first meal, Rescued Recipes grew into a series of fundraiser dinners across the country. Proceeds from the events go directly to the museum's preservation efforts, helping to digitize archival materials — like the Fenves family recipe book — and make them accessible to the public.

"Rescued Recipes has helped the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum raise over $800,000 in the past three years to support the collection and conservation work that we do," says Silberg. "That impact is a direct result of the vision and dedication of Emily, Alon and Mara Force."

Rescued Recipes has changed countless lives, including Fenves' own.

Fenves was considering stepping away from his duties at the museum, but meeting the Shayas changed his outlook. "When we discovered his story and started talking to him about it, it gave him a renewed passion for sharing his experience," Emily says. "It was an opportunity to tell his story from a more positive angle."

"The Holocaust looms so large," says Force. "It's so nice to be able to think about the joy of the before-times. Ultimately, it's a celebration of life.

"Food can nourish not just your body but also your soul," she adds. "How can you not have empathy for somebody whose food you've tasted?"

And for the Shayas, food is a common language that people of all backgrounds can understand.

"Food spans generations and demographics," Alon says. "It connects people. Rich or poor, white or Black, Jewish or non-Jewish, and everything in between."

Rescued Recipes dinners take place throughout the United States. For more information, visit the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum website.

FENVES PHOTOS COURTESY U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

ENGINEERING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

From expanded programs to world-class faculty to highly engaged students, engineering at Tulane is growing stronger every year.

BY MOLLY McCRORY

This summer, a small but mighty team of three Tulane University students presented their proposal for a modular lunar habitat to a panel of leading NASA and aerospace industry experts.

The trio was one of just 14 teams nationwide selected as finalists in the prestigious NASA 2025 Revolutionary Aerospace Systems - Academic Linkage, or RASC-AL competition. They were also the third team from Tulane to be selected as finalists in the national competition in the past four years — an incredible achievement considering the competition also includes MIT, Virginia Polytechnic and State University and Texas A&M University, schools with huge teams and renowned aerospace programs.

The strong showing by Tulane at the RASC-AL competition isn't just a testament to student achievement. It is also indicative of the university's expanding and influential engineering program — one that has regained its national standing after the School of Engineering was merged into the School of Science and Engineering in 2006.

"Engineering research and education are an integral part of Tulane," President Michael A. Fitts said. "They are central to our ethos and founding as an outward-facing institution. With major new curriculum offerings and an interdisciplinary approach, our engineering faculty and students are working to build more resilient communities and habitats, create precision health diagnostics and therapeutics, expand artificial intelligence, advance space science and more."

Clockwise from left: Biomedical engineering students designed and produced training wheelchairs to help children with mobility challenges prepare to use real wheelchairs. The annual Truss Bust competition challenges students with the task of building the most lightweight structure that can bear the most weight.

PHOTOS BY SABREE HILL, AMELIAH KOLP AND TULANE ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS

Expanded programs

Adding to its already robust curriculum, the School of Science and Engineering began offering three engineering minors to undergraduate students beginning in the fall of 2024: mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and materials engineering.

The program is continuing its expansion this fall with the introduction of two Master of Science Programs, electrical engineering and mechanical engineering. These graduate programs will join the PhD and master's programs in materials engineering that the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics already offers.

"For Tulane to achieve its potential as a leading research institution and contributor to the economic success of the Gulf South, strong engineering programs are absolutely essential," said Matthew Escarra, professor in the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics and co-director of Tulane Instrumentation for Nanoscience & Innovation. "The new minors in electrical and mechanical engineering, launched this academic year, have already seen strong participation from existing students in majors ranging from engineering physics to economics."

The Department of River-Coastal Science and Engineering was the first to reestablish a civil engineering program at Tulane with a minor for undergraduates in the fall of 2023. The Civil Engineering – Water Resources and Environmental minor has been so successful that this fall, the department is expanding to a major for undergraduates.

This is alongside the graduate programs already thriving within the department. Starting in 2023, the department began a PhD program and both resident and non-resident Master of Science programs in River-Coastal Science and Engineering.

"Our new minor in Civil Engineering gives students the opportunity to explore how engineers develop innovative solutions to reduce the risks posed by natural disasters to both human communities and natural ecosystems," said Ehab Meselhe, Nicholas Altiero Distinguished Professor and chair of the Department of River-Coastal Science and Engineering. "This program lays the foundation for a future full undergraduate major in Civil Engineering – Water Resources and Environmental — a significant milestone for our department and for Tulane as a whole."

"Tulane University, guided by the strategic vision of President Fitts and Provost Robin Forman, recognizes engineering education as critical to the Gulf South's economic vitality, innovation and community resilience. Engineering at SSE isn't just growing, it's driving our region forward," said Hridesh Rajan, dean of the School of Science and Engineering. "With enthusiastic support from faculty, staff and our generous alumni, engineering at Tulane is roaring back to life. Over the past two years, we've introduced four engineering minors: mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, materials engineering and civil engineering. Most exciting of all, this summer we've launched three new degree programs — a BS in Civil Engineering, and MS degrees in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering — underscoring Tulane's commitment to engineering excellence."

In keeping with the interdisciplinary nature of engineering education at Tulane, the School of Science and Engineering has joined with the School of Architecture and Built Environment to establish a first-of-its-kind dual graduate degree, a Master of Landscape Architecture and a Master of Science in River-Coastal Science and Engineering.

Hands-on experience

Engineering competition for Tulane students is not limited to outer space or out-of-state contests like RASC-AL. Students in the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics and the Department of Biomedical Engineering compete in the annual "Truss Bust" in which teams build a model bridge using one sheet of wood and a laser cutter from the Scott Ackerman MakerSpace.

Each bridge must support at least 20 pounds, but the students are also competing to see which bridge can support the most weight. The contest, which this year was held in Pocket Park on the uptown campus, is an exciting affair for students and onlookers alike.

The Truss Bust is one example of the numerous ways engineering students use the state-of-the-art Scott Ackerman MakerSpace. Students in Tulane's biomedical engineering program made national news in late 2023 when CBS Mornings covered their efforts in using the MakerSpace to build training wheelchairs for children.

Students in the Team Design class taught by Katherine Raymond, senior professor of practice and associate chair of biomedical engineering in the School of Science and Engineering, partnered with the nonprofit MakeGood to design and produce mobility trainers, or training wheelchairs, to help children with cerebral palsy, spina bifida, limb deficiencies or other medical conditions prepare to operate actual wheelchairs.

To make the trainers, the students first had to learn about the needs of the children who would ultimately receive them. This is part of a human-centered design process at Tulane whereby students cultivate empathy for those they will be serving.

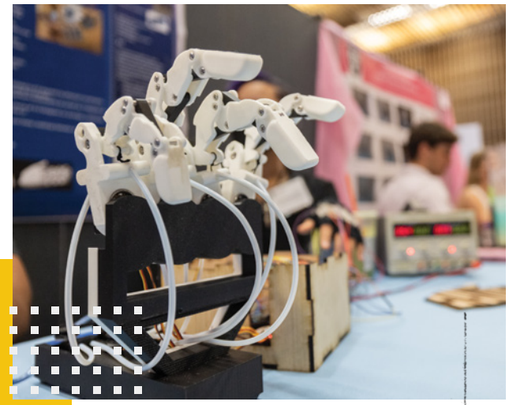
Tulane students' passion for service doesn't stop at their local community, either. The Tulane chapter of Engineers Without Borders is now in its second year of a project that builds composting toilets and provides access to clean water in Ghana. Last summer, the students visited the Sokode-Ando community to begin planning their project. Their first trip was an assessment trip during which students talked with local community members about their needs and planned the next steps of building the necessary facilities.

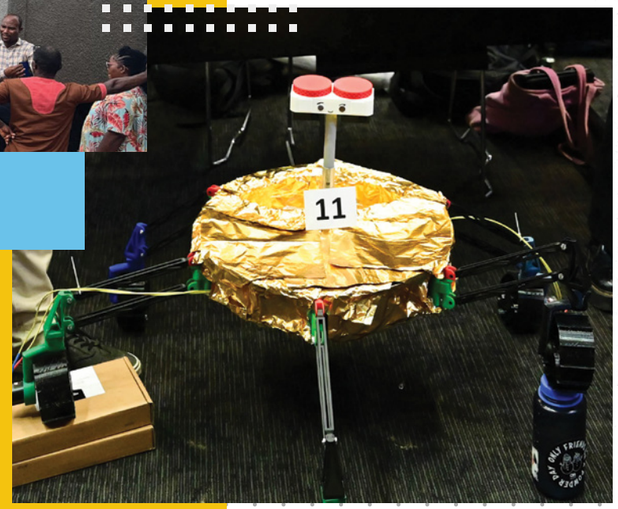
Using that same human-centered design process, the Engineers Without Borders team interviewed the people who would be using the facilities, with the aid of a translator, to ensure they would be helping in the best way possible.

