

TULANIAN



BRIDGE *to* TOMORROW

*The Mussafers' support helps students
cross from classroom to career*



Azaleas steal the spotlight in front of the Lavin-Bernick Center for University Life, bringing a bright burst of spring to the heart of campus.
PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

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BRIDGE TO TOMORROW

Thanks to a generous \$10 million gift from David and Marion Mussafer, a new initiative will ensure every Tulane undergraduate student has the chance to gain real-world work experience during their college career.



24 FOR ONE'S OWN

Across New Orleans, Tulane students put scholarship into action by solving problems and strengthening neighborhoods. Almost 20 years after service learning became mandatory, it continues to define what it means to be a Tulanian: learning by doing, and doing for others.



30 PLAYING FOR ATTENTION

How do babies learn what to pay attention to, and why does it matter? At Tulane's Learning and Brain Development Lab, researchers study how early interactions with caregivers shape attention, learning and brain development in the first year of life.

Your support helps every Newcomb-Tulane College student pursue paid internships, mentorships, and real-world career experiences with confidence.



Learn more about the Mussafer Internship Initiative

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Front cover: David and Marion Mussafer provided a \$10 million gift to Tulane to establish a new internship initiative. Photo by Lucy Lu



PHOTO BY KENNY LASS



First Look



During a record-breaking season that carried Tulane Green Wave Football to the College Football Playoff for the first time in program history, Yulman Stadium was filled with unforgettable moments from start to finish.

Left: Defensive Back and All-Conference Kick Returner TJ Smith is head over heels as the Green Wave takes the field on Aug. 30, 2025, marking the start of a historic year at Yulman Stadium. Top right and bottom right: Wave Weekend 2025 brought the energy on Nov. 15, as the Green Wave defeated Florida Atlantic, 35-24. The Tulane University Marching Band and fans turned out in full force, helping power the victory and celebrate a season to remember.

Up First



ONLY AT TULANE

The Bead Three sculpture on Tulane's uptown campus is a popular, and challenging, way for students to add their Mardi Gras treasures to campus history... IF they can make the perfect throw...

TULANE SCHOLAR SOLVES ROMAN ARTIFACT MYSTERY

BY BARRI BRONSTON

Tulane University Professor Susann Lusnia, who has taught classical studies for 26 years in the Tulane School of Liberal Arts, was instrumental in solving a mystery of historical proportions by authenticating a 1,900-year-old Roman grave marker found last fall in a New Orleans backyard.

It all began in April 2025 when Daniella Santoro, a Tulane anthropologist, and her husband, Aaron Lorenzo, unearthed what appeared to be a slab of old stone as they were landscaping their backyard. They were especially curious when they noticed that Latin inscriptions had been carved into the surface.

A colleague in the Department of Anthropology referred Santoro to Lusnia, who was both shocked and thrilled by the discovery. With help from Ryan Gray, a University of New Orleans archaeology professor, Lusnia immediately recognized that the inscription looked authentic, as the lettering, phrasing and funerary formula were consistent with genuine Roman gravestones.

Using keywords from the inscription, she searched epigraphic databases and matched it to a second-century marker honoring Sextus Congenius Verus, a Roman sailor.

The stone had once been housed in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Civitavecchia, Italy, but was recorded as missing after World War II. It turns out the previous owners of Santoro's house had inherited the stone from a relative, used it as a garden decoration and forgot it when they moved. They had no idea of its significance.

The artifact is now in the custody of the FBI Art Crimes Team, which will transport it back to the Civitavecchia museum as part of the repatriation process. Lusnia said the museum plans to hold a special event to welcome the artifact back home, and she will attend. She also delivered a paper on the discovery at the annual meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America.

The discovery of such a curious artifact so far from its origins and Lusnia's scholarly sleuthing soon became international news.

Lusnia fielded one media request after the other, beginning with a local WWL-TV interview at her office. Two days later, the Associated Press interviewed Lusnia in the yard where the artifact was found.

"A bit later, there was a request from the New York Times for a telephone interview, and then an interview with USA Today and a third interview that same day with a reporter at The Times-Picayune," Lusnia said.

The following week, The Washington Post, the BBC and the Tulane Hullabaloo took their turns interviewing Lusnia. Other outlets covering the story included The Guardian, Smithsonian, NBC News, Fox News and even Popular Mechanics.

From a media standpoint, Lusnia said she is not surprised by all the attention that the artifact has garnered. "I think it's the mystery and intrigue of the discovery as well as the randomness of it that something Roman would be found in New Orleans," she said. 📖



"The team brought a wide range of skills and data sets to visualize the plate structure and its properties, and our modeling systematically eliminated the possible factors controlling where plate rifting initiates."

Cynthia Ebinger, Marshall-Heape Chair in Geology, School of Science and Engineering, in *Futurity*, on research that discovered why some parts of the Earth's crust remain strong while others give way.

"Somebody who responded really well at the beginning may eventually need a more powerful or different medication."

Dr. Shauna Levy, medical director of Tulane University's Bariatric and Weight Loss Center, in *TODAY.com*, on why next-generation weight-loss drugs could expand options beyond current GLP-1 therapies

"Controlling all those factors is also good for improving cardiovascular health."

Yilin Yoshida, assistant professor of medicine, School of Medicine, in *Medical Xpress*, on how improving risk factors associated with type 2 diabetes may offset dementia risk.

"(Outbreaks are) often taking place within the community, and oftentimes we don't know that they're happening."

When we have these areas where people are in really close contact — things like day care facilities, nursing homes and cruise ships — it's more likely to be diagnosed, reported and brought to our attention."

Sarah R. Michaels, assistant professor, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, in *USA TODAY*, on why community outbreaks can go unnoticed until they reach high-contact settings.

MATT FORTÉ REFLECTS ON FOOTBALL, FAMILY AND LEGACY

BY BARRI BRONSTON

Former Green Wave standout and Chicago Bears star Matt Forté (B'09) returned to his alma mater to headline a Wave Weekend conversation in which he traced his journey from a football-obsessed child in Slidell, to a record-setting Tulanian, to one of the most versatile and respected running backs in the National Football League.

As part of his Presidential Speaker Series, Tulane University President Michael A. Fitts welcomed Forté to a packed Dixon Hall, where the crowd included dozens of cheering Chicago Bears fans. Fitts described Forté as someone who “epitomizes the Tulane principle of ‘not for oneself but for one’s own.’”

“He has a unique combination of intelligence, determination, natural talent and grit that defined his success, not just on the gridiron but in life,” Fitts said.

Forté, who played 10 seasons in the NFL with the Chicago Bears and the New York Jets, set an NFL record for receptions by a running back in a single season and is one of only three players in league history to record at least 1,000 rushing yards and 100 receptions in a single year.

His new memoir, “Stay in the Game: Making the Most of Every Season”, blends stories from his football journey with reflections on family, faith and the lessons that shaped his views on success, resilience and legacy. He will sign copies of his book when he returns to campus for the New Orleans Book Festival at Tulane University March 12-15.

“When you choose to go to Tulane, it’s not a four-year decision. It’s a 40-year decision,” Forté said, noting his finance degree from the A. B.

Freeman School of Business prepared him for life after football. “When you get your Tulane degree, it really means something.”

Forté said Tulane taught him what it truly means to be a student athlete — and how he had to stay committed to his studies to prepare for life after football. It is a message he emphasizes whenever he speaks with college athletes.

As a Tulanian, Forté was one of the most accomplished players in Green Wave football history. In his senior year, he earned first-team All-Conference USA honors, Associated Press third-team All-America recognition and semifinalist spots for several national awards.

Forté traced his love of football to his preschool years when he became obsessed with the game while living in Lake Charles. His father Gene, a former Tulane defensive lineman and team captain, wouldn’t allow him to play until he was 7. By then, the family had moved to Slidell.

“I remember the day we signed up and they gave you your helmet and shoulder pads, and I think I slept in the pads that night,” he said.

Drafted in the second round by the Chicago Bears in 2008, Forté spent eight seasons in Chicago and two with the New York Jets before retiring.

His What’s Your Forté Foundation, founded by him and his wife in 2013, supports youth in the Chicago area through family services, economic empowerment and educational programming. The couple also partners with Pro Athletes Outreach to help professional athletes navigate financial and personal challenges.

Forté says these efforts have helped him find his purpose off the field. 🏈

SCHOOL FOCUSES ON BUILDING STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

BY BARRI BRONSTON

A new initiative at Tulane University’s Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine will focus on training local and state health care employees who lack formal education in public health, including in areas such as epidemiology, health policy and statistics.

The ambitious effort captures the mission and momentum that have defined the school’s first year under its new name, which honors Celia Scott Weatherhead and her landmark total lifetime giving of more than \$160 million in support of Tulane.

“We promoted this to her, and she saw the potential,” said Thomas A. LaVeist, dean and Weatherhead Presidential Chair in Health Equity. “Only about 20% of the employees of state and local health departments nationwide have any training in public health.”

Rodney Anthony, the inaugural director of the school’s new Workforce Development Program, is leading the training initiative, which he expects to launch in the summer of 2026.

“The work has a lot of energy behind it,” said Anthony, an assistant professor at the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, who holds a doctorate in health science.

The program is especially meaningful to Celia Scott Weatherhead herself. Public health workforce development is among the key areas receiving seed funding from her support for the school.

The program is geared to working professionals in a variety of roles, including physicians, nurses, administrators, health educators, clinical researchers and policy experts, as well as students interested in exploring the public health field.

The certificate program comprises five courses: Foundations in Public Health, Biostatistics for Public Health, Epidemiology for Public Health, Health Systems Policy and Management and Design Strategies in Public Health Programs. Courses can be completed on a full- or part-time basis, online or in-person.

Those who earn the certificate will have a better understanding of how diseases spread and are tracked, how to interpret and analyze health data, how physical and social environments affect health outcomes and how to design and evaluate public health policy, Anthony said.

Anthony and his team are planning a series of focus groups with health leaders and practitioners to ensure the program meets real-world needs. He plans to work closely with employers so that participants can balance work responsibilities with their studies.

While many public health schools have seen steep enrollment declines since the pandemic, Tulane’s numbers have remained steady — and early data show applications for next year trending upward.

LaVeist credits the Weatherhead name and giving that is supporting a growing slate of innovative programs.

Last year, the school was named among the Top 10 public health graduate schools in the nation, according to the 2025 U.S. News & World Report rankings.

“This is more than a number — it’s a reflection of our relentless commitment to excellence in education, research and service,” LaVeist said. 🏆

A wave of elegance: Mignon Faget creates new jewelry line for Tulane

BY PAM RADTKE

Tulane University and the renowned New Orleans design house Mignon Faget have partnered on a new jewelry line that blends the university’s spirit with the brand’s signature artistic style. The collection — featuring a pendant, earrings and pin — offers an elegant reinterpretation of Tulane’s wave motif through a distinctly Mignon Faget lens.

The collaboration grew from an early conversation between Maghan Oroszi, CEO of Mignon Faget, and Tulane’s marketing team, where both sides agreed the pieces should reflect Tulane’s identity without relying on familiar, literal symbols. “Thousands of companies can make a T or a wave,” said Carmen Sarduy, Tulane’s assistant vice president of marketing. “I wanted their design capability.”

Oroszi shared the vision. “I think the final piece is a classic Mignon Faget design, but it also represents Tulane,” she said. “I hope people see this as an elevated form that honors Mignon’s legacy.”



That legacy is rooted in Tulane history. Mignon Faget, a 1955 Newcomb College graduate, long credited her Newcomb experience with shaping her artistic approach. Oroszi — who also attended Tulane — brought her own architectural and minimalist sensibility to the project.

“These are the kinds of gifts that you would give when someone starts Tulane or when they graduate,” Sarduy said. “It can tie an alum grandmother with an alum granddaughter.”

The Wave Weekend Collection is available at the Tulane Bookstore, Mignon Faget’s Magazine Street and Lakeside stores and online. 🌊

CancerConnect events bring multidisciplinary researchers together to fight cancer

BY MOLLY McCORRY

How do researchers begin collaborations with each other when they work in different fields? At the CancerConnect events co-hosted by the Tulane Cancer Center, it looks a lot like speed dating. In November, during an event between the Cancer Center and the School of Liberal Arts, philosophers talked with health policy experts, sociologists had conversations with pharmacologists and epidemiologists and anthropologists found common ground.

“All of us have a shared goal of finding better treatment options and ultimately cures for cancer,” said Dr. Stefan Grant, director of the Tulane Cancer Center. “By bringing together researchers from different fields and backgrounds, we can explore how new ideas and perspectives can drive progress in cancer research and care.”

The School of Liberal Arts might seem like an unlikely partner for cancer research, but the humanities and social sciences offer new ways of thinking about some of the most complex problems, said School of Liberal Arts Dean Brian T. Edwards. “Whether this opens up new approaches to treatment and care, or deeper understanding of how doctors and their patients approach interactions around cancer — or many other possibilities raised in our meetings — this partnership offers an exciting new avenue for future cross-disciplinary work.”

The CancerConnect event in November was the third such event in 2025 designed to connect members of the Cancer Center, which is housed within the School of Medicine, with researchers across all schools. The collaborations have already borne fruit. Researchers are initiating projects, including research into head and neck cancer, and applying for joint grants.

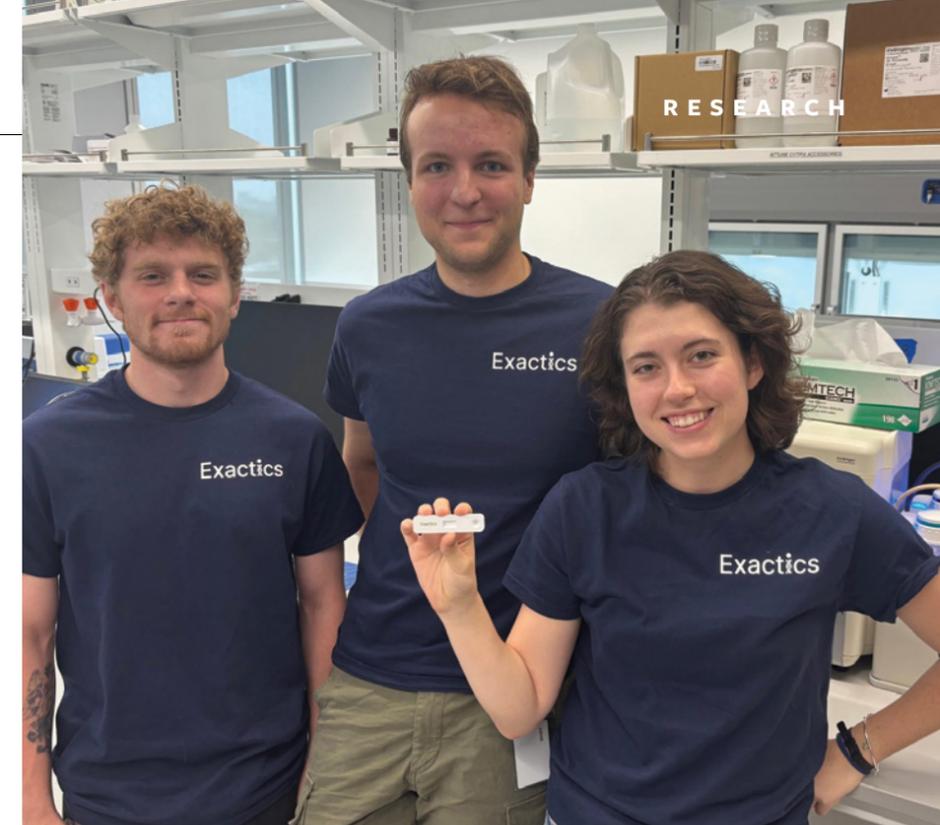
Previous events included collaboration with the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and the School of Science and Engineering. 📍



Stephen Ostertag, associate professor of sociology in the School of Liberal Arts, and Loren Gragert, assistant professor of biomedical informatics and genomics in the School of Medicine, were among the faculty members who attended the most recent CancerConnect event on Tulane's uptown campus.