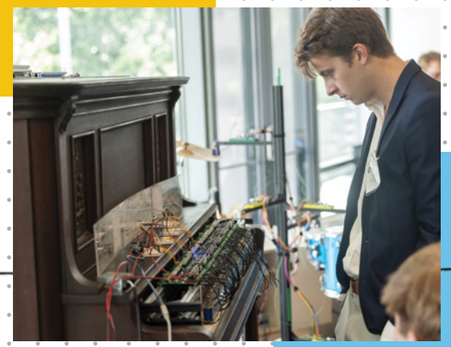
Students have also partnered with Humanity and Community Development Projects (HCDP) for the Ghana effort. The team is basing its design on composting toilets already in use in the nearby community of Dzita. The students are returning to Sokode-Ando this August for their second trip, when they will begin construction.

"It was my experience with Engineers Without Borders that helped me pursue my interest in civil engineering and inspired me to pursue a career in this field," said Lily Baughman, who served as president of the Tulane chapter during the last academic year as she completed her master's degree in materials science and engineering.

"Engineering research and education are an integral part of Tulane."







Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Tulane Engineers Without Borders (TEWB) joined members of HCDP Ghana and Sokode-Ando community representatives to assess composting toilet facilities in nearby Ho, Ghana. During the TEWB trip, the team visited facilities similar to the ones are they are designing and building. The AI Biomimicry Hand and SPIDER from the 2025 and 2024 Engineering Capstone Expos. The Music Robots project at the 2025 SSE Engineering Design Expo. TEWB Member Kiowa Wells receiving a ceremonial bracelet from Sokode-Ando community members during the closing religious ceremony.

PHOTOS BY AMELIAH KOLP, CHERYL GERBER, KENNY LASS AND TULANE ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS

World-class faculty

Attracting world-leading faculty is essential to building and maintaining a top engineering program, and Tulane's engineering faculty is proving to be second to none.

"At any leading research university, it is the faculty who define what is possible, and we are in very good hands," said Provost Forman. "From their path-breaking research that offers exciting glimpses of a healthier, more vibrant future, to the creation of innovative, engaging degree programs and research opportunities for our students, our engineering faculty are leading the way in building a more ambitious, energetic and impactful School of Science and Engineering and Tulane. And if you want a reason to be excited about our future, just look at the absolutely spectacular cohort of faculty who have joined us over the past several years."

One such faculty member, Matthew Montemore, the Robert and Gayle Longmire Early Career Professor in Chemical Engineering, made headlines earlier this year with a study published in Science that showed a new, potentially greener way to produce a crucial industrial chemical used to make everyday products. This came after he received a CAREER award from the National Science Foundation in 2024.

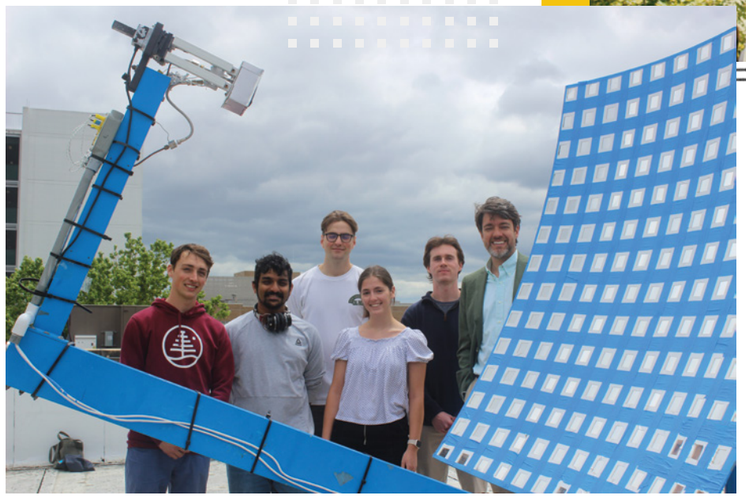
Montemore's breakthrough study could significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the manufacture of ethylene oxide, which has an estimated $40 billion global market. The team found that adding small amounts of nickel atoms to silver catalysts can maintain production efficiency while eliminating the need for chlorine, which could save money, decrease carbon dioxide entering the atmosphere and make production safer.

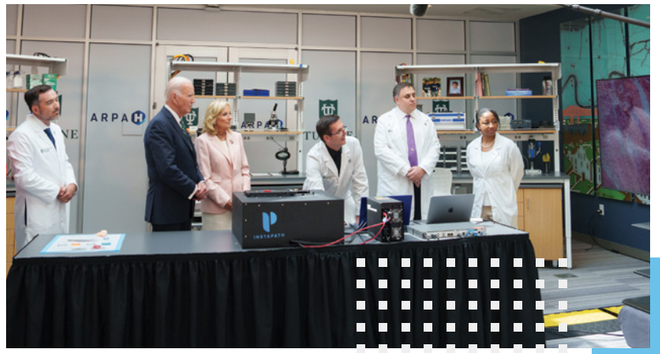
Escarra is another recipient of a CAREER award from the National Science Foundation. In 2024, he worked with a team of students, four of them seniors studying engineering physics and one a PhD student in materials engineering, to build a solar energy conversion system on the roof of Donna and Paul Flower Hall. The system, called the "Sunflower Receiver," harvests sunlight to generate electricity and heat.

Escarra originally developed the project in collaboration with Daniel Codd at the University of San Diego. The test on the roof of Flower Hall came after the project was awarded funding from the Tulane Innovation Institute Provost's Proof of Concept Fund in 2023. The system consists of a large, dish-shaped mirror which tracks the sun, and a hybrid receiver which features an array of high-efficiency solar cells mounted on a coil painted black. Once the device has absorbed sunlight, it creates electricity and heats water that runs through the coil.

In August of 2024, former President Joe Biden visited Tulane and announced up to $22.9 million in funding for MAGIC-SCAN, a Tulane project that aims to create a machine-learning-assisted imaging system capable of identifying even the tiniest remnant of cancer during surgery. The funding came from the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health, also known as ARPA-H, a federal funding agency established in 2022 with bipartisan support to rapidly advance high-potential, high-impact biomedical research.

The MAGIC-SCAN project is led by Quincy Brown, associate professor of biomedical engineering, and Brian Summa, associate professor of computer science. Both Brown and Summa are also affiliated with the Tulane Cancer Center.





"If you want a reason to be excited about our future, just look at the absolutely spectacular cohort of faculty who have joined us over the past several years."

Impactful alumni

This year was the 25th anniversary of the Tulane Engineering Forum, which took place on May 9 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. The forum is a joint venture between the School of Science and Engineering and engineering alumni, through the Society of Tulane Engineers.

"It's great to see a long legacy, where we've had support and engagement from not only the engineers and the community but also sponsoring companies," said Chuck Mart (E '81, E '82, E '86), the chairperson of the planning committee this year and a Tulane alumnus.

The forum brings together engineers in academia and industry from across the country for learning, networking and career development. The impact that Tulane engineering has had on Louisiana and the world is clear at such a wide-reaching and long-lasting event as the Tulane Engineering Forum.

Even recent alumni are making an impact on the Louisiana community. Franziska Trautmann (SSE '20), who studied chemical and biomedical engineering at Tulane, is one of the founders of Glass Half Full, a local nonprofit that recycles glass into sand that is used for coastal restoration projects.

Glass Half Full works with ReCoast, a program led by Julie Albert, associate professor in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, as well as other Tulane faculty, to study how sand made from recycled glass can be used for coastal restoration. The work that ReCoast does ranges from characterizing the safety of recycled glass sand and testing how well vegetation grows in the recycled sand to analyzing the most effective locations for restoration work.

The project brings together Tulane faculty, alumni, current students and community members, and is another highlight of interdisciplinarity at Tulane, with collaborators from ecology, materials engineering, coastal engineering and environmental science.

Tulane's engineering program grows stronger every year, fueled by the drive of its students, the brilliance of its faculty and the dedication of its alumni. With such a dynamic community and visionary leadership at the helm, the future of engineering at Tulane is brighter than ever.