TEST A TICK, GET ANSWERS: STUDENT-FOUNDED STARTUP DEVELOPS RAPID LYME TEST

BY MOLLY McCORRY AND JEANNE EXNICIOS



Exactics co-founders Sean Greeby, chief scientific officer; Julian Kage, chief executive officer; and Dylan Murray, chief operating officer, in the lab with a prototype of their new Lyme disease test.

At-home test being developed by Tulane senior Dylan Murray and her company Exactics will allow anyone to determine within 15 minutes if a tick carries the Lyme disease pathogen.

“This technology is going to be life-changing,” Murray said. The foundational technology behind the test can also be used to detect other infectious diseases.

The TiCK Test is similar to at-home COVID-19 tests, but rather than testing human saliva, it analyzes the tick itself. When a person or an animal is bitten by a tick, the user removes the tick, mixes it with a solution and places that solution on the test. Within minutes, the test determines whether the tick has transmitted Lyme disease in the past 24 hours, allowing the user to see a doctor or veterinarian and begin treatment before symptoms appear. Earlier detection and treatment of Lyme disease can lead to significantly better outcomes.

Murray tapped into Tulane's innovation ecosystem to jump-start Exactics with her co-founders. In October 2024, she entered the Tulane Innovation Institute's Open Medical Innovation Challenge (OPEN MIC) Night and the Albert Lepage Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Pitch Friday Competition, earning \$2,500 in prize money. By spring 2025, she advanced in the Pitch Friday Series Grand Prize Round and the Tulane Business Model Competition, securing a combined \$45,000.

“What's awesome about Tulane students — and Dylan in particular — is that they're curious. And when curiosity meets a program at Tulane, it can really turn into something pretty special,” said Kimberly Gramm, David and Marion Mussafer Chief Innovation & Entrepreneurship Officer at the Innovation Institute.

Exactics will allow anyone to determine within 15 minutes if a tick found on a person or an animal carries the Lyme disease pathogen.

Murray also connected with Monica Embers, an internationally renowned Lyme disease researcher at Tulane, who is helping validate the test at the Tulane National Biomedical Research Center at its Covington, Louisiana, campus.

Tulane Ventures, an early-stage investment fund launched by the Innovation Institute, has invested \$250,000 in Exactics, enabling the company to continue development and bring the test to market.

The TiCK Test is powered by Exactics' patented Proteus+ platform, a modular system designed to be adapted to detect hundreds of other infectious diseases by simply swapping biomarkers.

The idea began with CEO Julian Kage, who developed the core technology after

witnessing a friend become seriously ill from Lyme disease. Kage and Murray first met as freshman lab partners. The two stayed in touch, and Kage later invited her to help commercialize the technology alongside co-founders Sean Greeby, Max Almeida and Zachary Sarmoen.

“Dylan's entrepreneurial spirit is a strong example of the potential we are seeing in student-led innovation across Tulane University,” Gramm said. “Exactics has quickly gained traction and the potential to scale.” Earlier this year, the startup made history as the first team to win both the College and Social New Venture Challenges at the University of Chicago, securing \$250,000 in prizes.

Exactics has mapped out an initial market-entry strategy targeting the pet and veterinary markets through a licensing deal with Tick Solutions Global, the inventors of the TiCK MiTT. A 2026 launch is planned in major pet health and outdoor retailers, with a human version of the TiCK Test to follow pending regulatory approval. 📍

Scholar Anita Raj elected to the National Academy of Medicine

BY STACEY PLAISANCE



Tulane University's Anita Raj, a globally recognized scholar whose research on gender, public health and violence prevention is among the most widely cited worldwide, has been elected to the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), one of the highest honors in health and medicine.

Raj serves as executive director of Tulane's Newcomb Institute and as the Nancy Reeves Dreux Endowed Chair and Professor of Public Health in the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. With more than two decades of leadership at the nexus of health, gender and global development, her work has shaped public health strategies across the globe.

"This selection recognizes Dr. Raj as a world-leading researcher whose innovative and interdisciplinary approach is discovering real solutions to society's greatest challenges," Tulane President Michael A. Fitts said, noting she exemplifies the quality and impact of Tulane faculty.

Election to NAM honors individuals with outstanding professional achievement and service, chosen through a highly selective process recognizing major contributions to medical science, health care and public health.

Provost Robin Forman praised Raj as "one of the country's most important and impactful researchers" and a dedicated campus leader.

"To be recognized by the nation's leading scientific minds is deeply gratifying and very inspiring," Raj said. "I am profoundly grateful for this recognition, which reaffirms the value of research focused on improving the well-being of all people."

Raj has led large-scale, cross-disciplinary research initiatives addressing gender-based violence, adolescent and women's health and access to education and economic opportunity. Her work has been supported by the National Institutes of Health, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund. A prolific scholar, she has authored more than 350 peer-reviewed publications and advises academic, nonprofit and policy organizations worldwide. 📖

"I thought that in a year or two we'd come back to baseline. It hasn't decreased at all."

Anand Irimpen, cardiologist and professor, School of Medicine, in *The New Yorker*, on research showing that rates of heart attacks in New Orleans tripled after Hurricane Katrina and have remained elevated ever since.

"Research so far suggests that drinking coffee doesn't raise the risk of cardiovascular disease, and it seems to lower the risk of some chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes."

Dr. Lu Qi, professor, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, in *The Independent*, on why drinking coffee earlier in the day may protect heart health.

"It's a combination of rebellion, personal style, otherworldly confidence and charisma."

Joel Dinerstein, professor of English, School of Liberal Arts, in *The Guardian*, on why "cool" remains influential, elusive and difficult to define.

"It's important to recognize that a large percentage of heart failure patients have malnutrition, which increases mortality and other adverse clinical events."

Dr. Keith C. Ferdinand, professor of medicine; Gerald S. Berenson Chair in Preventive Cardiology; director of preventive cardiology, in *Medscape*, on a study showing healthy food improves heart health.

ALUM JEFF FROST HELPS POWER APPLE TV+'S LATEST HIT — AND TULANE'S GROWING ENTERTAINMENT LAW FOOTPRINT

BY ALINA HERNANDEZ



Jeff Frost (left) founded the Tulane Entertainment Negotiation Competition along with Seamus Blair when the latter was a second-year law student.

Long before Jeff Frost (L '89) helped launch Apple TV+'s newest sci-fi smash, "Pluribus," he was already busy shaping something far closer to home: Tulane Law's growing identity as a destination for students chasing careers in entertainment and sports law.

Frost is chairman and CEO of Bristol Circle Entertainment and executive producer of "Pluribus." He also co-founded Tulane Law's spring Tulane Entertainment and Sports Law Conference, now one of the school's signature annual events.

More recently, he helped launch the Tulane Entertainment Negotiation Competition (TENC), a first-of-its-kind, student-run contest drawing teams from across the country to New Orleans.

As Frost puts it: "Tulane Law wasn't getting the recognition in Hollywood that I knew it deserved. We had so many alumni working in the business. I wanted the industry to see Tulane as a real presence."

It's no surprise he felt that pull. Frost's own ascent through the entertainment industry is a case study in how legal training can fuel creative success. He began his career at ABC and The Walt Disney Company, applying the precision he learned at Tulane to the high-stakes world of network contracts. That work led him into business affairs and, ultimately, to the presidency of Sony Pictures Television Studios.

There, he helped oversee an extraordinary slate of programming including "Breaking Bad," "The Boys," "Cobra Kai," "The Good Doctor," and "Shark Tank." Frost understood the legal, financial and creative pressures that shape modern storytelling and the seismic change that new technologies, like streaming, brought to the industry. He built a reputation for balancing all of it.

That perspective proved critical when veteran creator Vince Gilligan brought him two new scripts, the seeds of what would become "Pluribus." Frost said he was "completely blown away." The project became Bristol Circle's first production. Streamers lined up; four offered straight two-season deals, a rarity in the current marketplace. Apple won the bidding with what Frost described as a "very healthy budget."

When "Pluribus" debuted Nov. 7, the impact was immediate. It drew strong reviews, and the series hit No. 1 on Apple TV+'s internal charts. The story is a post-apocalyptic psychological thriller in which "the most miserable person on Earth must save the world from happiness" and already has a two-season order. And Frost is optimistic: "We've just scratched the surface. The response has been overwhelming, and there's so much story left to tell."

While "Pluribus" showcases Frost's creative instincts on a global stage, his work at Tulane reflects another side of him: mentor, builder, connector. His early mock negotiation session at the law school, featuring a studio executive, an entertainment lawyer and an actress working through a series deal, sparked what would become an entertainment competition. After then-second-year law student Seamus Blair (L '25) suggested expanding it into a full competition, Frost helped write scenarios, recruit judges and structure the event.

The 2025 competition, only its second, brought together 16 teams from nine law schools, judged by more than 30 industry leaders. More than half the judges are Tulane Law alumni, a testament to the network Frost has created.

Frost says his trajectory — merging legal expertise, business strategy and creative vision — shows how far a Tulane Law degree can carry someone with ambition and imagination.

"Tulane gave me the foundation to enter entertainment," Frost said. "Being able to come back and help the next generation find their way into this business, that's incredibly meaningful to me." 📖



HALL AT THE HELM

BY BARRI BRONSTON

Will Hall was named head football coach of the Green Wave in December. Hall, who served under two previous Tulane head coaches, said that he knows what it takes to win.



NEW LABS FUEL TULANE'S HISTORIC DOWNTOWN EXPANSION

BY BARRI BRONSTON

Tulane University is entering a pivotal moment in its presence in downtown New Orleans. Not only is the university planning the multi-million-dollar redevelopment of the former Charity Hospital building, but it also recently completed its most significant renovation in nearly a century at the Hutchinson Memorial Building, home to the School of Medicine since 1930.

"The transformed space is almost as large as the Steven and Jann Paul Hall for Science and Engineering on the uptown campus," Tulane President Michael A. Fitts said. "This project is the equivalent of adding a new building to our downtown campus. Its scale and scope strengthen Tulane's commitment to bringing researchers from a wide array of fields and specialties together to discover the cures and treatments of tomorrow."

As a critical component of the university's growing biomedical research footprint, the new space on Hutchinson's fifth and seventh floors represents major growth in the research corridor located in the heart of the city.

"We've been growing our research substantially for the last several years, but this will allow us to accelerate this growth with state-of-the-art lab space," said Dr. Lee Hamm, senior vice president and dean of the School of Medicine.

The signature component of the \$35 million Hutchinson project is the sweeping modernization of approximately 40,000 to 50,000 square feet on the two floors, with the majority of work occurring on the seventh floor.

The spaces on both floors have been completely gutted and rebuilt as state-of-the-art, contemporary labs. Together, the

two floors will provide laboratory space for more than two dozen principal investigators and their research teams and dramatically expand the School of Medicine's research capacity.

"This marks a new chapter for our team, and we're deeply grateful to everyone who made this possible," said Kathleen S. Hering-Smith, associate professor in Tulane's John W. Deming Department of Medicine. "We can't wait to enjoy this modern-meets-historic, collaborative space together."

The project aligns with Fitts' vision of positioning Tulane as a major driver of discovery, biotech innovation and economic revitalization in downtown New Orleans. Hutchinson will join the J. Bennett Johnston Building and the former Charity Hospital building redevelopments in anchoring a growing academic and research district.

Researchers work in Hutchinson Memorial Building, which has undergone a major renovation that exponentially increases research space downtown.

Tulane's new head football coach, Will Hall, has settled into his new role with confidence, energy and joy.

Having worked under the Green Wave's last two head coaches, Willie Fritz and Jon Sumrall, Hall says he knows what it takes to win and is thrilled to be doing it at the school and in the city he loves.

"I love Tulane," Hall said. "I love our players. I love New Orleans. My family loves it here. We have a great program with a tremendous opportunity to win. To stay at a place that I love so much, my cup is overflowing."

Hall served as offensive coordinator under Fritz and passing game coordinator under Sumrall. When he applied for the head coaching position in December 2025, he told the search committee no one was more prepared to lead the program forward.

"I've worked under two successful coaches here," Hall said. "I know how to win. I know what works here, and we're going to continue to be successful and have a lot of fun doing it."

Hall earned the top job following a historic Green Wave run that included an American Conference championship and the team's first-ever appearance in the College Football Playoff against

Ole Miss in Oxford, Mississippi. He plans to keep that momentum going in 2026 and beyond.

"We expect to stay at the top of this conference," Hall said. "This is a championship football team, and we're going to continue to win."

Hall shared that same confidence Dec. 9, 2025, when he was introduced as Tulane's 42nd head football coach before a standing-room-only crowd at the Jill H. and Avram A. Glazer Family Club. The event featured a New Orleans-style second line, with Hall, his wife, Rebecca, and sons, Pete and Tripp joining in the celebration.

Tulane President Michael A. Fitts told the crowd that there are few people who know and understand college football more than Hall.

"He has a track record of success," Fitts said. "We're confident Coach Hall will bring the Green Wave to further success."

Ben Weiner, Director of Athletics Chair David Harris said Hall stood out among many candidates. "If you know Will Hall, you know what a fantastic coach and person he is."

One of the most meaningful endorsements of Hall's leadership came from his predecessor. Sumrall, now head coach at the University of Florida, donated \$100,000 to Tulane in Hall's honor to support recruiting and player development.

"He's a dear friend," Hall said. "It shows how much he loves this place and how much he believes in Tulane and in me."

A native of Amory, Mississippi, Hall began his coaching career in 2004 at Presbyterian College and has held numerous positions over the past two decades. Hall's family is pleased to be staying in New Orleans. His wife and two sons, both football players at John Curtis Christian School in River Ridge, feel the same.

"It would have been extremely hard on them to leave," Hall said. "It was a huge blessing to keep them at a place they love. New Orleans wakes up happy, and this city fits our family."



Clockwise from left: Heather Veneziano and Chai Paden walk through St. Louis Cemetery No. 2. Chai Paden, one of the graduate student volunteers, scrubs a closure tablet. Students Olivia Padula and Stone DuVernay clean a tomb in St. Louis Cemetery No. 2.

“Our cemeteries are unique in the United States, but they are not unique globally,” said Veneziano. That means the skills participants learn with B2CC in New Orleans will also be applicable in places such as the Caribbean and South America.

These skills are transferable to other masonry and ironwork restoration and preservation projects, such as the miles of historic ironwork in the French Quarter alone.

“Not only does it make a huge impact on the conservation of our cemeteries, it also provides people with skills that are highly transferable and that they can go on to have careers with,” said Veneziano. “It’s a win-win situation for everyone.”

Although they are sometimes overlooked in preservation projects, cemeteries provide critical historical records. The tombs in cemeteries like St. Louis No. 2 are still used for burials. That makes restoration projects like these essential, Veneziano said.

“Cemeteries are one of those things where everyone can be remembered, because you have names, ideally, and physical things to remember them by,” said Desormeaux. She compared them to architecturally significant buildings, or sites tied to historical events.

“I’m drawn to the forgotten places,” she added. “I don’t want them to be forgotten.”

PRESERVATION IN PRACTICE

BY MOLLY McCORRY

On a cloudy October morning, as the sounds of Interstate 10 traffic echoed around them in St. Louis Cemetery No. 2, a group of Tulane University graduate students knelt over broken marble, scrubbing the pieces with a mixture of horse shampoo and water.

They were cleaning closure tablets, the large front plates used to seal tombs with names and death dates, washing away decades of grime and preparing them to return to their homes.

“These names have been away from their bodies for so long. We’re giving people back their resting place,” said Stone DuVernay, who is in his first semester of the Master of Science in Historic Preservation Program at Tulane’s School of Architecture and Built Environment. DuVernay was one of a cohort of students who chose to spend their fall break restoring graves during a workshop under the instruction of program director Heather Veneziano.

“I’d rather spend my fall break in a cemetery than anywhere else,” said Chai Paden, another one of the students in the program, as she puzzled together pieces of a broken tablet.

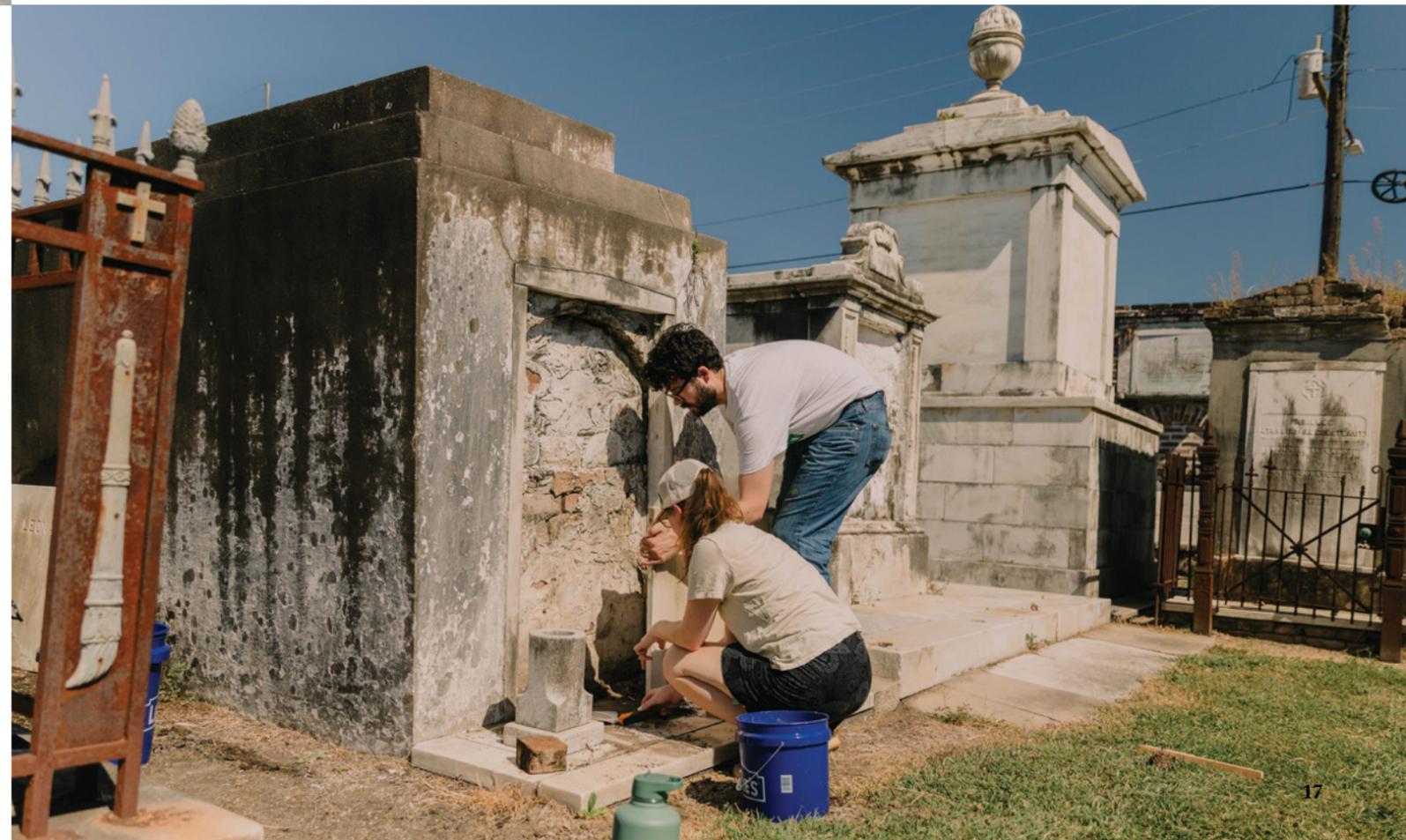
The workshop was a pilot program for a larger workforce development program Veneziano is starting in New Orleans with World Monuments

Fund. The program, called Bridge to Crafts Careers (B2CC), already exists in New York and is open to anyone interested in a career in restoration and preservation.

Veneziano, World Monuments Fund and the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans (PRC) created the student workshop to teach students about what kind of work is possible and how long projects will take. The workshop also gave Tulane students a taste of what they might do after graduation.

“There were a couple of things that called to me in this field, and cemetery preservation was a big one,” said Lydia Desormeaux, also a student in the Historic Preservation program. Now that they have some experience, these students got the chance to be teaching assistants for the first B2CC New Orleans workshops, which began in December 2025.

B2CC in New Orleans is a program of Save Our Cemeteries, a department of the PRC. Participants in the B2CC will learn how to repair stonework and ironwork found in New Orleans cemeteries.



BRIDGE *to* TOMORROW

Thanks to a generous \$10 million gift from David and Marion Mussafer, a new initiative will ensure every Tulane undergraduate student has the chance to gain real-world work experience during their college career.

BY KATE LORIO AND MICHAEL STRECKER



David Mussafer, chair of the Board of Tulane, still has the actual yellowed piece of legal paper from 1990 on which he wrote his life goals at age 27. On it were three columns: personal goals, business goals and philanthropic goals, which he referred to simply as “giving back.”

Fulfilling that goal has been a continual pursuit for Mussafer (B ’85), chairman and managing partner of Advent International, and his wife, Marion. Over time, the couple aligned around the broad goal of trying to “make a powerful, positive impact” on the lives of more than a thousand people, and increasingly this has centered around education.

At Tulane, working toward that goal has resulted in Mussafer Hall, the university’s hub

for academic advising and career services; funding for the Tulane Innovation Institute; and last fall, a \$10 million gift to launch the David and Marion Mussafer Internship Initiative.

“These collective initiatives advance, in new and exciting ways, Tulane’s mission of preparing our students to become leaders who will have a lasting and positive impact in all fields,” Tulane President Michael A. Fitts said. “With the Mussafer’s newest internship initiative, the university is building a comprehensive career readiness program that will offer every Tulane undergraduate student the invaluable opportunity to obtain internships, mentorships and real-world career experiences before they graduate.”



“Marion and I are passionate about education and thrilled about the work that Tulane is doing to build powerful avenues for young people to pursue their dream jobs!”

“With the Mussafers’ newest internship initiative, the university is building a comprehensive career readiness program that will offer every Tulane undergraduate student the invaluable opportunity to obtain internships, mentorships and real-world career experiences before they graduate.”

Michael A. Fitts, Tulane President

Mussafer knows firsthand how transformative such experiences can be. His own career in private equity was launched via a summer internship in 1989 at the firm Adler & Shaykin under the mentorship of John Quigley, a partner at the firm at the time and later the founder of Nassau Capital LLC. “I actually didn’t get the job that I was hoping for, but I gained enough experience and established personal and professional relationships that led me to Advent,” Mussafer said.

He joined Advent International in 1990 and has been a leader throughout his career at the company, which he has helped grow into one of the world’s largest and most respected private equity firms.

Since Mussafer’s days at Tulane in the 1980s, real-world skills have only become more pivotal for a student’s future career success.

“An internship is a bridge between what a student is doing academically and their next chapter in their career,” said Mollye Demosthenidy, dean of Newcomb-Tulane College (NTC). “The Mussafers’ gift is a recognition on their part of the value of an internship and how access to these opportunities is critical for students.”

The Mussafer Internship Initiative will leverage the university’s global alumni and family network to connect students with meaningful work opportunities. Through the program, students can apply classroom learning to professional settings, empowering them to graduate with skills, experience and contacts that lead to meaningful careers.

Culture of support

The philosophy of Tulane’s undergraduate education centers around opportunity and support.

Senior mathematics and finance major Sophie Casto felt that kind of support the moment she set foot on campus. “Tulane has a much more collaborative culture than other universities have,” she said. “The opportunities Tulane offers, both socially and academically, are unmatched by other schools.”

Hoping to go overseas during the summer after her first year, Casto reached out to NTC Career Services and the Office of Study Abroad.

She landed an internship in Tokyo with the consulting firm Visual Apha. That experience led to an internship with Vista Equity Partners in Austin, Texas, in her sophomore year, followed by a junior-year role with New York investment bank Moelis & Company.

Casto is now set to work full-time for Moelis & Company upon graduating in May. She credits her success to the encouragement and education she received at Tulane.

Students say Tulane’s supportive environment empowers them to collaborate better in the workplace, increasing their chances of success. For example, during his summer internship at BNY, senior marketing and computer science major Ethan Kraus sought advice from his coworkers before a meeting with the chief information officer (CIO).

“As the meeting got closer, I met with people on my team to prepare,” Kraus said, adding that the CIO even promised to try out one of his suggestions. “I think this effort really impressed my team and contributed to me receiving a return offer,” he said.

Hub of opportunity

Helping students like Casto and Kraus achieve their own life goals is the reason David and Marion Mussafer are so committed to expanding career education and opportunities at Tulane. That was their goal in pledging \$5 million in 2016 to establish Mussafer Hall as a central hub for services dedicated to the success of students in their academics, careers and lives.

A decade later, Mussafer Hall is constantly abuzz as students meet with advisors, receive coaching and attend career education programs. Now, they will also be able to find more internship support there than ever before.

Under the umbrella of NTC Career Services, the career and professional development team, the employer connections team and a whole new team focused on the Mussafer Internship Initiative are working toward strengthening and centralizing student career support coming from all corners of campus.

“We’re creating an ecosystem,” said Katherine Ruckstuhl, director of the Mussafer Internship Initiative. “We’re finding and creating opportunities for paid internships and supporting students with resources and coaching from start to finish. And we’re doing this in partnership with all five of our full-time undergraduate schools.”

The perfect piece

For recent graduate Bella Castro (B ’25), her time at the Texas branch of Boston Consulting Group was the perfect final piece of her college experience.

(Opposite) David and Marion Mussafer gifted Tulane \$10 million to establish a robust initiative that will expand and increase internship opportunities for undergraduates.

During her internship, the management team would often leave puzzles for employees in the break room.

While fitting pieces together on a Texas-themed puzzle with her coworkers, she was struck by the realization that everyone surrounding her came from different towns and cities. Yet, they had come together to tackle the same task with their unique perspectives.

“Being surrounded by people who approached even small challenges with that level of intelligence and openness was both inspiring and energizing,”

“We’re finding and creating opportunities for paid internships and supporting students with resources and coaching from start to finish.”

Katherine Ruckstuhl, director of the Mussafer Internship Initiative



said Castro, who will soon begin a full-time role at Boston Consulting Group.

“Through NTC Career Services and the A. B. Freeman Career Management Center, I received targeted career coaching, case interview preparation and live behavioral practice, all of which helped me sharpen how I think, communicate and present under pressure,” Castro said.

More students than ever will be able to take advantage of this kind of coaching, thanks to the Mussafer Internship Initiative.

“We have coaches that will be available to the students before, during and after their internship. We can coach them through the internships and then coach them on how to translate that to the next step in their career journey,” Demosthenidy said.

Empowering employers and students

When Naya Ben-Meir answered an email from her professor Alexis Culotta about an internship at M.S. Rau in New Orleans, she wasn’t looking for a summer job, but taking it paid off.

“I have gained immense knowledge on the type of work environment I enjoy, the subjects I take an

interest in and the opportunities available to me as I move into my professional life,” the senior psychology and art history major said of her time working in the research department of the esteemed antiques purveyor.

For Ben-Meir’s supervisor, Emily Otranto, the experience was equally rewarding.

“Tulane students bring rigor and a genuine sense of curiosity,” she said. “They come in ready to learn and ready to contribute.”

The Mussafer Internship Initiative will foster more of these mutually beneficial relationships between interns and companies by supporting employers in much the same way it supports students.

“We provide support to employers on best practices and how to be a good mentor,” said Edward Cruz, assistant dean and executive director of NTC Career Services. “We are building out a suite of employer resources to help them understand what it means to have a learning outcome, a substantial experience and mentorship.”

Through the initiative NTC will provide support so students can take advantage of can’t-miss opportunities.