Clockwise from left: Franziska Trautmann, co-founder and CEO of Glass Half Full, shows off sand produced from recycled glass. Former President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden preview the MAGIC-SCAN imaging system. Owen Harris, Sid Padmanabha, Axel Nielsen, Thalia Koutsougeras, Timothy Keegan and Professor Matthew Escarra stand with the "Sunflower Receiver," which harvests sunlight to generate electricity and heat. The School of Science and Engineering's annual "Truss Bust" competition is a popular spectacle for the Tulane community.

PHOTOS BY AMELIAH KOLP, JOHN FOSTER, PAUL MORSE AND JENNIFER ZDON

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ***ACTION*** on the Class of 2025

The Caesars Superdome was lit up in Tulane green in honor of the 2025 Unified Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, May 17. More than 2,000 graduates representing Tulane's nine undergraduate and professional schools attended the ceremony, which featured such New Orleans flair as jazz, second-lining and Mardi Gras beads. **BY BARRI BRONSTON**

Tulane University's Class of 2025 marked the closing scene of their college careers and the opening credits of a story yet to be written as they second-lined, danced and celebrated their achievements Saturday, May 17, during a Hollywood-themed Unified Commencement ceremony that featured one of today's biggest stars.

The milestone event was the culmination of three days of celebration that included individual school diploma ceremonies, as well as hooding and awards ceremonies. This year's Unified Commencement was held for the first time since 2019 in the Caesars Superdome, which had been the event's home since 1999, but was unavailable for the past five years due to off-season renovations.

With more than 2,000 graduates in attendance and more than 11,000 family and friends looking on, Tulane President Michael A. Fitts used the power of film to remind graduates that life is filled with challenge, emotion and the thrill of the unknown. Fortunately, their Tulane experience has more than prepared them for the world that awaits them.

Fitts' speech was the perfect lead-in to the keynote address by Emmy Award-winning actress Sheryl Lee Ralph, who told graduates how honored she was to serve as Commencement speaker for such an impressive university.

"When I told my cast members at 'Abbott Elementary,' Quinta (Brunson, the show's creator and lead actress) said, 'Oh my God, Tulane. It's not just a university. It's a special place.'

"That's when I realized Tulane isn't just a school. It's a living, breathing testament to resilience, innovation and the power of community," Ralph added. "And today, I have the immense joy of speaking to the unstoppable, unshakable, undeniable Class of 2025."

To kick off his address, Fitts welcomed Tulane's mascot Riptide to the stage, calling him one of the best directors in the business and assigning him the task of showing clips on two large screens from films chosen by Fitts to demonstrate meaningful life lessons.

"I hope you're ready for your close-up, because you are a star and this is your world premiere," Fitts told graduates.

Of the 2015 animated movie "Inside Out," Fitts said it "reminds us to seek the light in the darkest moments and embrace the intricacies of our emotions."

"As you navigate careers, adventures, misfortunes and triumphs, your Tulane family will be right there with you no matter how far apart you are," Fitts said.

Turning to the film "Apollo 13," Fitts told graduates that while they will make mistakes along the way, it's how they confront those mistakes that will define their character and perseverance.

"Though you may not have to rescue astronauts in outer space, you will undoubtedly face challenges in your years after Tulane," Fitts said. "But when you're confronted with a problem of galactic proportions, sometimes the answer will be to think small, to use or rethink everyday things in a new and novel way."

Showing an eerie underwater scene from the movie "Jaws," Fitts reminded graduates that while the film was a blockbuster that audiences still enjoy 50 years later, it did not start out that way.

"The production of 'Jaws' was a notorious disaster," he said. "It was painfully over-budget. It was way behind schedule. And most of all, there were problems with the shark."

But, Fitts noted, director Steven Spielberg overcame the failures by getting creative.

"The lesson here is clear: even something that appears to have gone horribly wrong can become a huge success," Fitts said. "The difference is persistence. Keep going. If what you planned isn't working, you don't necessarily need to change your goal. You may just need to find a different way to get there. Failure doesn't have to be final. It can be a detour, a strategic pause or an all-out inspiration."

In her rousing keynote address, Ralph challenged graduates to put their Tulane education to meaningful use — whether in medicine, public health, engineering, the arts or any other pursuit — urging them to lead with integrity and courage.

"The world needs people who will raise their hand and raise their voice," Ralph said. "People who follow their moral compass. Who celebrate our differences and stand up for the least among us. The world needs people like you."

She left students with a stirring reminder of their worth and potential: "Please, don't shrink to fit into places that can't handle your brilliance. Don't edit yourself to make others comfortable — not for your friends, not for your family, not for anyone."

After her speech, Fitts presented Ralph with the Tulane President's Medal, noting that the award is "for those who inspire us with their contributions to the well-being and success of Tulane and the world — those who move us to act, to think, to lead — and to make the world a better place."

Over the past 40 years, Ralph has gained international acclaim for her memorable roles in comedy, drama and musicals — all while working as an advocate for HIV/AIDS awareness, as well as for teachers like the one she portrays in "Abbott Elementary."

In the show, Ralph portrays veteran teacher Barbara Howard, a role for which she won the 2022 Emmy for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series, along with a Critics' Choice award and a Film Independent Spirit Award nomination. Ralph received a second and third Emmy nomination in 2023 and 2024 for the same role, and the show has garnered numerous other accolades, including AFI Awards, Golden Globes, NAACP Image Awards, SAG Awards and a Peabody Award. In April, Ralph received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Graduate Devin Goldman shared a powerful message of perseverance and connection as student speaker. A psychology and health and wellness major from New York, Goldman overcame personal loss while embracing campus life through service, mentorship and a key supporting role with the Green Wave football team. Her speech reflected the deep love she developed for Tulane and the community that supported her journey.

Opposite page, clockwise from top: Emmy Award-winning actress Sheryl Lee Ralph served as this year's keynote speaker, challenging graduates to put their Tulane education to meaningful use and urging them to lead with integrity and courage. Riptide the Pelican presented iconic movie clips during Tulane President Michael A. Fitts' address. Graduates paraded around the Caesars Superdome with umbrellas which they had decorated with momentos from their Tulane years.

Goldman challenged graduates to use their Tulane experience to make the world a better place. Fear and doubt are normal, she said, but even those kinds of feelings can be used as opportunities to "redefine the type of person that we choose to be in this unpredictable, beautiful world."

"Will we let the bitterness of our circumstances diffuse our negativity? Or will we use gratitude and perspective to be understanding, influential, audacious?" Goldman asked the crowd.

Goldman said she had her own share of challenges over the past four years and knows what it's like to experience — and overcome — adversity, including the loss of loved ones. She mentioned the names of three Tulanians who passed away before graduating from Tulane and "who should be with us today" — Lindsay Wiener, Caleb Connor and Ralph Adedeji.

"Embrace the challenges that we have faced," Goldman said. "And acknowledge that we have not even touched the tip of our successes. We are learning. Changing. Thriving. And now, the world awaits us."

She added, "My message to you is simple: While the world around us tries to fit us into boxes and form us into what it wants, remember who you are. Remember your story. Use it. Lean on the people around you. Trust yourself. Be audacious. And spread your joy."

Besides student achievement, the ceremony also honored outstanding faculty with annual teaching awards. The 2025 President's Awards for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Teaching went to Catherine O'Connor, professor in the School of Social Work, and Randy Sparks, professor of history in the School of Liberal Arts. The recipients of the 2025 Suzanne and Stephen Weiss Presidential Fellowship for Undergraduate Education were Jacquelyne Thoni Howard, professor of practice and associate director of the Connolly Alexander Institute for Data Science, and Katherine Raymond, senior professor of practice in the School of Science and Engineering.

The ceremony was filled with New Orleans flair and celebration throughout. It opened with an academic procession of graduates and faculty making their way to their seats as Dr. Michael White and his Original Liberty Jazz Band provided the soundtrack. In true New Orleans style, the evening's final send-off included second-lining, confetti cannons, live jazz and Mardi Gras beads as graduates paraded with dazzling green and blue umbrellas emblazoned with their own creative designs. Graduates were given the parasols, plain and unadorned, at the start of their Tulane career and asked to bring them back — personalized and decorated with memorabilia from their Tulane journey — for Commencement.

Graduates sporting garb from a variety of student organizations celebrated at Unified Commencement, which featured an address from Student speaker Devin Goldman. Opposite page: Confetti flew inside the Caesars Superdome as Tulane graduates celebrated their hard work.