“It’s not uncommon for us to hear a student say, ‘I got this great internship in New York, but it doesn’t really pay enough for me to take it, even though it’s a great opportunity,’” Cruz said. “Whatever it is that they need, we’ll try to help them get across the finish line on it.”

NTC will also foster internships in more cities worldwide, similar to Tulane’s Summer Internship in Barcelona program, which combines work experience abroad with coursework focused on career competencies.

Lifelong advice

The Mussafers’ goal of giving back goes beyond financial commitments. It’s personal.

“I talk to students all the time,” Mussafer said. “Competition for that special job is fierce, and it’s easy to get dejected, but don’t. The advice I give to young pros is to try to separate yourself from the herd stampeding for the same job and build personal relationships versus waiting for the opportunity to come to you.”

“Your life will be richer and more enjoyable if you are fortunate enough to find work that you are truly passionate about,” Mussafer said. “Marion and I are passionate about education and thrilled about the work that Tulane is doing to build powerful avenues for young people to pursue their dream jobs!”



During her internship at M.S. Rau antique store in New Orleans, student Naya Ben-Meir (opposite page) gained valuable research skills under the guidance of mentor Emily Otranto (right). Students Sophie Casto (above) and Ethan Kraus (left) finished their internships in the financial sector with newfound knowledge of the career paths they want to pursue.





Across New Orleans, Tulane students put scholarship into action—

solving problems, learning solutions and strengthening neighborhoods.

FOR ONE'S OWN

Almost 20 years after service learning became mandatory,

it continues to define what it means to be a Tulanian:

learning by doing, and doing for others.

BY BARRI BRONSTON

Donning lab coats, goggles and gloves, fifth graders at Esperanza Middle School had a mystery on their hands. They had to figure out how one of their classmates became ill after eating a cookie at lunch.

It was all part of the fictional “Case of the Poisoned Cookie,” a hands-on forensics lesson led by four Tulane University science students as part of Tulane’s STEM program in partnership with the Tulane Center for Public Service. Playing the role of investigators, the Esperanza students performed simple tests using substances such as vinegar, iodine and water to identify a strange powder that had been detected on the cookie crumbs.

Similar scenes play out almost daily as Tulane students leave campus to fulfill service-learning hours and, in the process, make a difference in the city they call home. Equipped with knowledge they gained in Tulane’s classrooms, lecture halls and research labs, they head to community gardens, public schools, hospitals, arts centers and other venues, where they put their education to work in ways that matter.

They teach financial literacy to high school students. They prepare young music students for community performances. They design assistive technology devices for people with disabilities. They take water samples to monitor the health of the water ecology system. They provide consulting services to nonprofits.



engagement and embedded it within the academic mission of the institution along with the school’s motto “not for oneself, but for one’s own.”

University leaders say this shift reshaped not only how Tulanians learn but also how they show up for their city.

“It created both an infrastructure and the strategic leadership that allowed this work to diffuse through the entire campus, giving it a depth and breadth and visibility that has been central in creating the Tulane of today,” said Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Robin Forman.

“Tulane remains one of the nation’s most community-engaged universities, a status affirmed by its Carnegie Foundation’s Community Engagement Classification, the gold standard for civic engagement in higher education,” he said.

The center at work

CPS Executive Director Agnieszka Nance has been part of the center since mid 2007 when she joined the staff as an assistant director after a two-year stint as a German language professor in the School of Liberal Arts. Since then, she has seen the center evolve into a major facet of Tulane’s undergraduate experience, offering a range of programs that include public service internships, civic engagement fellowships and advocacy opportunities.

In addition, the center offers a Peace Corps Prep course for students interested in post-graduate service, and an annual Day of Service.

“When the university was restructuring after Katrina, there was a collective decision to create a hub for community engagement,” Nance said. “It continues to be very bold and almost revolutionary in higher education to make it a requirement for all undergraduate students.

“It’s now part of our DNA. It’s a transformative experience for our students who gain valuable skills in empathy, leadership and critical thinking but also a tangible skill set that can help them in their careers.”

Behind the scenes, Nance leads a dedicated team of 18 staff members who keep the center running smoothly. They include Bridget Smith, assistant director for Academic Community Engagement. Smith works with faculty in developing service-learning opportunities, and she oversees such logistical issues as scheduling, transportation and accessibility accommodations.

“Our roles can vary from being a thought partner on syllabus design or reflection strategies to logistical support and project management, ensuring we’re meeting both our community partners’ goals and the class objectives,” Smith said. “We support students with any challenges while helping them develop their own civic identity.”

Service learning in action

Those efforts come to life in places like Esperanza Middle School, where sophomore Nemat Iddisah and three Tulane classmates circulated among teams of fifth graders, making sure everyone understood the steps in the forensics experiment. The room buzzed with delight as children poured, mixed, observed and recorded their findings, eager to determine the source of the “poison” discovered on the cookie crumbs.

“I love getting to bring science into classrooms and watching students light up when they make discoveries for themselves,” said Iddisah, who is majoring in neuroscience and cognitive studies in the School of Science and Engineering. “It brings back the feelings of wonder and excitement I had for science when I was little.”

For Iddisah, the value of service learning goes beyond her passion for science. It lies in the impact she and other Tulane students have had on the New Orleans community.

“We often focus on what the city can do for us and take advantage of it without thinking about how we can give back to this beautiful place,” she said. “So although service learning is a chance to share knowledge and provide support, it’s also a chance to learn from the kids, teachers and neighborhoods that make New Orleans so special.”

Previous page: Tulane student Nemat Iddisah, center, leads an interactive chemistry and forensics lesson with fifth graders from Esperanza Middle School as part of a service-learning project with the Tulane School of Science and Engineering. Left: Haley Duhe assists students during the hands-on activity. Below: Tulane students work on a coastal restoration project using oyster shells as part of a service-learning project called “Indian Tribes on the Bayou” in Port Sulphur, Louisiana.

“It continues to be very bold and almost revolutionary in higher education to make it a requirement for all undergraduate students.”

Agnieszka Nance, CPS Executive Director

A post-Katrina commitment

Tulane’s academic service-learning program is based upon a collaborative partnership between the university and the community. Service learning has been front and center in the Tulane landscape since the fall semester of 2006 when Tulane’s leadership launched the Center for Public Service (CPS) as part of the university’s post-Hurricane Katrina Renewal Plan.

By including community engagement in the plan, Tulane became the first major private research university in the nation to make public service a graduation requirement. Nearly two decades later, what began as a bold experiment has since become one of Tulane’s most enduring — and endearing — legacies.

While Tulane students have been engaged in volunteer work since the university’s founding in 1834, the launch of CPS following Hurricane Katrina formalized Tulane’s long-standing commitment to community





Top: Students from Tulane's Theatre and Dance Department spent the fall semester helping young actors from the nonprofit group Cultivating Youth stage an environment-themed production called "Animal Crackers." Bottom: Patti Dunn, a design professor in the School of Architecture and Built Environment, meets with students to discuss ideas for environmentally friendly Mardi Gras throws.

Those are the kinds of words that Tulane alumna Michelle Hewlett Sanchez, a senior professor of practice and director of the Tulane Center for K-12 STEM Education in the School of Science and Engineering, hears on a regular basis as students head out into the community to fulfill service-learning hours.

"It has transformed the experience that undergraduates have at Tulane," said Sanchez. "It also attracts the kind of students who believe in the community service aspect of the curriculum. It puts them in situations where they have to get out of their comfort zone. It makes them more communicative and more understanding of people who may have different backgrounds than they do."

That transformation is evident in the wide range of projects that have unfolded on campus, everything from an A. B. Freeman School of Business initiative that teaches personal finance and investment skills to high school students to a School of Science and Engineering partnership that addresses such issues as coastal erosion and storm recovery in the tribal communities of southeast Louisiana.

At the School of Architecture and Built Environment, Professor of Practice Patti Dunn is partnering with the recycling nonprofit RicRACK to bring sustainability

to Carnival season through the service-learning component of her textile design course.

"Students are tackling the challenge of textile waste by creating Mardi Gras throws from recycled materials, learning how design can address environmental challenges while celebrating New Orleans culture," Dunn said. "It's a creative approach to making a meaningful community impact."

Through the School of Liberal Arts' Department of Theatre and Dance, students spent the fall semester helping young actors stage an environment-themed production called "Animal Crackers." The children were part of Cultivating Youth, a nonprofit group that addresses childhood trauma.

At Tulane's Schwartz Family Center for Experiential Business Learning in partnership with First Generation Investors (FGI), Tulane finance majors teach personal finance and investment skills to high school students. Students who complete the program are awarded \$100 by FGI to invest in a carefully selected set of investment funds. Upon graduating from high school and turning 18, the money is theirs to continue to manage.

"This is true service learning," said Mara Baumgarten Force, director of the Schwartz Family Center for Experiential Learning and the Seymour S. Goodman Professor of Business Administration. "Tulane students put their new skills into immediate practice with the high schoolers. The goal is for the high schoolers to be able to present a capstone presentation on how they would invest a hypothetical portfolio."

At a recent presentation at the Goldring/Woldenberg Business Complex on Tulane's uptown campus, students

from Rooted School New Orleans showed off what they learned during the eight-week program, from how to determine riskiness in choosing stocks to where to look for investment advice.

Juan Carlos Cotes thanked his Tulane tutor Sydney Horn and other teachers involved in the program for "teaching me how to invest in my future and become financially secure." Horn said it was a pleasure working with Juan.

"Juan's drive to learn the material and understand investing showed his passion to pursue business," she said. "The program teaches these high schoolers ways to save and invest their money that they likely did not know about before."

Since 2020, computer scientists and AI experts Nick Mattei and Aron Culotta of the Tulane Center for Community-Engaged AI have supervised more than 50 students on 15 projects with nine community partners.

Students are also working with the nonprofit resources center Families Helping Families to develop a chatbot tool to enable easier access to information for parents of children with disabilities.

"It's taught me what civic duty really means. It means staying accountable, showing up and finding ways to keep making an impact long after graduating from Tulane."

Tess Rebold (SLA '21)

An ethos that endures

Katherine Raymond (SSE '99, SLA '07), a senior professor of practice in biomedical engineering in the School of Science and Engineering, has led a wide array of service-learning projects, including her partnership with the nonprofit group MakeGood to design and produce mobility trainers to help youngsters with physical disabilities build independence and strength as they prepare for real wheelchairs.

A Tulane graduate student when Katrina devastated New Orleans, Raymond recalls the excitement around campus when students learned of the decision to make service learning an academic requirement.

"No one fully understood which students would enroll after Katrina. But what seemed to happen is that the obligation to be part of the rebuilding of the city attracted students that wanted to make a difference. And I think we still attract that type of student at Tulane — engaged, creative, driven to have a larger impact in the world.

"It became part of our ethos, that we aren't just a great place to learn, but a great place to act," Raymond said. "Tulane students don't sit in classrooms and receive information — they bring ideas to faculty, they try novel things, they create innovative designs, new initiatives and programs.

"It gave Tulane students permission to be part of not just New Orleans, but of Tulane's post-Katrina identity. And that continues today, with our students shaping what impact is possible with their passion and inventiveness."

Service beyond graduation

For many students, that commitment doesn't end when they receive their diplomas. Through the CPS's Young Alumni Action Council, recent graduates like Tess Rebold (SLA '21) and Sophie Glynn (SLA '21) continue to stay engaged in their communities, while also helping raise money to make the center even stronger.

"It's taught me what civic duty really means," said Rebold. "It means staying accountable, showing up and finding ways to keep making an impact long after graduating from Tulane."

Glynn said she is forever grateful to what she learned through CPS.

"Tulane wasn't just four years of learning; it became a foundation for a lifetime of engagement and purpose," Glynn said. "I owe a great deal of my continued connection to New Orleans and to the communities I've become part of since to CPS and the values it instilled." 📍



playing for attention



How do babies learn what to pay attention to, and why does it matter? At Tulane's Learning and Brain Development Lab, researchers study how early interactions with caregivers shape attention, learning and brain development in the first year of life.

BY MOLLY McCRORY



Previous page: Research assistant Shanae Venter sets up a camera to record a baby and his mother, who are participants in a study with Tulane's Learning and Brain Development Lab. Left: Markant's lab uses eye-tracking technology to measure how quickly babies look at a photo of their mother's face to understand attention bias. Right: Babies are hooked up to a heart monitor and filmed to help researchers understand their attachment to their caregivers.

Eight-month-old Joseph sits in a high chair, his tray filled with toys. He reaches for one and looks over at his mother beside him who is smiling and talking softly. He turns back to his toys, unfazed by the camera pointed at him or the researcher sitting behind him.

Joseph is too young to realize this seemingly normal afternoon spent playing with his mother is helping researchers understand how babies pay attention, how they learn and how their relationships shape that process. The information, gleaned from small moments like this, could help children and their caregivers around the world. What researchers learn could influence how caregivers, clinicians and educators support children during one of the fastest periods of brain development in their lives.

Joseph and his mother are part of a study being conducted by the Learning and Brain Development Lab at Tulane University, led by Julie Markant, associate professor of psychology in the School of Science and Engineering. The study, funded by a \$1.9 million grant from the National Institutes of Health, examines how caregivers affect an infant's ability to focus and control their attention during the first year of life.

The research could help explain fundamental science about how brains work from the very beginning. By understanding how attention develops at its earliest stages, researchers can better explain how more complex skills — like learning, emotional regulation and social interaction — emerge over time.

They can also obtain insights into how best to care for infants and give them the best start in life. Once there is a baseline of research examining these processes in typical development, researchers can also study atypical development, such as autism spectrum disorder. Without a clear picture of typical development, it is difficult to identify early signs or design effective early interventions for atypical development.

Paying attention

"We're especially interested in the development of attention control, which is basically how we can focus attention on information that's relevant ... and ignore distracting or irrelevant information," said Markant, who is also a faculty associate with the Tulane Brain Institute. This control, which develops in the first year of life, is crucial for more advanced cognitive skills.

One way researchers study attention control is by examining attention biases, the natural tendency to pay attention to some things more than others, like the instinctive urge to look in the direction of a loud noise.

It might seem like common sense that babies would have such biases toward their caregivers, the people who feed them, protect them and play with them most of the time. But just because something seems intuitive does not necessarily mean that it is true. Scientists don't fully understand how these biases form or why they vary among children. The differences among children may help explain why children raised in similar environments can have different developmental paths.

That is where Markant and her team come in.

They are looking at two main things: how to describe the development of attention biases toward caregivers and what in a baby's environment or other skills could predict individual differences in these attention biases.

"The main goal of this study is really to set a baseline for what typical attention development will look like throughout infancy," said Shanae Venter, a senior studying neuroscience and a research assistant in Markant's lab.

"They have a lot of agency, and even though they can barely hold their bodies, their eyes are a gateway into their experience with the world."

JULIE MARKANT, associate professor of psychology in the School of Science and Engineering

That baseline gives researchers a reference point for identifying when development may begin to diverge and why.

This research is part of an ongoing shift in psychology away from separately studying social-emotional and cognitive development. Social-emotional development refers to how we learn to relate to other people, practice social skills and express emotions. Cognitive development, on the other hand, refers to how we learn to reason, think and understand. For a long time, psychologists have generally studied these areas in isolation without examining how one might affect the other, especially in the early stages of life. However, more recent research has shown that they impact each other throughout our lives.

"In developmental science, there's a lot of interest right now in how the dynamics of everyday interactions drive [cognitive] development," Markant said. Those everyday moments — eye contact, shared attention and responsive caregiving — can have lasting effects on how the brain organizes itself.

Markant has been interested in how babies learn since she was an undergraduate student working as a research assistant and studied how infants perceive the world around them. Much like her own undergraduate researchers, Markant worked with eye-tracking technology and was fascinated by how engaged the infants were.

"They're really active participants in what they're learning, they have a lot of agency, and even though they can barely hold their bodies, their eyes are a gateway into their experience with the world," said Markant.



Eye-tracking studies involve a high-tech camera zoomed in very closely to a baby's face as they look at images on a screen in front of them.

Changes over time

Joseph and his mother are part of a longitudinal study, meaning researchers observe babies multiple times, at four, six and eight months, to see how their behavior changes. This is Joseph's last visit. As a thank you, Brooke Montgomery, a PhD student in Markant's lab, presents him with a gift: a blue T-shirt with the lab's pelican logo.

In the first eight months of life, babies like Joseph take in the bright, busy world they now inhabit, learn to recognize faces and master milestones like rolling and crawling. Each visit provides a snapshot of the growth and development of that child. "You can really tell a difference, how they change and how they interact with strangers, how they interact with their mom," said Emma Crawford, a junior studying neuroscience with a minor in Spanish. "They get a little bit more endurance toward six and eight months."

All of the tasks that Joseph and his mother are doing address a challenge Markant's lab faces: Unlike older children or adults, infants can't take direction or tell researchers what they are thinking or feeling.

"We obviously have to be pretty creative with babies," said Markant. "We can't just ask them questions."

How do you react?

When Joseph chooses a toy to play with, when his mom faces him and talks to him, when he watches a video on a tablet, researchers monitor his heart rate, looking to see how it changes. These physiological responses offer clues about how infants process information and regulate attention in real time.

Researchers also monitor how the infants react during the still-face task, which caregivers tend to find difficult. During this activity, they must maintain a neutral expression and refrain from interacting with their child for two minutes. This is a common task in psychological studies with infants to assess the quality of infant-caregiver interactions by examining how a baby reacts when their caregiver does not react to them. Babies' responses during this brief disruption can reveal early patterns of emotional regulation and attachment.

Joseph and his mother did the test at their four-month visit.

"After four months of interacting with your baby, you have these very natural, reciprocal interactions," said Markant. "So, we're asking them not to do what feels natural for them."

The results of this task stay consistent over the first year.

"We obviously have to be pretty creative with babies. We can't just ask them questions."

JULIE MARKANT

Where are you looking?

For one activity, Joseph's mother fastens him in a high chair in front of a screen. Markant and her team use eye-tracking technology to study how quickly Joseph will turn his attention to a photo of his mother's face when presented with multiple images, including one of a stranger's face. How quickly babies orient to familiar versus unfamiliar faces may help researchers understand how social experiences guide attention early in life.

A sticker with black concentric circles between Joseph's eyebrows helps calibrate a camera that tracks where Joseph is looking and for how long.

Another test uses eye-tracking to gauge Joseph's selective attention, or how well he pays attention amid other distractions. Researchers are looking at whether these developing attention skills predict anything about the attention biases that are the main subject of the study.

While Joseph plays with the research assistants, his mom answers questions about her own well-being and how many people Joseph interacts with regularly. Markant wants to know more about Joseph's socialization, because how many new faces he regularly sees likely impacts how he chooses to pay attention to strangers' faces.

Markant's team is also reviewing the questionnaires to identify how they should further study how caregiver well-being, including depression, relates to infant attachment. Plans for that study won't be made until they have a baseline of typical attention biases from the current study.

Families

The research wouldn't be possible without the trust and support of the families who participate. The team needs more than 100 participants to attend all three visits to complete this study.

"We're asking so much of [the families who participate]," said Venter. "Part of caring for them is meeting them where they're at."

The team provides a small monetary incentive to families who participate and, when needed, can provide transportation to and from visits. Siblings who tag along are made comfortable with toys and snacks.

"We have many families who, over the years, have had a second child and they've come in again," said Markant. "We have families who are quite supportive of what we're doing."

Markant's team recruits families and expecting parents at the Louisiana Children's Museum, farmers markets and other outreach events.

"I love going to those events and telling people more about it, because I don't think a lot of people know that they can just get involved with research at an institution like this," said Crawford.

Part of the team's outreach includes sharing findings, even preliminary ones, with the community in newsletters and on social media.

"They deserve to know what we found, and they deserve to be informed in a way that's understandable," Markant said.

Although the team is nearly done with this phase of the study, they still need to process and analyze the data they have gathered before it can be published in a journal.

As Joseph's mother packs him in his stroller and heads home, he becomes one of the many babies whose small moments of play could provide a key to how humans connect and how these earliest relationships could impact the way we think. 🐦



Julie Markant, associate professor of psychology in the School of Science and Engineering and faculty associate with the Tulane Brain Institute, leads the Learning and Brain Development Lab.

Wavemakers



Actor and comedian Bill Murray made a special appearance at Tipping Point, the only concert of its kind in the United States that directly supports university scholarships.

TIPPING POINT 2025 STRIKES A CHORD FOR STUDENT ACCESS AT TULANE

For nine years, Tipping Point has been a defining feature of Tulane University's Homecoming, Reunion and Family Weekend, blending live music with philanthropy in a distinctly New Orleans setting. The annual Tipping Point concert took place Friday, Nov. 14, 2025, at the Orpheum Theatre, with a packed house and night of live performances, including a special appearance by comedian and actor Bill Murray. The event once again paired a high-energy musical lineup with a fundraising mission that supports Tulane students.

"The Tipping Point brings some of the country's top musicians together for a special evening devoted to ensuring that cost is no barrier for any student who dreams of pursuing a Tulane education," said Tulane President Michael A. Fitts. "This concert embodies our shared commitment to expanding opportunity for students who will shape the future of New Orleans."

Tipping Point is the only concert of its kind in the United States in which all

proceeds directly support a university. Funds raised through the event support student scholarships, helping to expand access to a Tulane education.

Luann Dozier, vice president for Advancement, has worked with the event's producers since its inception and counts it as one of Tulane's signature events.

"Tipping Point is one of the most beloved and anticipated events of Wave Weekend," she said. "What makes it so special is that everyone comes together in celebration for an outstanding cause. From the producers who created this unique model to the artists who love New Orleans and Tulane to the sponsors who make Tipping Point possible and the audience whose spirit infuses the night with energy and dynamism, everyone plays a part in transforming a fun event into a night to remember."

The 2025 concert came during the 20th anniversary year of Hurricane Katrina, adding resonance to a celebration centered on the culture, creativity and resilience of New Orleans. Performers from Louisiana and across the country took the stage.

This year's standout headliners were Ben Jaffe & Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Taylor and Griffin Goldsmith from Dawes, David Shaw of The Revivalists and Oteil Burbridge from Dead & Company. They were joined by Taj Mahal, George Porter Jr. and Irma Thomas. Grammy-winning musician Eric Krasno served as the music director, leading the Tipping Point band alongside Ivan Neville, Raymond Weber, Tony Hall and the Dumpstaphunk Horns.

One of the evening's most unexpected moments came when Murray rolled into the venue with a second-line band. Carrying a blue and olive green Mardi Gras umbrella and wearing a custom Tulane honorary letterman jacket, Murray sang, played the drums and danced with the Pedrito Martinez Group.

Dozier and other organizers called Tipping Point 2025 a rousing success, both as a fundraiser and as a celebration of the culture, vibrancy and resilience of New Orleans. Sponsors, executive producers Nicole Rechter and Greg Williamson of RWE Partners and attendees joined together to make the night possible. The event will mark its 10th anniversary in 2026, continuing a tradition that has become a cornerstone of Wave Weekend.

WAVEMAKERS

ENDOWED CHAIRS SPOTLIGHT TULANE RESEARCH STRENGTH

Tulane's research momentum continues to accelerate, fueled by faculty innovation and the sustained generosity of philanthropic partners. In November 2025, the university celebrated that progress with investiture ceremonies recognizing new chairs and endowed professorships.

The ceremonies honored faculty in political science, river and coastal science and biomedical engineering, positions made possible by Tulane donors.

"These endowed chairs reflect Tulane's leadership in the widest array of fields and exemplify the critical role we serve in advancing society through innovation and discovery," said Tulane University President Michael A. Fitts. "The generosity of our donors provides the resources that support us in attracting world-leading faculty who are raising Tulane's visibility and impact both locally and globally."

At the School of Liberal Arts ceremony, Martin K. Dimitrov, professor and head of the Department of Political Science, was appointed as the inaugural holder of the Livingston Family Chair in Political Science.

At the School of Science and Engineering, Ehab A. Meselhe was installed as the inaugural Charlotte Beyer Hubbell Chair in River-Coastal Science and Engineering, and J. Quincy Brown was invested as the inaugural Mark and Diana Tipton Endowed Professor in the School of Science and Engineering.

Daniel Cressy has benefited from Tulane's multidisciplinary team. Pictured from left to right, Dr. Maria Espanol, Amy Kinzie, Rihana Galloway-Dawkins, Daniel Cressy, Dr. Benjamin Watkins, Treenese McDonald and Dr. Justin Farge.

THE POWER OF CARE AND DISCOVERY: SUPPORTING TULANE'S SICKLE CELL MISSION

Life-changing medical care requires investment in the people and research that make it possible. At Tulane, clinical care and research support treatment for patients with complex conditions. Daniel Cressy's story reflects what is possible when medicine pushes boundaries in sickle cell disease treatment.

Cressy, 22, is making history as the first patient in Louisiana to receive a recently approved gene therapy for sickle cell disease. Thanks to this groundbreaking procedure and over two decades of comprehensive care at the Tulane Sickle Cell Center, Cressy is on the cusp of achieving his dream to become a commercial pilot.

"We are with our patients side by side at every step," said Dr. Maria Espanol, the center's medical director. "We want them to know they don't have to face this disease alone."

"We offer a multidisciplinary team with nurses, social workers and physicians, and every time patients come in, we see them as a team," Espanol said. Because Tulane is an academic medical center, patients also have access to research opportunities.

Through Tulane's Grateful Giving program, patients, physicians and members of the community can support this life-changing work by honoring a specific caregiver, supporting medical research or making a gift in honor of a loved one.



GREEN WAVE TALENT FUND SETS THE STAGE FOR TULANE'S NEXT CHAPTER IN ATHLETICS

Lead gifts from Doug and Lila Hertz, Don and Lora Peters and Richard Yulman have launched the Green Wave Talent Fund, a landmark initiative that positions Tulane Athletics to compete at the highest level in the new era of college athletics, in which student-athletes can receive compensation and Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) opportunities.

Multiple initial commitments are providing early support for the Green Wave Talent Fund, intended to underscore the urgency of strengthening Tulane's position in an increasingly competitive national landscape. The fund offers supporters a powerful avenue to bolster Tulane's on-field and on-court success, according to Tulane Athletics leadership.

"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.

"The Green Wave Talent Fund is our response to the changing landscape of college athletics," said David Harris, the Ben Weiner Director of Athletics. "For the first time, we can directly provide significant payment, NIL opportunities and other new benefits to Tulane student-athletes. These investments recognize the value our student-athletes bring to the university and will be essential as we continue our competitive ascent. If supporting student-athletes in this way is meaningful to you, there's never been an easier or more direct way to do it."

Harris noted that these additional payments, benefits and NIL opportunities have become a key factor in building and sustaining championship-caliber programs. While not the only part of recruiting, this new financial support for athletes is now one consideration for prospective student-athletes.



Following the lead of Doug and Lila Hertz, Don and Lora Peters and Richard Yulman, who launched the Green Wave Talent Fund, former head coach of Tulane Football Jon Sumrall, shown here on the field after leading the Green Wave to the American Conference Championship title in December, donated \$100,000 to the Green Wave Talent Fund. The donation was in honor of Will Hall, who succeeded him as head coach. The fund positions Tulane Athletics to compete at the highest level in the new era of college athletics, in which student-athletes can receive compensation and Name, Image and Likeness opportunities.

Doug Hertz, longtime Tulane supporter and chair emeritus of the Board of Tulane, played a key role in spearheading efforts to support the Green Wave Talent Fund with top donors. He emphasized the importance of this new initiative.

"The ability to provide additional payments and NIL opportunities to athletes has reshaped the entire landscape of college sports," Hertz said. "If Tulane wants to compete for championships — and continue the momentum we've built — then we must invest accordingly. The Green Wave Talent Fund gives us the ability to retain exceptional student-athletes, recruit future leaders and ensure Tulane remains nationally competitive for years to come."

Additional gifts to the fund continue to reinforce this momentum. In December, former head football coach Jon Sumrall and his wife, Ginny, made a generous \$100,000 contribution to the Green Wave Talent Fund in support of his successor, Head Coach Will Hall.

The formation of the fund follows a period of unprecedented success for Tulane Athletics in competition, with the Green Wave making the College Football Playoff for the first time. Likewise, off the field, Tulane student-athletes continue to excel academically, maintaining a 95% graduation success rate, the highest in both Louisiana and the American Conference. 🏆

Tulanians

How has your Tulane experience shaped the way you lead, give back or mentor others?



Tulane... endowed me with a high degree of compassion, conviction and wherewithal to lead, inspire and cultivate the next generation.

Derek D. Bardell (G '01, '02)



I feel a responsibility to share my time, skills and experiences when and where I can.

Elissa Washburn (B '91)



I learned that curiosity and compassion are not opposites — they are partners, and real leadership begins with listening, observing and understanding the "why".

Luning He (SSE '11)



WAVE WEEKEND 2025 Tulane students, families, alumni, staff, faculty and Green Wave fans gathered in November to celebrate Wave Weekend, featuring homecoming, reunions and Family Weekend. With dozens of events on the schedule, attendees had their pick of activities, including the big game.