PHOTOS BY JEFF BRANDON, CHERYL GERBER AND KENNY LASS

Wavemakers

ATHLETICS LAUNCHES NIL FUND, UPGRADES WITH PETERS GIFT

Tulane Athletics has received a transformative $3.5 million gift from longtime supporters Don and Lora Peters to continue upgrading its sports facilities and launch the Green Wave Talent Fund, an initiative to expand Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) opportunities and other benefits for Tulane student-athletes.

"Tulane Athletics has entered a new era and is on an upward trajectory, along with the entire university, as it pursues academic and competitive excellence at the highest levels with a premier infrastructure and outstanding coaching staffs," Tulane President Michael A. Fitts said. "This gift will continue the Green Wave's ascent and further support our student-athletes by providing them state-of-the-art facilities and resources to ensure that they benefit from NIL opportunities."

"This fund is a game-changer for Tulane Athletics, courtesy of two of our most generous supporters," said David Harris, the Ben Weiner Director of Athletics Chair. "Don and Lora Peters have stepped up time and time again over the years, and their leadership sends a strong message: Tulane is committed to empowering its student-athletes to thrive both on and off the field. Their generosity will help us attract and retain top talent while maintaining our tradition of integrity and excellence."

The Peters family has generously supported Tulane for decades.

Don Peters is a 1981 alumnus and member of the Board of Tulane and the Tulane Intercollegiate Athletics Committee. He and Lora are also members of the Olive & Blue Society. Among their other leadership roles at Tulane, they serve on the National Campaign Council for Greater D.C. as part of the university's Always the Audacious fundraising campaign. Their lifetime giving to Tulane exceeds $20 million and their latest gift raises their total commitment to Tulane Athletics' Investing in Excellence fundraising campaign to almost $16 million. This includes their $10 million gift to modernize the university's sports medicine and training facilities and establish the Don and Lora Peters Academic Center for student-athletes' academic success.

"NIL has reshaped college sports, and Tulane must remain competitive in this new landscape," said Don Peters. "This initiative ensures Tulane stays ahead in the evolving landscape. It's about empowering student-athletes to succeed in their sports, their academics and their future careers."

The Peterses' latest gift comes with the rising stature of Tulane Athletics, including the Cotton Bowl Championship in 2023, three consecutive football conference championship appearances, back-to-back American Athletic Conference baseball tournament titles, and a national championship in sailing in 2022. The men's cross-country team and the women's indoor track and field teams have also recently won conference championships. Tulane's student-athletes maintain a 95 percent Graduation Success Rate, the highest in Louisiana and in the American Athletic Conference, and consistently earn strong Academic Progress Rates.

Through the Investing in Excellence campaign, Tulane Athletics has renovated its headquarters, the James W. Wilson Jr. Center, as well as upgraded the turf at Benson Field at Yulman Stadium and the turf and dugouts at Greer Field at Turchin Stadium. It has also established a multipurpose headquarters for both the Green Wave sailing team and community partners known as the Libby and Robert Alexander Community Sailing Center and renovated the Reily Student Recreation Center's natatorium. Additionally, Tulane Athletics is installing a new enclosed practice field and building a new tennis complex.

$1 Million for Graduate Study Program in School of Liberal Arts

Tulane University's School of Liberal Arts has received a four-year $1 million grant from the Mellon Foundation to develop the Crossroads Cohort: Africana Studies at the Intersection of Art History and Practice, a collaboration between the Africana Studies Program and the Newcomb Art Department. Stephanie Porras (left), professor of art history and chair of the Newcomb Art Department, and Mia L. Bagneris (right), associate professor of art history and Africana studies and director of the Africana Studies Program, developed the initiative that will allow students to pursue an interdisciplinary course of study culminating in either an MA in Africana studies and art history or a studio art MFA with an MA or certificate in Africana studies. Set to launch in fall 2025, Crossroads Cohort will offer the nation's first master's-level interdisciplinary degree in Africana studies and art.

SCOTT GRAYSON AND ERIN GRAYSON SAPP PROFESSORSHIP IN CHEMISTRY

For Scott Grayson and Erin Grayson Sapp, Tulane isn't just their alma mater — it's a place that shaped their lives and careers in profound ways. Now, they're ensuring that impact continues for future generations by leaving a bequest to Tulane to establish a professorship in chemistry.

Both Grayson and Sapp had transformative experiences as students at Tulane.

Grayson (A&S '96) found a close-knit community as an undergraduate in the honors dorm, rowed crew and pursued degrees in chemistry, math and history. He received his PhD from Berkeley, and his academic path eventually led him back to Tulane, where he joined the faculty in 2005 as a professor of chemistry, specializing in polymer chemistry.

"I looked at jobs all over the world," he recalled, "but when I visited Tulane, I realized how much incredible work was happening here."

Grayson's contributions to the field were recognized in 2015 when he was named the inaugural Joseph H. Boyer Professor of Chemistry, a position funded by one of Boyer's former graduate students, Gene Miller (A&S '54, G '59), and Miller's wife, Dorothy Lamb.

Sapp (SLA '07, SLA '13) followed a different but equally fulfilling academic path. After earning a master's in art history, she returned to Tulane for an interdisciplinary PhD that allowed her to craft a program spanning history, English, art history and sociology. "It was an amazing experience," she said. "I had amazing advisors who let me explore and supported me."

A single term paper evolved into "Moving the Chains," a book that examines civil rights in New Orleans through the lens of professional football. The significance of her research was highlighted during Super Bowl LIX week, when the Tulane Center for Sport hosted a panel discussion centered around Sapp's book.

The decision to leave a bequest to Tulane was shaped not only by their positive student experiences but also by the university's steadfast support during one of their most difficult moments. In 2018, after he came back from a sabbatical in Sweden, Grayson suffered a severe stroke. Tulane and the Department of Chemistry offered unwavering support throughout his recovery. "They were with me every step of the way," he said.

Grayson's experience as the Boyer Professor solidified his belief in the power of faculty endowments, which can provide critical resources for research, student support and professional development. "I want to make sure that the next person has what I had," he said.

When it came to planning their own bequest, the Office of Gift Planning made the process seamless. "They were great about explaining our options," Sapp said. "After speaking with them, I felt confident that Tulane would honor what we wanted to do."

They hope their planned gift will support a future faculty member in chemistry, but their love for Tulane extends far beyond one department.

"The interdisciplinary nature of Tulane is a huge part of why we both, on polar opposite tracks, have been fulfilled at Tulane," Sapp said. "Even now, we still are. We both feel at home, appreciated and supported by Tulane. So, while we're thinking that this money will go to chemistry, our love for Tulane goes beyond that — it's for the institution as a whole."

Pictured from left to right, Tulane Professor Scott Grayson, Pro Football Hall of Famer Bobby Bell, author Erin Grayson Sapp and Hall of Famer Ron Mix at a Tulane Center for Sport event, where they discussed Sapp's book, "Moving the Chains."