LEE P. GARY JR. (A&S '63, PHTM '10) graduated from the National Emergency Management Basic Academy operated by FEMA and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. He was also awarded a Visiting Fulbright Research Scholar grant to the University of Malta School of Public Health for 2025-2026 to teach and conduct research. During 2025, he was a Fulbright Specialist at the University of Makeni in Sierra Leone. He was also invited to present

his research article on the importance of sanitation and hygiene in disease control at the XI Malta Medical School Conference in Valletta, Malta, in December 2025.

TIM M. BERRA (G '67, G '69) received a "Friend of Darwin Award" from the National Center for Science Education for his work promoting the teaching of evolution. His latest book, "The Peopling of Polynesia: From Taiwan to Easter Island," was published by Acclaim Press.

FREDERICK LUKASH (A&S '69, M '73) published "The Hypocritical Oath," a medical murder mystery set in New Orleans.

WHIT RUMMEL (A&S '69) released his first book, "The Accidental Picasso Thief," co-authored with art-crime scholar Noah Charney. The book blends memoir and a true-crime investigation to tell how Rummel's family became caught up in a 1969 Picasso theft in Boston — complete with an FBI investigation, mob rumors and a daring "reverse heist" to return the painting.

Submit your news to tulanian.tulane.edu/contact and follow @tulanealumni on Facebook to join the conversation.

1970
1979

KEVIN DUCOTE (A&S '71) presented “Community Engagement in the Various Rounds of Naming and Renaming K–12 Public School Buildings and Campuses in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA” to the International Society for Educational Planning at Nelson Mandela University.

MARLENE ESKIND MOSES (NC '72) was presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award by the Nashville Public Education Foundation at the Public Schools Hall of Fame Luncheon on Sept. 30, 2025. Awardees have shown exemplary leadership and service in the community and are inspiring examples of the talent cultivated by Metro Nashville Public Schools.

NEAL BRANTLEY (A&S '73) won Best of Show and First Place in Opaque Painting at the Selma Art Guild’s Annual Art Competition in Selma, Alabama.

GEORGE F. INDEST III (SLA '73, L '80), president and managing partner of The Health Law Firm, was named to the Florida Super Lawyers list for 2025, which recognizes the top 5% of attorneys in the state.

DAVID MCLAIN (M '74) was inducted into the Royal College of Physicians in London. His medical practice was named Best of Alabama 2025 for rheumatology by “The Guide to Alabama.”

JOSEPH V. TRAHAN III (A&S '76) was inducted into the Defense Information School Hall of Fame in recognition of his extraordinary and lasting contributions as a public relations professional.

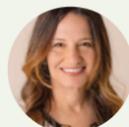
1980
1989

CHRISTOPHER MORRIS (A&S '80) was awarded the master designation by the American College of Rheumatology. He is one of 16 awardees from the 10,000-member medical organization and the only one in private practice to earn the designation. The award recognizes members who have made contributions to the organization and the medical specialty throughout their careers.

How has your Tulane experience shaped the way you lead, give back or mentor others?



Tulane shaped how I lead, mentor and give back. The culture of New Orleans, the emphasis on community and the expectation that you show up for others instilled values that have stayed with me for decades. Collaboration over ego. Resilience in the face of disruption. And a belief that success means little if you're not lifting others along the way.
Brian C. Silengo (TC '00)



Tulane instilled in me a strong commitment to helping others and I have a deep passion for volunteering and mentoring anywhere I can!
Emily Rosenthal (SLA '93)

SANDY ROSENTHAL (B '81), the brain behind Levees.org and host of her own podcast, was featured in the documentary “Leading Ladies of Hurricane Katrina,” which highlights four women whose leadership shaped the city’s recovery after Katrina.

PAUL FRIEDRICH (A&S '86) stepped down as the inaugural director of the White House Office of Pandemic Preparedness and Response Policy in early 2025 and now serves as a professor of surgery at the Uniformed Services University. He also acts as a senior advisor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The American Medical Association honored him with its 2025 Annual Award for Outstanding Government Service by a presidentially appointed official. He and his wife, Rita, also a physician, live in Alexandria, Virginia.

SUE STRACHAN (NC '86) published her second book, “The Obituary Cocktail,” through LSU Press as part of its Iconic New Orleans Cocktails series. Her first title in the series was “The Café Brûlot.”

CHIEF JUDGE WILLIAM PRYOR (L '87), of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, delivered the address at the New Life Member Luncheon during the American Law Institute’s 2025 annual meeting in Washington, D.C. The Florida Law Review also published a keynote address, “Modesty in Originalism,” that Pryor delivered at the University of Florida Levin College of Law’s Inaugural Originalism Conference.

1990
1999

CHRISTOPHER MOFFETT (B '91) joined SK Commercial Realty as president of SK Investment Group, bringing more than 25 years of real estate and finance experience to the role.

KEVIN BARRON (B '92) was promoted to vice president of payer relations at University Health in San Antonio, Texas. He was recently featured in an article and podcast episode of “Becker’s Hospital Review” discussing University Health’s approach to recovering high-dollar claims and navigating today’s payer landscape.

ELAINE BIRD PURDY (B '92) was promoted to associate professor in the faculty of health administration at Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University.

FRANK DICRISTINA (E '93) accepted a position as director of operations with Arxada in Rochester, New York.

PABLO ACEDO (B '94) was appointed CEO of the Raw Materials segment of Grupo Pochteca, a leading Mexican distributor of industrial inputs, bringing more than 30 years of senior management experience to the role.

SANFORD C. “SANDY” COATS (TC '94) joined The Norris Law Firm as a partner specializing in trial practice.

ANANDA FRENCH KARAKAYA (B '96) was promoted to chief of strategic operations and transformation for enterprise applications at the healthcare firm McKesson.

PHILIP LAWRENCE (L '96) directed “The Long Walk: A Dance with Humanities,” which won the award for best documentary at the 2025 Golden Gate International Film Festival in San Jose, California.

CAROLINE POGGE (NC '96) became the first University of Kentucky College of Public Health and Healthcare Administration alumna to be inducted into the University of Kentucky’s Hall of Distinguished Alumni. This recognition was awarded for her impactful career, service as an Army officer and commitment to empowering the next generation of public health professionals.

ALISON VULGAMORE WISNOM (NC '96) was elected to the Board of Directors of the Residential Real Estate Council, an organization with over 20,000 members, and an affiliate of the National Association of REALTORS. She is a broker with Coldwell Banker Realty in Annapolis, Maryland, and ranks in the top 1% of company sales nationally.

SANDRA GUSTIN (PHTM '97) is the author of the recently released book of poems “Balloons Beyond Our Borders,” which follows three and a half decades of international, cross-cultural work and explores language, landscapes and what unites people across borders. Her work has also appeared in Poetry, AAP’s Poem-a-Day, Silk Road, Anglican Theological Review and Bellevue Literary Review, among others.

IMPRESSION
COLE ASHMAN

BY PAM RADTKE

Long before Cole Ashman (SSE '13) founded a revolutionary energy company, the seeds were planted in a city struggling to regain electricity. “I grew up in New Orleans and lived through Hurricane Katrina,” he says. “I saw firsthand how fragile our energy systems are.”

Watching his hometown go and stay dark became a quiet catalyst for a career spent rethinking how to keep the lights on in people’s homes. After working on groundbreaking home energy products at Tesla and SPAN, Ashman founded Pila Energy, a company aiming to bring resilient, affordable backup power to households historically unable to access such resources.

Ashman is quick to point out that his story is about far more than batteries and circuits. It’s about people, and Tulane played no small part in shaping that perspective.

As a chemical engineering major at Tulane, Ashman found an environment where engineering students studied alongside liberal arts majors, business students and digital media creators. “The best thing about Tulane is that it isn’t siloed,” he says. “Everyone intermixes because that’s the fabric of the school, and New Orleans is a big part of that.”

That interdisciplinary energy helped him think about technology not just as a set of technical puzzles but as something deeply human. “Tulane taught me to think beyond one piece of the equation.”

One of Ashman’s teachers, Katie C. Russell, now a senior professor of practice in the School of Science and Engineering, said that Ashman was the kind of student professors love to teach. “He had an innate ability and drive to solve problems using innovative solutions both inside and outside of the classroom.”

She said in senior design he created a novel process to produce renewable energy from wastewater. “I will always remember his stories about tinkering with carbon dioxide dosing to increase plant growth in his home aquarium.”

After early exposure to large-scale energy systems at a Louisiana refinery and later working in California’s fast-evolving clean energy sector, Ashman saw a gap he couldn’t ignore: most current backup and solar products were still too expensive, too complex or too restrictive for the majority of U.S. households. “Two-thirds of homes can’t access today’s backup or solar products,” he says. “Energy resilience should be available to everyone.”

His solution was Pila Energy. The company’s breakthrough is a modular, plug-in home battery system. Each 1.6 kWh unit simply plugs into the wall, no electrician



or permit required. Multiple units form a mesh network, creating what Ashman calls a “distributed nanogrid” that uses artificial intelligence to autonomously manage and optimize the plug-in home batteries.

“It’s a measured, smart, surgical approach to keeping things running the right way,” Ashman says.

During a recent visit to Tulane, Ashman carved out time to speak with engineering students — conversations he remembers appreciating when he was in their shoes.

“I think that’s what we all need to do as alumni, so to be a small part of that, to offer help where I can, feels great,” he says.

As Pila grows, Ashman is focused on balancing rigorous engineering with thoughtful design. “We want energy independence to feel intuitive and beautiful,” he says. “The hardest problems are worth solving twice — once for the human experience, and again for the system it connects to.”

IMPRESSION

KELLY JACQUES

BY MOLLY McCORRY

Before she was recognized as one of Food & Wine’s Best New Chefs, Kelly Jacques was known around Tulane for showing up with freshly baked cookies. It was a simple act that helped her feel at home as part of the first class to enroll after Hurricane Katrina.

Years later, that same spirit of creativity and generosity defines her work at Ayu Bakehouse — a spirit she traces back to her time at Tulane. The bakehouse, located on the corner of Frenchmen and Dauphine streets, features bakery classics like croissants and sour-dough bread alongside its own local specialties.

Jacques started at Tulane in 2006. Her first-year class wasn’t very big, she said, but “created a really intimate feeling on campus.”

Jacques initially pursued a pre-med track, but she ultimately majored in glassblowing and international development, with a minor in Africana studies. “Baking was the throughline” that carried her through Tulane, no matter what her major, she said.

Jacques said her circuitous academic path at Tulane serves her daily as a business owner and baker.

“Things come back to help me now, even though I didn’t follow any of those career paths,” she said.

She pointed out how her experience with glassblowing prepared her to work in a kitchen. “It’s working with a heat-sensitive material with a team in a timely way,” she said. “That’s what we’re doing basically all day long.”

Jacques credits Tulane with many small lessons that led her to where she is today, from problem-solving skills to design work to science to understanding her place in the world.

“There was so much potential for whatever you wanted to do,” she said of her time at Tulane. “That’s a mindset I tap back into here that’s amazing.”

After graduating, she started The Bikery, a bicycle-delivery bakery service in New Orleans.

“The most memorable part of it all was that people would give me keys to their house to get in and just leave their wallet on the table, like ‘take whatever you need,’” she said. “I still think that’s kind of magical and very New Orleans.”

Jacques leapt at the opportunity to attend pastry school in New York City. She stayed in New York for a few years after the program, but the entire time, New Orleans was calling her back.



She returned in 2019, followed soon by her friend Samantha Weiss, whom she met at the International Culinary Center in New York City. In 2022, the two began a new venture: opening Ayu Bakehouse, named for an Indonesian word for “beauty” or “joy.”

In addition to classic pastries, Ayu Bakehouse serves up unique local offerings including muffaletta breadsticks and boudin boys. And of course, like any self-respecting bakery in New Orleans, it sells its own beloved king cake every Mardi Gras season.

Jacques will be attending this year’s New Orleans Book Festival at Tulane University as a speaker. 📖

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

Submit your news to tulanian.tulane.edu/contact and follow @tulanealumni on Facebook to join the conversation.

MICHAEL HORNER (L '99) recently married Monica Baird and rejoined Reynolds, Horne & Survant as a personal injury trial lawyer.

CHRISTOPHER K. RALSTON (L '99) was re-elected chair of the National Board of Directors of the American Diabetes Association (ADA). He also continues to serve as community leadership board chair for the ADA in Louisiana and Mississippi. Ralston is a commercial litigation partner and litigation practice coordinator at Phelps Dunbar in New Orleans.



IAN KRAMAR (TC '00) was promoted to executive producer of streaming at WWL Louisiana. Kramar has earned multiple New Orleans Press Club awards and an Emmy nomination for newscast excellence.

VICKIE RICE (L '00) Dallas County, Texas, renamed the Mental Health Division and Specialty courts after Vickie Rice posthumously for her work as a public defender.

JONATHAN AUGUSTINE (L '01) was named senior pastor of Big Bethel AME Church, the oldest Black church in Atlanta. He also serves on the inaugural faculty at the Hampton University School of Religion and continues his work as an author, scholar and national leader.

DEREK BARDELL (G '01, '02) has been recognized as a Distinguished Educator by the national nonprofit Next Gen Personal Finance for outstanding commitment to professional development in real-world personal finance topics.

JOSHUA CRILE (B '02) attained the State of Florida Lineman Certification for powerline construction.

REBECCA KEITHLEY (B '03) was promoted to assistant section chief of the FBI’s Financial Crimes Section, where she leads the bureau’s efforts against white-collar crime threats and has directed national initiatives to protect older Americans from fraud and cyber-enabled scams.

STEPHANIE (CRANE) LIEB (B '03) was inducted as a Fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy in 2025.

and elected chair of the business law section of The Florida Bar.

MICHAEL J. HICKERSON (L '04) joined Davis Hartman Wright LLP as a partner in the banking and finance, corporate and commercial real estate practice groups in Charleston, South Carolina.

KEVIN WILLIAMS (SSE '06) received the Xavier Pi-Sunyer Award from The Obesity Society. Williams also co-hosts the American Diabetes Association’s “DiabetesBio” podcast and was featured in a Journal of Diabetes spotlight in late 2025.

JOHN GAGNON (L '07) transitioned to a new role in civil rights compliance at the University of Michigan after 20 years of federal service.

KRIS SHULL-DUNN (A '07) and her firm, workshopWDXL, received a 2025 Small Project Award from the American Institute of Architects for The Syd, a hotel in New Orleans’ Central City neighborhood.

MICHAEL BRADEN WRIGHT (L '07) made history in 2023 as the first African American administrative law judge at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and currently serves as chief administrative law judge at the agency.

LILY FILSON (SLA '08) published “Renaissance Automata of the Villa Pratolino: Magic, Mechanics, and Medici Ambition” with Palgrave Macmillan/Springer, which explores how the Medici family used art, engineering and theatrical wonder to project power.



BENJAMIN KARP (SLA '12) has published his first book, “The Leviathan Conspiracy.”



MAX W. FARGOTSTEIN (B '14, L '17), an associate at Duane Morris LLP, was elected president of the board of directors of the Jewish Council for Youth Services in Chicago, which provides early childhood education and camp programs that serve thousands of families annually.

JOHN OWENS (SLA '14) was appointed chief strategy officer for the Arizona Department of Administration.

LOGAN HILTON (SSE '16) completed his neurology residency as chief resident and has returned home to New Orleans to begin his first attending position in Covington, Louisiana.

JOHN KANZLER (SLA '21, SSE '21) will be graduating from the University of Michigan Law School in May and starting a position as an associate in the energy and infrastructure projects division at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, & Flom in New York City.

HANNAH DAVIS (SOPA '25) was selected as one of 30 artists featured in CONFAB 2025, the Washington Studio School’s annual juried exhibition exploring the role of conversation and connection in contemporary art.

DAVID CLAIRBORNE WEBSTER (SSE '25) has been commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps at Quantico, Virginia, where he is stationed.

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 two quarters.

Juliet Mitchell (NC '43, SW '46)

Marie Armbruster (NC '44)

Warren Ibele (E '44)

Gordon Frank (M '45)

Charles Munden (B '45, L '47)

Max VanLandingham (B '45)

Emily Yawn (NC '45)

Marianne Aiken (NC '46)

Chalita Baehr (NC '46)

Joan Benjamin (NC '46)

James Davison (B '46)

Arthur Gottlieb (B '46)

Carol Ammons (NC '47, G '49)

Wilma Barnes (A&S '47)

William Buchanan (L '47)

Lorraine Foley (A&S '47)

Nancy Kevetter (UC '47)

Robert Myers (M '47)

Charles Camp (E '48)

Joseph Cangelosi (A&S '48)

Brian Collins (A&S '48)

Paul Graffagnino (A&S '48, M '51)

Robert Grehan (E '48)

Vivian Miller (NC '48)

Betsie Tremant (NC '48, SW '53)

Shirley Watsky (NC '48)

Dorothy Clemmer (NC '49, G '58)

Nollie Felts (M '49)

Shirley Goldman (NC '49)

Joan Inman (NC '49)

Christhel Johnson (NC '49)

Lily Smith (B '49)

Shirley Summerfield (NC '49)

Casmier Blanda (A&S '50)

Marjorie Kolman (SW '50)

Marjorie Milhas (NC '50)

Felix Rabito (A&S '50)

James Faust (B '51)
 Shirley Green (NC '51)
 Patsyearl Hinrichs (NC '51)
 Jack Minor (E '51)
 Leila Schumacher (NC '51, UC '83)
 Robert Shader (A&S '51)
 Shirley Wall (NC '51)
 Julia Box (M '52)
 Polly Durham (NC '52)
 Jacquelynn Hendershott (NC '52)
 Stella Hollis (NC '52)
 Stephen Holzman (B '52)
 Irvin Kohler (A '52)
 Jean Matkin (NC '52)
 Donald Miller (G '52)
 Florence Scharff (NC '52)
 Charlene Smith (NC '52)
 Nita Wonderley (UC '52)
 Anne Behrend (NC '53)
 Wallace Braud (UC '53)
 Edward Goller (E '53)
 Robert Hoffman (A&S '53)
 Donald Ingram (A&S '53)
 Ann McCay (SW '53)
 Bernard Samuels (A&S '53)
 James Van Pelt (A&S '53)
 Patricia Gray (NC '54)
 Lester Lautenschlaeger (B '54, L '59)
 Robert Lucas (M '54)
 John Richardson (A&S '54)
 Raymond Weidenbacher (A&S '54)
 Luis Arocha (A '55)
 Frederic Bancroft, Sr. (B '55)
 Rodney Bourgeois (E '55, E '80)
 Patricia Ryan (NC '55, G '59)
 Jeannine Samuels (NC '55)
 Carol Segal (NC '55)
 Roger Barba (B '56)
 Sylvia Huete (NC '56, G '62)
 Barbara Jacobs (NC '56)
 Hanne Klein (NC '56)
 Steven Plotkin (A&S '56, L '59)

Jerome Roebuck (M '56)
 Larry Rousseau (E '56)
 William Simmons (B '56)
 Elise Stratford (NC '56)
 Frances Vergne (NC '56)
 Edward Zalta (A&S '56, M '56)
 Margot Astrachan (NC '57)
 George Ball (M '57)
 Valeton Dansereau (A '57)
 Marilyn Ruckstuhl (NC '57)
 Robert Millon (G '57)
 Richard Moiel (A&S '57, M '60)
 Peter Mullins (E '57)
 Sarah Neal (NC '57)
 Thomas Oelsner (A&S '57, M '60)
 George Oubre (L '57)
 Edwin Pearlstine, Jr (A&S '57)
 William Sistrunk (M '57)
 Patricia Weiss (NC '57)
 Fred Wulff (E '57)
 Raymond Zambrano (A '57)
 Patricia Ames (NC '58)
 Elizabeth Anderson (NC '58)
 Ann Caldwell-Gettes (M '58)
 Geraldine Calonje (SW '58)
 Angelo Chetta (A&S '58)
 Carmel Cohen (M '58)
 Richard Colomes (A&S '58, G '59)
 Helen Cook (B '58)
 Baron Aaron Fodiman (A&S '58)
 Maurice Little (G '58, G '61)
 Michael Patton (B '58)
 Mettha Rapier (NC '58)
 Everett St. Romain (UC '58)
 Harrietta Turner (SW '58)
 Philip Cohen (A&S '59)
 Martin DuCote (M '59)
 Norman Glosserman (B '59)
 Edwin Herron (E '59, E '63, E '64)
 Robert Hewitt (M '59)
 Howard Johnson (A&S '59, UC '93)
 Maurice Krawcheck (A&S '59)

Albert Lafaye (B '59)
 Gilbert Marx (M '59)
 Jack McNamara (A&S '59)
 Grover Neill (SW '59)
 Jerome Planchard (E '59, E '67)
 Charles Rea (A&S '59, L '59)
 William Riecke (M '59)
 Ronald Soderberg (A&S '59)
 Allen Springer (E '59)
 Jack Tolson (A '59)
 Charlie Tong (A&S '59)
 Margaret Watts (NC '59)
 Bess Allen (UC '60)
 Lawrence Ash (G '60)
 David Bennett (L '60)
 Beverly Bringle (NC '60)
 Garron Chaisson (E '60)
 Jane Cohen (NC '60)
 Diane Evans (UC '60, G '75)
 Mary Greene (L '60)
 William Hays (A&S '60)
 Gene Hymel (B '60)
 Rozanna Levine (NC '60)
 Jon Levy (A&S '60, L '63)
 Benjamin McMinn (A&S '60)
 Charles Passman (A&S '60)
 Robert Sonnier (B '60)
 Howard Stanley (E '60, L '67)
 Anne Turner (NC '60)
 Joseph Variani (E '60)
 Michael York (A&S '60)
 Beryl Bourgeois (G '61)
 Jane Caserta (NC '61)
 John Cocchiara (A&S '61, M '64)
 Stanley Daul (B '61)
 Coleen Davidson (NC '61)
 Larry Harvill (E '61)
 Stanley Hobart (G '61)
 Kraig Klosson (A&S '61)
 Thomasine Kushner (NC '61)
 Michel Lanaux (B '61)
 Ernest Landry (L '61)

George Lavender (E '61)
 John McRae (M '61)
 Mary Rowland (NC '61)
 Sylvia Senter (NC '61)
 Catherine Taylor (PHTM '61)
 John Thomas (A&S '61, G '64)
 Hector Venegas (A&S '61)
 Carolyn Bowman (SW '62)
 Bonita Dannen (NC '62)
 Thomas Flynn (M '62)
 Charles Frazer (M '62)
 Donald Halley (G '62)
 Margaret Kunz (SW '62)
 Herbert Lepp (A&S '62)
 Lucien Provosty, Sr. (UC '62, L '65)
 John Reeder (M '62)
 Dennis Smeltz (A '62)
 Sue Witt (NC '62)
 Elizabeth Wood (NC '62)
 Martha Wood (SW '62)
 Roland Bassett (L '63)
 Martin Boorstein (A&S '63)
 Arthur Clarkson (UC '63)
 Sandy Gittleson (NC '63)
 Billy Graham (SW '63)
 Virginia Hanto (NC '63)
 William Hintze (UC '63, G '66)
 Sue Hosterman (NC '63)
 Michael Huston (B '63)
 Daniel Jacek (UC '63)
 Robert Kandell (M '63)
 Judith Krogsgard (B '63)
 James Langston (M '63)
 Hubert Odom (A&S '63)
 Alice O'Ferrall (NC '63)
 Ernest Pope (M '63)
 Ralph Pringle (E '63)
 Robert Toups (A&S '63)
 John Trebellas (G '63, G '65)
 Eugenia Clark (G '64)
 William Clark (G '64)
 Wilbert Crain (A&S '64, L '66)

Philip Dater (M '64)
 Jack Fisher (A&S '64)
 Donald Fisk (UC '64)
 Howard Gordon (B '64)
 Hank Gosch (M '64)
 Peter Herring (A&S '64, SW '69)
 Frederick Hilgeman (G '64)
 Floyd Hindelang (A&S '64)
 Terry Hiserodt (E '64)
 Sandra Ireland (NC '64)
 David Lang (B '64, L '66)
 Blanca Mejia (UC '64)
 Harriett Rosin (NC '64)
 Terry Salassi (NC '64, SW '66)
 Charles Seibert (G '64)
 Dennis Socha (A&S '64)
 Arthur Thomas (A&S '64)
 Felix Tranchina (UC '64)
 Roy Walter (A&S '64)
 Tevy Wellins (A&S '64)
 Suzanne White (NC '64)
 William Hand (M '65)
 Lee Johnson (A&S '65)
 James Kirkpatrick (B '65)
 Lee Peterson (M '65)
 Bertram Roberts (A&S '65)
 William Shenk (A&S '65)
 Rajindar Sohal (G '65)
 Susan Valentine (NC '65)
 Elizabeth Van Loo (G '65, G '73)
 Joan Weil (NC '65)
 Leah Williams (SW '65)
 Jimmy Willis (G '65)
 Joseph Dodd (G '65, G '66)
 William Franklin (G '65)
 Richard Williamson (A&S '65)
 Kamal Zakhary (UC '65)
 Peter Brueckner (G '66, G '68)
 Richard Burrows (G '66)
 Donald Cobb (B '66)
 Vincent Comberrel (UC '66)
 Francis Dadah (A&S '66)



TRIBUTE
JOHN C. LAROSA

John C. LaRosa, a prominent physician-scientist and nationally recognized authority on cholesterol and cardiovascular disease who served as chancellor of Tulane University Medical Center from 1994 to 1999, died on September 23, 2025. He was 84.

LaRosa joined Tulane after two decades on the faculty of George Washington University, where he served as Dean for Clinical Affairs and Research and helped establish one of the nation's Lipid Research Clinics. His background as a leading researcher who wrote more than 230 peer-reviewed papers and served as a frequent commentator on national and international broadcast programs made him a high-profile health science leader.

"John was a wonderful chancellor for the health sciences at Tulane," said Paul K. Whelton, Show Chwan Health System Endowed Chair in Global Public Health at the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. LaRosa recruited Whelton to Tulane. "He espoused academic excellence, was a champion for all the right causes and people, and he was a leader of great integrity."

At Tulane, LaRosa oversaw the School of Medicine and School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine during a period of strategic growth in biomedical research and clinical programs. Under his leadership, the university expanded its research portfolio with major federal grants and helped launch new initiatives in gene therapy, women's health, infectious diseases and cancer research. He also collaborated with the Louisiana State University Center for Gene Therapy Research and played a key role in significantly increasing research and philanthropic funding across the health sciences.

Colleagues at Tulane recall LaRosa as a leader who emphasized academic excellence, integrity and faculty development. Several university administrators credit him with shaping their careers and strengthening the institution's leadership culture during his tenure. His profile as a scientist and administrator also elevated Tulane's national visibility at a time of growing competition among academic medical centers.

In 1999, LaRosa was appointed president of the State University of New York's Downstate Health Sciences University, where he later oversaw the creation of a School of Public Health, expanded clinical facilities and advanced major biotechnology initiatives. He served in that role until 2012.