PHOTO BY RIVERVIEW PHOTOGRAPHY

Tulanians

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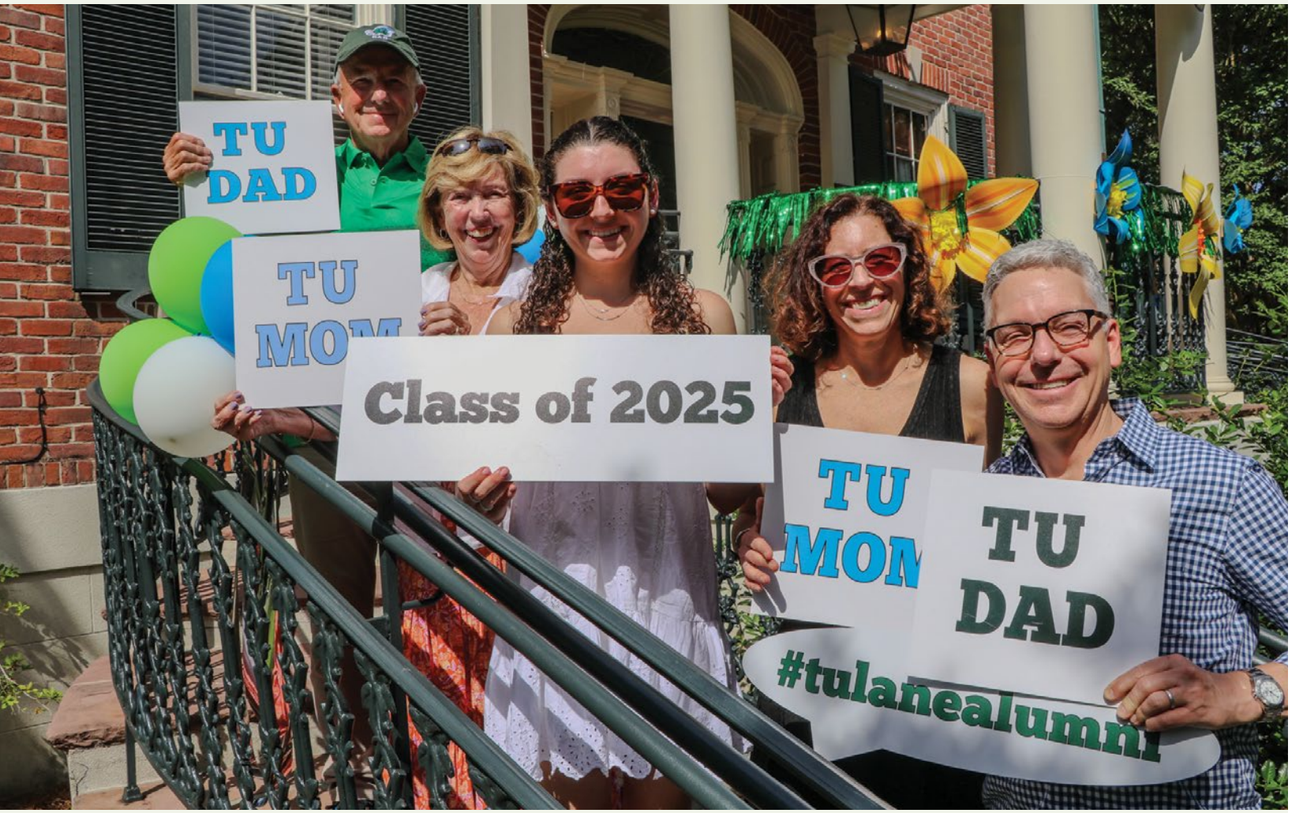

LASTING LEGACIES Graduates of the Class of 2025 and their families commemorated being part of generations of Tulanians at the Alumni Family Graduation Celebration on May 15.

PHOTO BY THEO MITCHELL

1970–1979

RONALD L. BOOK (L '78) has been awarded the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award by the Daily Business Review as part of the 2025 Florida Legal Awards. This honor recognizes those who have made a significant impact on the practices of law in Florida over a notable legal career.

CURTIS MOSLEY (A&S '78) has published three books: "The 10 Greatest Teams in the Bible," "The Athlete's Bible" and "How to Spot the Messiah When He Appears."

MARIE QUINTANA (SW '79) was featured at the 2025 New Orleans Book Festival at Tulane University with her memoir, "Last Flight From Havana," which follows her journey fleeing Cuba with her family during Fidel Castro's rise to power, growing up in New Orleans and building a trailblazing 30-year career in corporate America.

1980–1989

WILLIAM T. BEAM JR. (A&S '80) had the Athletic Hall of Fame named in his honor at the Kentucky Country Day School, recognizing his contributions to the school and its athletic program. It is now called the Beam Athletic Hall of Fame.

LARRY CONNOLLY (B '82) was elected as a new member of the Board of Directors for Skyland Trail. Connolly is also president of the Connolly Family Foundation.

JULIE ANN SIPOS (NC '84) has published her debut novel, "Horrible Women, Wonderful Girls: A Jaycee Grayson Novel." The novel explores themes of missed connections, snap judgments and the dearth of kindness within a post-feminist sisterhood.

IMPRESSION

SUHAS SUBRAMANYAM

As a Tulane student in post-Katrina New Orleans, Suhas Subramanyam (SLA '08) found his calling in service — one that would ultimately lead him to Capitol Hill. Now a U.S. Representative for Virginia's 10th Congressional District, Subramanyam credits his experiences at Tulane with shaping his career in public service.

"My time at Tulane was very formative in getting me on this path," says Subramanyam.

When Subramanyam arrived at Tulane, he was on the pre-med track, planning to follow in the footsteps of his parents by becoming a doctor. Then Hurricane Katrina struck, forcing him to temporarily relocate to Rice University in Houston, his hometown. When he returned to New Orleans, Subramanyam felt compelled to do more than just watch from the sidelines.

"I wanted to be part of the rebuilding of New Orleans," he said. He took on a leadership role in the Tulane Green Club, focusing on environmental initiatives, and became deeply involved in CACTUS, Tulane's community service organization. "Before Katrina, I was just kind of going through the motions, unsure of what I would do with my life. But afterward, I saw a purpose — serving the community."

He began working closely with the City Council and the mayor's office. One initiative focused on hosting out-of-town volunteer groups to aid in rebuilding efforts, while another pushed for more environmentally friendly reconstruction.

He was sports editor for The Hullabaloo, and his growing involvement in local politics sparked an interest in covering news and policy. He took an internship in Washington, D.C., for "This Week with George Stephanopoulos" at ABC News.

"I took that opportunity to just follow producers at ABC around Capitol Hill, and that's when I started being more aware of what happens in national politics."

PHOTO BY BRENDAN O'HARA

During Subramanyam's senior year, he was offered a position on a congressional campaign in Houston. Then, he went on to earn his law degree from Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law. After graduation, he joined former President Barack Obama's White House as a technology policy advisor.

In 2019, he made history as the first South Asian American elected to the Virginia General Assembly. Four years later, in 2023, he continued his political rise by winning a seat in the Virginia Senate. Building on this momentum, Subramanyam was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in November 2024, representing Virginia's 10th Congressional District, and was sworn in on January 3, 2025.

Through it all, Tulane has remained a defining part of his journey. He values staying engaged with the Tulane community, and this dedication to fostering the next generation of leaders is reflected in his own office, where Tulane alumnus Matthew Fisher (SLA '23) now serves as a staffer.

Looking back, Subramanyam credits Tulane with providing not only an education but also a foundation for leadership, service and lifelong connections.

IMPRESSION

CADE R. COLE

When Cade Cole (L ’08) walked the halls of Tulane Law School nearly two decades ago, he found himself interested in Louisiana’s unique civil law tradition and was all in.

“I was from Louisiana, and I really cared about the issues here in Louisiana, and so I really enjoyed the professors and the classes in the civilian tradition,” said Cole.

That early interest has culminated in Cole achieving one of the highest honors in Louisiana’s legal community: a seat on the Louisiana Supreme Court.

Elected from a district covering all of western Louisiana, now Justice Cole took office in March, and at 41, he is the youngest of seven justices on the state’s highest court. He is enjoying his role, cognizant of the weight and importance of the work.

“At the Supreme Court there is never a dull moment,” he said. “We have a wide variety of issues from criminal law to civil law to some of the most complex constitutional questions. I love the complexity and variety.”

Cole brings a broad range of experience and a commitment to public service to the bench. His legal path — marked by versatility, innovation and a focus on improving access to justice — has earned him respect across the state’s legal and political spectrum.

A native of the small town of DeQuincy, Cole’s interest in public service began early. While still in high school, he worked as a student assistant at the state legislature, getting a firsthand look at government in action. Cole also earned his undergraduate degree from Tulane, and his wife, Rebekah, graduated from the Tulane School of Engineering in 2004.

Cole attended Tulane Law in the difficult times immediately following Hurricane Katrina. “We compressed the whole first year into less than six months, there were longer days than usual and weekend classes. It was baptism by fire,” he said.

Cole’s legal career began with a prestigious clerkship for Louisiana Supreme Court Justice Jeannette T. Knoll, whose seat he now holds. He then entered private practice in Lake Charles, handling complex business and tax litigation, and serving as appellate counsel on a wide array of cases. He also held several public legal roles, including assistant district attorney, city attorney for the towns of Sulphur and Vinton and city magistrate.

Cole became a board-certified tax law specialist and chaired the Board of Legal Specialization’s Tax Law Advisory Commission. He also trained as a mediator at Pepperdine University’s Straus Institute, going on to mediate more than 1,500 cases.

Cole later became Louisiana’s first Tax Court judge. In the aftermath of Hurricane Laura, Cole was appointed by federal and state judges as a Special Master, tasked with designing and implementing the program to efficiently manage over 10,000 legal claims.

Cole ran for the Supreme Court seat on a platform centered on transparency, efficiency and expanding access to justice. Reflecting on his time at Tulane Law, Cole encouraged current students to embrace the academic challenges.

“Be diligent about your studies,” he said. “You never know what knowledge you’ll need later. I’ve often found myself grateful that I took a wide variety of courses. It wasn’t my focus then, but I use constitutional criminal procedure every day in this job. And enjoy learning — it’s one of the reasons I love this job. I’m still learning every day.”

LANCE SPENCER (E ’86) was inducted into the extremely selective Air Force Cyberspace Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame honors those individuals who made significant contributions, both to the Air Force and to the communications and cyber fields, while serving in the public and private sectors.

ELIZABETH BRISTER (B ’87) has been appointed president of Downtown Jackson Partners in Jackson, Mississippi. It is the state’s largest commercial district.

1990–1999

ERIC D. SUBEN (L ’93) has started a new position as Senior Claims Counsel, Financial Lines, for CNA Insurance.

NIMROD CHAPEL JR. (L ’95) has been awarded the Missouri Justice Defender Award by the Missouri NAACP in honor of his past achievements and as an acknowledgement of the ongoing movement he leads.

CAROL SCHLUETER (B ’97) has been awarded the 2025 Jefferson Parish Tourism Ambassador of the Year Award from the Jefferson Parish Convention and Visitors Bureau. She is the director of the German-American Cultural Center and Museum in Gretna, Louisiana.

2000–2009

DEREK BARDELL (G ’01, G ’02) has completed a Doctor of Education degree in Leadership & Learning in Organizations, with certificates in College Online Teaching and Social Impact from Vanderbilt University.

MARISSA HERSHON (NC ’03) wrote a chapter entitled “The Ringling’s Ca’ d’Zan: Its Evolution from Winter Residence to Historic House Museum” in the collected volume “The Evolving House Museum: Art Collectors and Their Residences, Then and Now.”

QUIN BRELAND (B ’03, L ’07) and **MARTHA CLAIRE (SW ’13)** had their fourth daughter, Quinby “Hollis” Breland, on September 25, 2024, in Houston, Texas.

MOLLY MCFARLAND (SLA ’04) has been named a winner of The Path to Purchase Institute’s (P2PI) 2025 Retail Media Awards. The Retail Media Awards recognize the top 25 commerce marketers who are pioneering retail media across a variety of retail sectors and who are efficiently aiding in the leverage of retail media for digital and omnichannel campaigns.

LAURA FLANNERY-SACHTLEBEN (A ’05) has been appointed chief strategy officer at Landscape Forms, an international leader in integrated collections of high-design site furniture, structures, accessories and advanced LED lighting. She will lead the company’s strategic planning process and champion growth initiatives.

JEANNICE APPENTENG (L ’08) has been appointed a United States Magistrate Judge in the Northern District of Illinois. She is the first Black female Magistrate Judge in the district.

BRIAN MELTZER (B ’08) has been selected by The Baltimore Banner as an honoree for its 2025 Emerging Leaders event. The news outlet honors the next generation of emerging community leaders doing exceptional work to better Baltimore and the surrounding communities.

ADAM EITMANN (SLA ’09) has been named legislative director for Washington’s newly elected Attorney General Nick Brown.

ARIANNE LARIMER (SLA ’09, SSE ’09) has been named president of Symmetric, a leading sampling firm for companies performing survey research.

2010–2019

ELISE ROBERTS (SLA ’10) has been appointed director of media and public relations at The Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs (RICE), the largest nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing Black entrepreneurs.

MATTHEW MAWBY (L ’11) and **ELIZABETH CALDWELL (L ’11)** had their first child, Malia Mawby, on July 11, 2024, in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

A TOAST TO TRADITION On April 22, Class of 2025 graduates came together to honor those who held leadership positions in campus organizations at the Senior Leader Toast event.

Which class, professor or project had the biggest impact on you?

Too many to fit, but Dr. Basseches, Michael Jones, Dr. Egan, and Prof. Oliveros

Desiree Hardin (SLA ’25)

The Freeman Reports (now Burkenroad Reports) project taught me so much and has stayed with me throughout my entire career. I probably speak for a generation of business school students by saying Beau Parent’s Intro to Acct.

Jeffrey Eagan (B ’97)

Professor Heumann. I took two classes with her for SLAM and I learned more than any other class

Annabelle Shapiro (SSE ’25)

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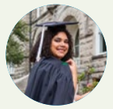
Which class, professor or project had the biggest impact on you?



Professor Rodning's Ancient Societies!! The reason I majored in Anthropology. Associate Dean Yest, he treats his students like family.
Tamara Guy (SLA '25, B '25)

Dr. Anastasia Gage! Her passion for public health and her students is transformative
Julia Bingel (PHTM '23, PHTM '25)

Katherine Johnson cares so deeply for her students! "I'm proud of you" means so much
Ella Robinet (SSE '25)

ZACHARY ROSENBERG (L '12) launched his new law firm Saikin Rosenberg, PLLC, where he is continuing his transactional real estate practice.

PATRICK LUAN (PHTM '14, SLA '14) has been selected for a Shawn Brimley Next Generation National Security Leaders Fellowship by the Center for New American Security. The fellowship brings together young professionals within the national security field to learn best practices and lessons in leadership.

2020 — 2025

SORRELL BROWN (B '22, SSE '22), a New Orleans-based general contractor and founder of Rellestate Renovations, recently completed a bold renovation of 1 Rail Street — a historically significant mid-century modern home in Lake Vista, Louisiana, originally designed in 1956 by George Saunders, a former professor in the School of Architecture and Built Environment.

DR. SASINI BENTOTA (M '23), a second-year psychiatry resident at the Medical University of South Carolina, has been awarded the distinguished Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry Fellowship, a highly selective fellowship that recognizes individuals for their exemplary leadership, academic excellence and commitment to advancing the field of psychiatry.

KEY TO SCHOOLS

SLA (School of Liberal Arts)
SSE (School of Science and Engineering)
A (School of Architecture)
B (A. B. Freeman School of Business)
L (Law School)
M (School of Medicine)
SW (School of Social Work)
PHTM (Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine)
SoPA (School of Professional Advancement)

A&S (College of Arts and Sciences, the men's liberal arts and sciences college that existed until 1994)
TC (Tulane College, the men's liberal arts and sciences college that existed from 1994 until 2006)
NC (Newcomb College, the women's liberal arts and sciences college that existed until 2006)
E (School of Engineering)
G (Graduate School)
UC (University College, the school for part-time adult learners. The college's name was changed to the School of Continuing Studies in 2006.)
SCS (School of Continuing Studies, which changed its name to the School of Professional Advancement in 2017)

Farewell

We say goodbye to Tulanians whose deaths were reported to us during the past quarter.