John Charles LaRosa was born in Pittsburgh on February 17, 1941. He is survived by his wife Judie LaRosa, his daughter Jennifer, his son Christopher, and six grandchildren. ☞

Zeb Mayhew (A&S '66)	John Brown, Sr. (B '68)	John Stewart (L '70)	Craig Saporito (A&S '73, PHTM '74)	Perry Torregano (UC '78, UC '88)	Mark Holmes (A&S '85)	Anita Duke (SW '92)	Nicole Nicolette (NC '00)
Gary Gaffney (A&S '66)	Jamie Covell (NC '68)	Laren Tolbert (A&S '70)	Susan Tillinghast (NC '73, G '75)	Barbara Trahan (PHTM '78)	David Kemker (SW '85)	Alexander Holloway-Melise (A&S '92)	Vickie Rice (L '00)
Gerald Gastony (G '66)	Susan Dahlen (SW '68)	Peter Van Auken (M '70)	Josephine Wiersum (UC '73)	Cynthia Young (NC '78)	David Licciardi (B '85)	Laura Joiner (UC '92)	Adam Stokes (B '01, L '01)
Stephen Gorden (NC '66)	Cloyd Ezell (A&S '68)	Donald Weaver (PHTM '70)	Stephen Baker (B '74)	Victor Fitzpatrick (L '79)	Dorothy Duplantier (NC '86)	Mark Romboletti (A&S '92)	Matthew Cardinale (TC '02)
Bill Gosa (SW '66)	Theresa Flanagan (G '68)	Lester Adelsberg (G '71)	Dawn Barrios (NC '74, L '76)	Pamela Bauer (G '80)	Janet Gray (G '86)	Jeffrey Winder (L '92)	Roger Schimberg (PHTM '02)
Joseph Grace (A&S '66)	Steven Ginsberg (A&S '68)	Richard Anderssen (A&S '71)	Bernard Fulghum (L '74)	Benjamin Buckwald (A&S '80)	Roger Harrison (B '86)	Gloria Batiste (UC '93)	Michael Burks (UC '03)
Stephen Green (M '66)	Rita Hankins (NC '68)	Joseph Baggett (A&S '71, L '77)	Rudolph Hammack (G '74)	Michael Butler (M '80, PHTM '90)	David Keiser (L '86, B '87)	Michael Bowers (L '93)	Steven Talbot (L '03)
Bert Jacob (B '66)	Bradford Hedrick (A&S '68)	David Booher (G '71)	Michael Harris (A&S '74)	Frank Coe (A&S '80)	Leon Roy (L '86)	Richard Goldenberg (B '93)	David Cunningham (UC '04)
Johnny Johnson (A&S '66)	Harold Jordan (G '68)	Stephen Carmichael (G '71)	Lonn Huntington (G '74)	Joseph LeBlanc, Jr. (G '80)	John Starr (L '86)	Nancy Klein (NC '93)	Pamela McDonald (SW '04)
Robert Knowles (A&S '66)	Dianne Kreeger (NC '68)	Richard Danysh (A&S '71)	John Moreland (E '74, B '75)	Charles Murray (L '80)	Laurie Wogan (PHTM '86)	Matthew Popp (B '93, L '96)	David Benson (M '05, PHTM '05)
Sau Li (G '66)	John MacKay (A&S '68)	Thomas De Martini (SW '71)	William Settoon (E '74)	Martin Woods (L '80)	Janet Belknap (UC '87)	Donald Potter (PHTM '93)	Alissa Klein (L '05)
James Mason (M '66, PHTM '70)	Martha Mims (NC '68)	Michael Gannon (SW '71)	Edward Smith (PHTM '74)	Geoffrey Cooper (M '81)	Alvaro Montero (E '87)	Karen Romano (PHTM '93)	Samuel Spicer (PHTM '05)
Patrick Murphy (G '66)	Edith Morris (NC '68)	Dan Grimes (B '71, E '71)	Martha Bradford (G '75)	James Docker (A&S '81, G '85)	John Roberts (B '87)	Carla Sharp (UC '93, UC '95)	Jacqueline Brumfield (SCS '06)
Holm Neumann (M '66)	Barbara Polmer (NC '68)	William Helvie (M '71)	Jack Friedman (A&S '75)	James Doty (M '81)	Julie Schopf (UC '87)	Todd Van Ness (A&S '93)	Gerard Collins (SCS '06)
Raphael Ross (B '66)	Robert Thigpen (G '68)	Linda Holley (G '71, G '76)	David Kiyonaga (L '75)	Lesley Drucker (G '81)	Kirk Stackhouse (B '87)	Jeanette Battistella (UC '94)	Janna Stockinger (SCS '06)
Edward Tucker (M '66)	Ralph Tobelmann (E '68)	Frank Kennett, III (G '71)	Linda Lewis (G '75)	Barbara Kellogg (E '81)	Walter Stamm (A&S '87)	Lisette Deckard (NC '94)	Mary-Kathryn Tantum (B '06)
Joseph Weaver (M '66)	Sandra Weiner (NC '68)	Dorothy LaBorde (UC '71)	Cynthia Ortego (G '75)	Mildred Moore (PHTM '81)	Lauralie Blanchard (UC '88)	Peter Kelley (L '94)	Stephanie Bordy (SLA '07)
Donald Weekley (A&S '66)	Alfred Willie (A&S '68)	Earl McCallon (L '71)	Myer Reed (G '75)	Maria Reuther (UC '81)	Betty Chen (B '88, NC '88)	Mary Knepper (SW '94)	Kenneth Demarest, Jr. (SCS '07)
Robert Whitelaw (G '66)	Roland Alpha (A '69)	Eugene McLeod (A&S '71)	Bruce Rogers (B '75, E '75)	Maurice Stewart (E '81, E '83)	Timothy Daggett (E '88)	Sylvia Lande (SW '94)	Thea Harter-Leahy (SCS '07)
Lawrence Babst (L '67)	Charles Bercier (PHTM '69)	Betty Moye-Myers (SW '71)	Teka Summers (SW '75)	Jameel Terzi (E '81)	John Hazard (UC '88)	Joseph Noble (UC '94)	Gregory Havard (SCS '07)
Richard Beard (A&S '67)	Edward Carnot (A&S '69)	Florence Wright (PHTM '71)	John Wheat (A&S '75)	Todd Dowd (A&S '82)	Deborah Resor (UC '88)	James Parsons (UC '94)	Beth Henry (SCS '09)
Jack Brown (A '67)	Karen Harmony (NC '69)	James Bain (G '72, G '78)	Thomas Wiseman (G '75, G '79)	Lawrence Einhorn (L '82)	Eric Sand (UC '88)	Justin Vatel (TC '94)	Rozalind Kendrick (B '11)
Kenneth Evans (UC '67)	Georgia Holko (NC '69)	Sandra Collie (NC '72)	Dorian Bennett (A&S '76)	Martin Grayson (L '82)	Kenneth Singleton (UC '88)	Valarie Washington (UC '94)	Natalie Stanbro (SW '12)
Leonard Kenney (A&S '67)	Robert Humphrey (A&S '69)	Melvin Goldin (A&S '72)	Robert Brandt (A&S '76, L '78)	Laura Hall (G '82)	Daniel Smithson (UC '88)	Walter Askew (UC '95)	Felicia Douglas (SCS '14, SCS '16)
Ella Flower (NC '67)	Steven Karch (M '69)	David White (G '72, G '75)	Karl Clifford (A&S '76, A '82)	Deborah Legvold (PHTM '82)	Ibrahim Atwa (E '89)	Edward Bernosky (L '95)	Belveanna Parkman (SCS '16)
Michael Flynn (A&S '67)	James Lacy (G '69)	Bill Harrell (G '72)	Robert Francis (PHTM '76)	Primo Lombardi (UC '82)	Lisa Francis (UC '89)	Jonathan Mayers (B '95)	Kevin Quinet (SCS '16)
Anne Hulsey (NC '67)	George Meade (PHTM '69)	Helen Kammer (NC '72)	Alan Glenesk (PHTM '76)	Beth Tedesco (NC '82)	Jonathan Glatzer (A '89)	Joanna Diboll (UC '96)	Michael Stolten (M '16)
Hal Hutchison (E '67)	Robert Quintana (SW '69)	Paul Kullman (G '72)	James Heil (PHTM '76)	Timothy Wilkinson (A&S '82)	Joy Hoffmann (UC '89)	Carol Nyman (PHTM '96)	Eric Bell (SLA '17)
Robert James (A&S '67)	Margaret Ransone (UC '69)	Paul Paustian (A&S '72, PHTM '75)	Lane Kincannon (A&S '76)	Ellen Bland (UC '83)	Barbara Ringham (SW '89)	Earl Berry (PHTM '97)	Joanna Jacwwkson-James (SoPA '18, SoPA '23, SoPA '26)
James Jaubert (L '67)	Yolanda Seys (M '69)	Francis Segrave, Sr. (UC '72)	Frances Mather (G '76)	Robert Burijon (L '83)	Frank Tardo (UC '89)	Benjamin Brodbeck (TC '97)	Joseph Paul (SSE '19)
Harry Kloos (G '67)	Robert Songe (E '69)	John Snell (A&S '72, L '72)	Eleanor Merritt (UC '76, G '78)	Lauradis Cardet (G '83)	Betty Hamby (UC '90)	Charles Smith (L '97)	Isley Lundgren (SoPA '20)
Frederick Lawson (G '67)	Shelby Wilson (A&S '69)	Vance Titus (B '72)	Elmer Casey (PHTM '77)	Anthony Ciervo (B '83)	Jonathan Hubbs (G '90)	Dana Boatwright (NC '98)	Jeffrey Trojan (M '22)
Irving Loev (SW '67)	Dan Yoshioka (M '69)	George Troxell (L '72)	John Mangiaracina (PHTM '77)	Peter Demb (A '83)	Edward Keith (A&S '90)	Albert Bothe (PHTM '98)	Rosario Valvo (PHTM '23)
John Stoliar (M '67)	Carl Doumit (G '70, G '72, G '74)	Jeffrey Wiener (A&S '72)	John Marcus (B '77)	Daniel Johnson (A&S '83)	Lillian Lioeanjie (PHTM '90)	Carol Cox (PHTM '98)	Gregg Glenn (NT '27)
Cecil Talley (A&S '67)	Pamela Erwin (SW '70)	Jonathan Avellone (A&S '73)	Charles Thensted (L '77)	James Jones (L '83)	James McLeod (G '90)	Joshua Haynes (TC '98)	Caretta Hall (B '27)
Vincent Viso (UC '67)	Thomas Guggolz (A&S '70)	Jacob Burns (A&S '73)	Peter Trapolin (A '77)	Alan Strunk (G '83)	Megan Murphy (NC '90)	Lawrence Johnson (B '98)	
Clifford Warren (A '67)	Thomas Healy (A&S '70)	Elena Davillier (UC '73)	Evan Trestman (L '77)	Paul Watkins (A&S '83)	Harry Schwartz (A&S '90)	Anthony Chavis (PHTM '99)	
Karl Wenger (A&S '67)	Ronald Kurlander (A&S '70)	Carolyn Harden (SW '73)	Roger Atkins (A&S '78)	Elton Webster (UC '83)	Edgar Dixey (B '91)	Lois Elswick (NC '99)	
Sybil Adler (NC '68)	John Lary (M '70)	Paul Kim (SW '73)	Charles Bibbins (E '78)	Beverly Andry (B '84)	Richard Farmer (L '91)	Gary Frank (PHTM '99)	
Raymond Ashton (G '68)	Frederick Lutz (A&S '70)	Robert Meriwether (M '73)	Denise Biestek (B '78)	Cherie Henderson (NC '84, B '86)	Carolyn Guste (NC '91)	Brandon Kallinen (A '99, G '06)	
Charles Barker (M '68)	Suzanne Maguire (B '70)	Charlotte Odom (PTHM '73)	Gayle Duskin (G '78)	Gregory Olejack (G '84)	Eric Harrison (E '91)	Richard Keen (UC '99)	
Tyler Bateman (A&S '68)	Barrie Muldrey (A&S '70)	Jann Paul (SW '73)	Robert Heath (E '78)	Timothy Curren (B '85)	John Broussard (A&S '92, B '93)	Wodajo Welldaregay (PHTM '99)	

ACADEMIC MEDICINE SAVES LIVES

BY MICHAEL A. FITTS, President

Picayune, Mississippi, sits 45 miles northeast of New Orleans, a town with a population of around 12,000. It's the home of Benny Nunez, a devoted father and husband who's been a caregiver to his wife ever since she had a stroke. When Benny had a heart attack last year, he was rushed to a small community hospital in St. Tammany Parish, where the doctors revived him again and again as his heart stopped multiple times. Recognizing that his challenging case required highly specialized care, those attending Benny called on Tulane's world-class heart failure and transplant program at East Jefferson General Hospital (EJGH), launched earlier in 2025 as part of our transformative partnership with LCMC Health.

Benny was in a coma when he arrived at EJGH. His organs were shutting down. Led by Dr. Jamil Borgi and Dr. Sasha Vukelic, over three dozen of Tulane's dedicated medical professionals worked together to give him a fighting chance, and Benny took up the fight. After months of inpatient care, he was strong enough for a heart transplant when a donor heart became available. The operation was a success.

A few months earlier, Benny's children were planning his funeral. Instead, they pivoted to planning a Thanksgiving gathering filled with gratitude beyond measure.

This is destination health care in action. Rooted in both clinical excellence and academic leadership, the Tulane Interventional Cardiology team provided Benny with lifesaving, research-driven treatment that simply wasn't available anywhere else. In partnership with LCMC Health, Tulane is building a region-wide, integrated health ecosystem that will improve and save lives from Metairie to Monroe to Mobile, while advancing medical breakthroughs with global impact.

With clinical care centered at EJGH, Tulane is coalescing a vibrant community around research, innovation, education and world-class translational medicine that brings scientific breakthroughs to patients on our evolving downtown campus. In the School of Medicine's Hutchinson Memorial Building, finishing touches are being applied to 50,000 square feet of state-of-the-art laboratory space, (see story, page 15) while the Tidewater Building sports new signs celebrating the recently named, and rapidly expanding, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of



President Michael A. Fitts is joined by university leadership in celebrating new state-of-the-art lab space in Hutchinson Memorial Building. When completed, the transformative project will be the equivalent of adding a new building to Tulane's burgeoning downtown campus.

Public Health and Tropical Medicine. The former Tulane Medical Center has been reimagined as the Downtown Campus Center with renovations underway to build a home for Tulane's new nursing program, while Wave City Market on the ground floor offers an inviting space for faculty, students and staff to refuel, connect and spark new ideas.

Steps away from this bustling evolution sits a silent icon: the long-vacant former Charity Hospital building. Today, Tulane is planning a new chapter for Charity, and for the city itself. We will lead an historic redevelopment that will dramatically expand our downtown footprint, occupying more than half of the one-million-square-foot space which will also include a mix of residential, retail and dining spaces. This is not just a renovation. It's a reimagining that will invigorate the area without displacing a single resident.

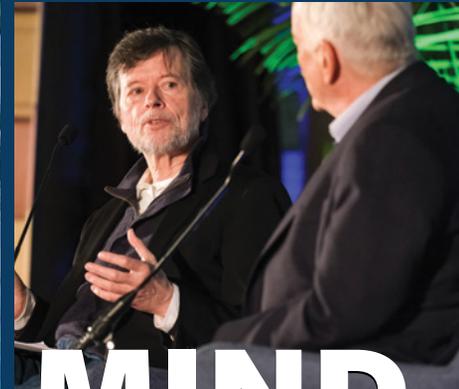
Our growing downtown campus will foster discovery, nurture startups and grow Tulane's more than \$5.2 billion annual impact on the regional economy. It will vastly increase educational, entrepreneurial

and career pathways for both Tulanians and community members. To this end, the university is continuing to invest in impactful programs like the Tulane Innovation Institute, which supports startups from within and beyond the Tulane community; and the Mussafer Internship Initiative, which aims to provide all Newcomb-Tulane College students with access to paid internships, mentorships and real-world career experiences (see story, page 18). With support from the Mussafer program, a pre-med student may be empowered to enroll in a surgical internship instead of taking a summer job unrelated to any career goal. This opportunity, just an example among countless others, could be life-changing not only for the student in question but also for the patients who will benefit in the future.

From Charity to EJGH and beyond, Tulane's bold vision will touch countless lives. For the Nunez family of Picayune, Mississippi, this vision is far from an abstract idea. It's a shared meal, a warm embrace and the incomparable gift of more time together. 🍷



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Downtown New Orleans rises beyond Tulane's campus — a reminder that the university and the city grow stronger together.

PHOTO BY ROMAN VAULIN