Dorothy Johnson Callahan (NC '47)
Frances Willard Fuller (G '48)
Walter L. Reiter (A&S '50)
Dorothy Iley Rogers (NC '50, G '52)
Samuel E. Maclin (A&S '52)
John M. Koffskey Jr. (E '53)
Margaret Maier (NC '53)
George J. Pinell (A&S '53)
William P. Harrington Jr. (E '54)
Sylvia Stahl Sterne (NC '54, G '74)
Gene Tye (E '54)
Carl W. Conrad (A&S '55, G '56)
Robert M. Fine (M '55)
Barry J. Hildebrand (E '55)
Allen H. Mackenzie (M '55)
John S. Fordtran (M '56)
Jerry L. Foster (B '56)
Edward J. Ross III (A&S '56)
James R. Alliston (A&S '57)
Mary Akin Colbert (NC '57)
Frederick C. Giraud (B '57)
Walter F. Jahncke II (E '57)
Ann Marie Gandolfo Smith (NC '57)
Donald R. Charles (A&S '58)
Eugenie Ricau Rocherolle (NC '58)
Edward M. Gray Jr. (E '59, E '62)
Irvin B. Hoover Jr. (B '59)
William A. Hunter (L '59)
Robert L. Risk (B '59)
William M. Wilder (M '59)
John E. Maxwell (B '60)
Maurice D. Mussafer (A&S '60)
Sidonie Evans Schmidt (NC '60)
Melvin E. Greer (G '61, G '63)
Caroline Sutter Nusloch (NC '61)
Anne Robertson Sellin (NC '62)
Catherine Porter Hannahan (NC '63)
Earl A. Jeansonne Sr. (UC '63)
Lois Lee Huck Ramsey (G '63, G '65)
Robin deArmas Terrebonne (NC '63)
Frederick M. Derr (E '64)
David L. Eustis Sr. (B '64)
Timothy D. Ferguson (SW '64)
James B. Jennings (B '64)
Morris H. Pardue (A&S '64, G '71)
Robert L. Sain Sr. (A&S '64)
Michael S. Tarre (B '64)
Andrew M. Weir (A&S '64, L '66)
Lorraine Alexander Baroco (NC '66)
Lester J. Keyser (G '66, G '70)
Elyse Derbes (UC '67)
Thomas E. Joiner (SW '67)
Robert W. Merrick Jr. (A&S '67)
Charles R. Coneway Jr. (A&S '68)
Stephen F. Heartwell (PHTM '68, PHTM '72)
Lloyd E. Isman (SW '68)
Marilyn McConnell (UC '68)
Dean R. Wilson Jr. (A&S '68)
Horace H. Harvey III (G '69, PHTM '69)
Cathy Goldstein Tasman (NC '69)
Madison H. Cockman Jr. (L '70)
Joel E. Miller (A&S '70)
Robert D. Stephens (A&S '70)
Michael L. Kurtz (G '71)
Rise Delmar Ochsner (M '71)
Carol Ehrhard Wells (G '71)
Clifton M. Davis Jr. (G '72)
Sherry Zox (NC '72)
Brian M. Begue (L '73)
John S. Fontaine (SW '74)
Mary Trotter Green (G '74)
Lynne Young Grisafe (UC '74)
James S. Cox (M '75)
Fredrick R. Duplantier (A&S '75)
Thomas H. Bornemann (SW '76)
James G. Rudulph (A&S '76)
Claudia Borman Ware (NC '76)
Franklin F. Starks III (A&S '77)
Kathleen O'Brien Carmouche (L '78)
Benjamin J. Legett Jr. (PHTM '78)
John M. Mintz (A&S '78)
Berney L. Strauss (L '78)
William P. Farrington (UC '79)
Warren A. Hutton (A&S '79)
Ronald H. Killen (M '79)
Louis S. Crews Jr. (B '80)
William M. Ringle III (G '80, G '85)
Alan D. Weinberger (L '80)
Christopher S. Bodde (A&S '84)
Lynn Perkins Perez (B '84)
Margaret Powers (G '85)
Lendy W. Pridgen (B '85, PHTM '85)
Albert S. Hulett (A '86)
Teresa Schleh Bruff (NC '88)
Pamela McCullen Ortiz (UC '89)
Jeffrey L. Barca (UC '92)
Richard L. Parker (G '90)
Cynthia Lakey Darce (UC '91, UC '94)
Martin B. Duhe (L '92)
George O. Avery II (UC '93)
Harry L. Terrell (B '94)
Pauline McDougal Taquino (UC '95)
Richard E. Williams (B '95)
Charles A. Brown (G '98)
Sean M. Maplethorpe (B '99)
Kelle' Hankton Parrales (E '99)
Annetta Ewell Dominick (UC '00, UC '01)
Fenisha Cohn Johnson (PHTM '01)
Ashley Beckerman Evans (NC '03)
Christina Rukavina (UC '04)
John A. Noel Jr. (B '05)
Angela Patterson (SW '06)
Judith De Rouchey Wright (SLA '07)
Christian Myers (SSE '15)
Caleb G. Gardner (B '18)

TRIBUTE

J. BENNETT JOHNSTON

Longtime U.S. Sen. J. Bennett Johnston, who passed away on March 25, 2025, at the age of 92, was a Tulane honorary degree recipient whose impact can be seen across the university's campuses.

The J. Bennett Johnston Quadrangle, bordered by a grove of native plants and trees, is nestled among Tulane's science and engineering buildings on the uptown campus. On the downtown campus, the J. Bennett Johnston Health and Research Building — commonly referred to as the JBJ — is one of Tulane's premier research centers.

Johnston, who represented Louisiana in the U.S. Senate from 1972 to 1996, was widely known for his impact on energy policy as well as initiatives to fund environmental and biomedical research.

In 1986, Johnston was awarded an honorary Tulane degree at that year's Commencement. At the ceremony, he was cited for his ability to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and for his popularity among constituents, who had given him 84 percent of the vote in the most recent election.

Photo source: U.S. Congress - https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=msu.31293012373902&view=1up&seq=68&q1=johnston

In 1992, Tulane named the Health and Environmental Research Building, then under construction, for Johnston, whose interest in research led to the creation of the Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research. Tulane's then-President Eamon Kelly credited Johnston with securing $33 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Defense to make the center a reality.

"Thanks to Bennett Johnston's vision, approximately 50 researchers — basic scientists, physicians, pharmacologists, toxicologists, epidemiologists, engineers and specialists in health education — today have a mechanism to engage in a unique collaborative effort to solve the complex environmental problems that plague our world," Kelly said at the building's dedication.

In 2001, the J. Bennett Johnston Bioenvironmental Sciences Quadrangle was dedicated along with the Merryl and Sam Israel Jr. Environmental Sciences Building, the Robert E. Flowerree III Courtyard and the W. M. Keck Instrument Room in the Israel building.

During the dedication, a large marker was unveiled naming the quadrangle in honor of Johnston. Several nearby buildings were either constructed or renovated with funds that Johnston helped Tulane obtain during his Senate career.

"The seeds that we planted have sprouted into mighty oaks," Johnston said at the ceremony. "My association with this university has been one of the crowning delights of my political career."

A plaque on the quadrangle praises Johnston for his "unwavering commitment to improving scientific research and education in the State of Louisiana and at Tulane University." It expresses appreciation for Johnston's efforts on behalf of what was then the most significant growth of scientific infrastructure in Tulane's history.

2025 ALUMNI AWARDS

A. B. Freeman School of Business Outstanding Alumni Award

Andrew E. Friedman (B ’99)

Attending Tulane on a baseball scholarship, Andrew Friedman graduated from the A. B. Freeman School of Business in 1999. After early roles in finance, he rose in the ranks of Major League Baseball to executive positions with the Tampa Bay Rays and later the Los Angeles Dodgers, who won the 2020 World Series under his leadership. He is a member of the Tulane Athletics Hall of Fame and a recipient of the Don and Lora Peters Career Achievement Award.

Robert V. Tessaro Young Alumni Volunteer Award

Andrew A. Pritzker (SLA ’14)

Andrew Pritzker is a dedicated Tulane alumnus, serving on the National Campaign Council and the Center for Public Service Executive Director’s Advisory Council. As a student, he was a committed member of the Tulane Debate Society, creating and supporting the debate tournament, which is now named in his honor. A co-founding partner of TAWANI Ventures, he is also a trustee of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Scott Cowen Service Award

Jane L. Wolfe (SLA ’12)

Jane L. Wolfe is a professor, entrepreneur and community advocate. After earning her BA from Tulane and a master’s from Harvard Divinity School, she co-founded Melba’s Poboys, named Louisiana’s fastest-growing business by Inc. Wolfe also teaches world religion and leads the Eat and Read Literacy Project. A dedicated Tulane alumna, she has served on multiple advisory boards and actively supports community-focused entrepreneurship in New Orleans.

Lisa Jackson Professional Achievement Award

Angela O’Byrne (A ’83)

Angela O’Byrne, president of Perez, APC, is a licensed architect in over 20 states and a general contractor in three. A Tulane alumna with a master’s in architecture, she has grown Perez into an international firm with locations across the country and projects around the globe. She’s received numerous honors, including SBA’s Small Business Person of the Year for Louisiana, and serves as chair of the Dean’s Advisory Council at Tulane School of Architecture and Built Environment.

Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine Outstanding Alumni Award

Paulin Basinga (PHTM ’06, PHTM ’09)

Dr. Paulin Basinga is the Africa director for the Gates Foundation, where he leads health and development efforts across the continent. Since joining the foundation in 2012, he has held key roles in HIV, tuberculosis, and maternal and child health research. A physician and global health expert, he is also a professor at the University of Washington and serves on the Board of Directors of the African Economic Research Consortium.

GOLD Professional Achievement Award

Juan Carlos Monterrey Gómez (SLA ’14)

Juan Carlos Monterrey Gómez is Panama’s special representative for climate change and a global leader in climate diplomacy. He has led Panama’s delegations to COP26 and COP29 and founded Climate Resilient, a think tank advancing climate policy in Latin America and the Caribbean. A 2023 Pritzker Environmental Genius Award finalist, he advises international organizations on climate finance and adaptation and was named a Hero for Panama by TVN in 2023.

Community Builder Award

Ruth Janelle Nguyen (SoPA ’21)

Ruth Janelle Nguyen is a learning and development specialist for the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee, where she creates and manages learning and development programs for staff and partners. She is a passionate advocate for the Paralympic movement and para sports, with the goal of making the Paralympic Games a can’t-miss event. Janelle is a Krewe of Alla member and volunteers with the Denver Zoo and Conservation Alliance.

Distinguished Alumni Award

John D. Georges (B ’83)

John D. Georges is CEO of Georges Enterprises, a Louisiana-based conglomerate with ventures in media, food, real estate and more. He owns The Advocate, Times-Picayune and Galatoire’s, and founded the Galatoire’s Foundation to support cultural initiatives. A dedicated civic leader and philanthropist, Georges also played a key role in post-Katrina recovery. A loyal Tulane supporter, he served on the President’s Council and helped bring football back to campus.

Tulane Medical Alumni Association Outstanding Alumni Award

Joseph E. Bavaria (E ’79, M ’83)

Dr. Joseph Bavaria is executive director of the Bruce and Robbi Toll Heart and Vascular Institute at Jefferson Health and chair of Cardiac Surgery at Thomas Jefferson University’s Sidney Kimmel Medical College. A leader in complex aortic disease and valve surgery, he has performed over 6,000 heart operations and led numerous clinical trials. A longtime Tulane supporter, Bavaria was inducted as an Alpha Omega Alpha alumnus member in 2015.

Bobby Boudreau Spirit Award

Andrew L. Plauché, Jr. (A&S ’69, L ’72)

Andrew “Andy” Plauché practiced law for several decades in Lake Charles and New Orleans, co-founding Plauché Maselli Parkerson with his Tulane undergraduate and law classmate, Joe Maselli. A proud member of Tulane’s “Lake Charles Connection,” he has supported the university through the Green Wave Club and President’s Council. Andy and his wife, Diane, now retired, enjoy traveling to see their five children and nine grandchildren while remaining deeply engaged with Tulane.

International Award for Achievement

Daniel G. Bausch (F ’94, PHTM ’94)

Dr. Daniel Bausch is an internationally recognized leader in global health, specializing in emerging tropical diseases like Ebola, Lassa and Marburg. With more than 25 years of experience across Africa, Latin America and Asia, he has held key roles at the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. Now a visiting professor in Singapore and London, he strives to ensure scientific advances benefit those most in need.

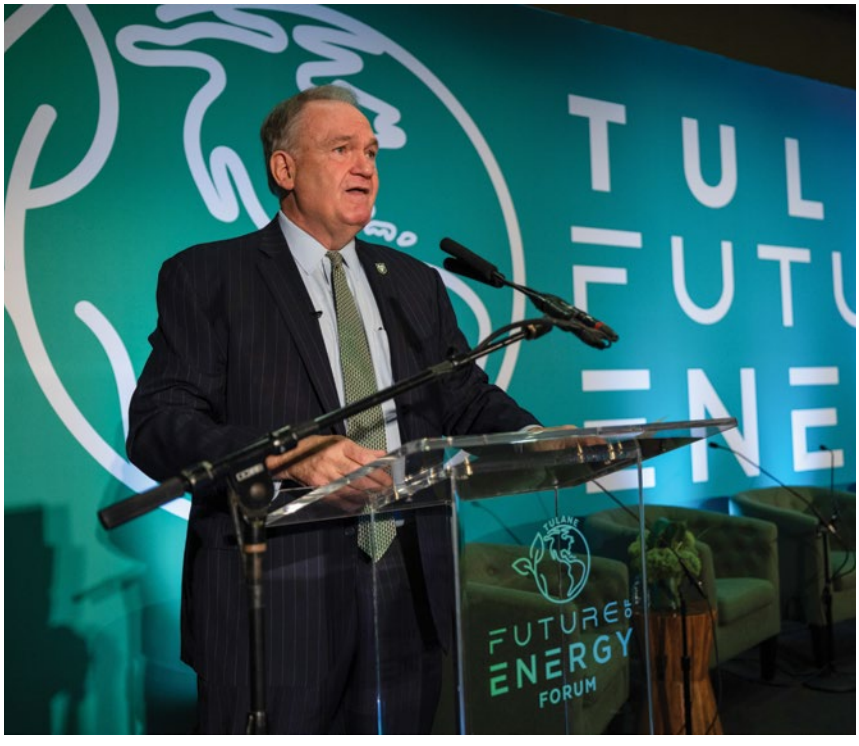
Dermot McGlinchey Lifetime Achievement Award

Myrna L. Daniels (NC ’52)

Myrna L. Daniels, a retired speech pathologist, is part of a proud three-generation Tulane family, including her brother, son and grandchildren — three of whom graduated from the School of Medicine. With her late husband, John H. Daniels, a renowned Toronto developer, she built a lasting philanthropic legacy. Her recent gifts to Tulane support geriatric initiatives, clinical research and a faculty chair at the School of Medicine.

ENERGY INTO ACTION

BY MICHAEL A. FITTS, President



President Michael A. Fitts delivered welcome remarks at the inaugural Future of Energy Forum in November 2024.

In physics, the Law of Conservation of Energy dictates that energy cannot be created — it can only be transferred from one form to another. Wherever Tulanians gather, be it a classroom, a lab, a playing field or a conference room, the energy is palpable and the air is charged with possibility. Together, we convert our curiosity and creativity into fuel for innovation and progress.

We do this in a world where the demand for energy is skyrocketing. The rise of AI and the growth of emerging economies have accelerated our mandate to find creative solutions to power a new and exciting future.

At Tulane, we are uniquely positioned to seek answers to the increasingly complex questions surrounding the future of energy. We are a leading research university, located in one of the world's most significant regions for energy production. Our interdisciplinary spirit facilitates collaboration across fields, enabling innovation that takes a holistic approach to energy and other multifaceted issues.

From the Tulane Energy Institute to the Tulane Energy Law and Policy Center to the ByWater Institute, our students and scholars are contributing to critical conversations and generating important new ideas. And we are actively developing a new infrastructure to connect and support our work in the energy space across schools.

Building on this strong foundation, we launched the Future of Energy Forum last fall. This marquee event incubates dialogue and exchange among thought leaders, experts and stakeholders from business, government, academia and nonprofits. The inaugural forum drew over 900 registrants and featured 100 speakers and panelists, including the former governor of Louisiana and the former U.S. Secretary of Energy.

Among the panelists was Ken Ahmann, who was hired in 2004 to build a power plant for the Cachil DeHe Band of Wintun Indians. The tribe was experiencing over 50 outages per year, so they decided to build their own energy infrastructure. Twenty years later, Ken is the COO of Colusa Indian Energy, the only tribally owned micro-grid developer in the United States. By literally empowering their community, the tribe now operates 100 percent off-grid, and they've had zero power outages over the last 12 years.

On Tulane's campuses, we've partnered with ENFRA (formerly Bernhard, LLC) on Project RISE, a 30-year Energy-as-a-Service agreement that hardens our infrastructure against weather events and local power failures. By improving efficiency and expanding our energy sources, we are reducing our carbon footprint even as our physical footprint continues to grow.

In tandem with our operational progress, the Future of Energy Forum advances Tulane's leadership in the energy expansion. It joins a number of university initiatives that are bridging the gap between our academic output and real-world needs across countless critical areas. Like energy itself, our research is a vital resource that is essential to our future.

So, we are hardening our research and educational infrastructure as well. We're leaning into what already powers us, revitalizing our downtown campus to exponentially increase biomedical and clinical research and establish a national hub of discovery and innovation. At the same time, we're launching more interdisciplinary centers, commercializing new technology, and preparing students to lead for the future.

Fueled by our unique creativity, culture and expertise, we are expanding what's possible through a broader array of opportunities. The Louisiana Promise is building new educational pathways and helping more students from our home state realize the dream of a college education. New academic programs from landscape engineering to nursing are addressing vitally important needs, and presidential chairs are attracting internationally renowned faculty who are making breakthrough discoveries in areas ranging from biomedicine to flood prevention.

All of these achievements are driven by the students, faculty, staff and alumni who bring their own energy and passion to carrying out our mission. Our task is to build and maintain a university that supports the transformation of this energy into life-changing ideas and innovations. We are well on our way.

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

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HOMECOMING · REUNION · FAMILY WEEKEND

November 13–16, 2025

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Wave Weekend at Tulane is your chance to connect, celebrate and soak in the excitement of our campus buzzing with Green Wave pride. Don't miss this unforgettable weekend filled with fun for all Tulanians!

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The sunset casts a pastel glow over Lake Pontchartrain as palm trees sway in the lakefront breeze.

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS