THE MAGAZINE OF TULANE UNIVERSITY / FALL 2026

TULANIAN





With the start of the fall semester, the sounds of students' footsteps mingle with the birdsong heard beneath the live oak canopy. PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

Contents

TULANIAN

FALL 2026 / VOL. 97 / NO. 2

DEPARTMENTS

UP FIRST

4 **Inside Tulane Greenhouse**

6 **'Gray's Anatomy' Editor-in-Chief**

7 **By the Numbers**

8 **Newcomb Art Museum Celebrates 30 Years**

10 **New Path Into Nursing at Tulane**

11 **Mangroves Make Global Comeback**

12 **Convocation with World Cup Spirit**

WAVEMAKERS

36 **Audacious Giving**

TULANIANS

40 **Class Notes**

41 **Impression: Kobi Jones**

42 **Impression: Rachel Liverman**

44 **Farewell**

46 **Tribute: Richard W. Freeman Jr.**

47 **Alumni Awards**

VIEWPOINT

48 **President's Letter**

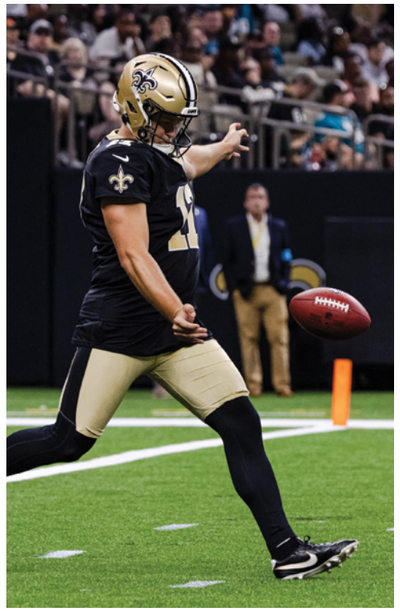


14

MAIN FEATURE

A NEW BEGINNING

The historic transformation of a New Orleans landmark will be the most consequential project ever for Tulane and perhaps for the city itself.



24 PUNT RETURN

Five years after he played for the Green Wave, returning to Louisiana as the New Orleans Saints' newest punter feels like a homecoming for Ryan Wright.



30 CLOSER TO CARE

From functionally curing a sickle cell patient to advanced robotic surgery and a pioneering eye cancer treatment, Tulane University and LCMC Health are redrawing the map of destination healthcare in the Gulf South — with New Orleans at its center.

CONTRIBUTORS
Barri Bronston
Paula Burch-Celentano
Patrick Davis
Katherine DiLeo
Tyler Kaufman
Tina Krohn
Kenny Lass
Samantha Leonard
Kate Lorio-DuVernay
Molly McCrory
Mark Miester
Theo Mitchell
Britlyn Pham
Nick Pierre
Stacey Plaisance
Vincent Postle
Kim Rainey
Mary Sparacello
Mike Strecker
Amanda Vance
Eva Vázquez
Andrew Yawn
O Zhang

VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Ian Morrison

PRESIDENT OF TULANE UNIVERSITY
Michael A. Fitts

Tulanian (ISSN 21619255) is published three times annually by Tulane University Communications and Marketing, 31 McAlister Drive, Drawer 1, New Orleans, LA 70118-5624. Business and Editorial Offices: 200 Broadway, Suite 219, New Orleans, LA 70118-3543. Send editorial and subscription correspondence to Tulane University Communications and Marketing, 31 McAlister Drive, Drawer 1, New Orleans, LA 70118-5624 or email tulanemag@tulane.edu. Nonprofit postage is paid at New Orleans, LA, and additional mailing offices.

Opinions expressed in *Tulanian* are not necessarily those of Tulane representatives and do not necessarily reflect university policies. Material may be reprinted only with permission. Tulane is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Legally protected demographic classifications such as race, national origin, sex, age, disability, veteran status, etc. are not relied upon as an eligibility or participation criteria for employment or educational programs or activities.

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:
Tulanian magazine, Tulane University Communications and Marketing,
31 McAlister Drive, Drawer 1,
New Orleans, LA 70118-5624.

Tulanian magazine is online at tulanian.tulane.edu

Front cover: A glimpse into the future of the historic former Charity Hospital building. Illustration by Eva Vázquez.

TULANE UNIVERSITY



PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

INSIDE THE TULANE GREENHOUSE, AN ‘EXPERIMENTAL PLAYGROUND’ FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

BY BARRI BRONSTON



About a mile from Tulane University’s uptown campus, a greenhouse sits tucked away near the Mississippi River levee. Inside, buckets of sand created from recycled glass sit alongside trays of various marsh grasses and young cypress trees small enough to fit in your palm.

This greenhouse is where researchers from the Tulane Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology in the School of Science and Engineering use carefully controlled conditions to test new ideas. What makes certain cypress trees more tolerant of saltwater than others? Can plants grow in sand made from recycled glass bottles? The greenhouse is where answers to these questions are put to the test before new innovations are introduced in the marshes, forests and restoration sites across south Louisiana and the Gulf Coast.

The 1,500-square-foot greenhouse is equipped with an adaptive system that lets researchers control temperature, light and other conditions. This allows faculty, staff and students to grow Gulf Coast plants under conditions that more closely resemble the natural environment — or help cool plants off during sweltering summers.

“Most research is conducted on local plant species from the marshes, bayous and beaches of the Gulf Coast that thrive in our local environment,” said Keith Clay, professor emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology at Tulane. “The greenhouse is a key resource for education and research.”

The goal is to translate those discoveries into new ways to restore Louisiana’s disappearing coastline.

That mission is personal for Bek Markel, a Tulane research technician and alum who oversees the facility and much of the day-to-day operations.

Markel (SSE ’19, SSE ’20) grew up in south Louisiana. And from their time as a student to their current role, they’ve dedicated themselves to researching the “hidden networks” of microorganisms holding together the ecosystems they grew up exploring.

One of the biggest concerns for south Louisiana is the loss of marshland, which can increase saltwater intrusion, kill vegetation and accelerate erosion. Markel is researching how bacteria and fungi may help some cypress trees survive in areas where salinity levels would otherwise be lethal.

“We salt stress the trees, identify which ones are doing well and then see if we can identify microbes that may be helping them survive,” Markel said. “We’re losing the trees that can lessen the wind effect of a storm surge. So how can we retain these storm protectors? Can adding certain bacteria to trees help them survive?

“This building is kind of an experimental playground. If you have an idea, this is where you test it.”

Markel knows the greenhouse so well they could probably give a tour blindfolded: Here, beach grasses and morning glories are used to study how native plants can stabilize sand dunes. Elsewhere, plants are being grown to support butterfly research.

Another of the greenhouse’s most promising projects is its work with Glass Half Full, a New Orleans-based recycling company founded in 2020 by two Tulane graduates. The company has diverted millions of pounds of glass away from landfills by turning it into sand that can be used to address coastal erosion.

Tulane researchers found that both dune and wetland plants grew as well in recycled glass sand as they did in natural beach and river sand, offering a possible alternative to natural sand dredged from offshore environments, a process that is costly and can damage marine ecosystems.

Following the greenhouse studies, an experimental island incorporating recycled glass sand was built in nearby Bayou Bienvenue, ready to support new plant growth.

“Plants are the main thing holding together our land,” Markel said. “There’s something special about studying what makes your home feel like home and working to preserve it for later generations.”

PHOTOS BY KENNY LASS

Tulane professor is first American editor-in-chief of 'Gray's Anatomy'

BY MOLLY McCRORY

For 168 years, generations of physicians have learned the architecture of the human body from "Gray's Anatomy." Now, for the first time, an American has been chosen to lead and shape the landmark medical text.

R. Shane Tubbs, anatomical research director in Tulane's Clinical Neuroscience Research Center and surgical anatomy director in the School of Medicine, served as co-editor-in-chief of the 43rd edition, published in 2025. Previously, the post had been held exclusively by British editors.

"I have approached this role with deep respect for the book's history and traditions, while ensuring it continues to meet the highest modern scientific and clinical standards," he said. "This appointment reflects the strength and international impact of contemporary clinical anatomical research at Tulane."

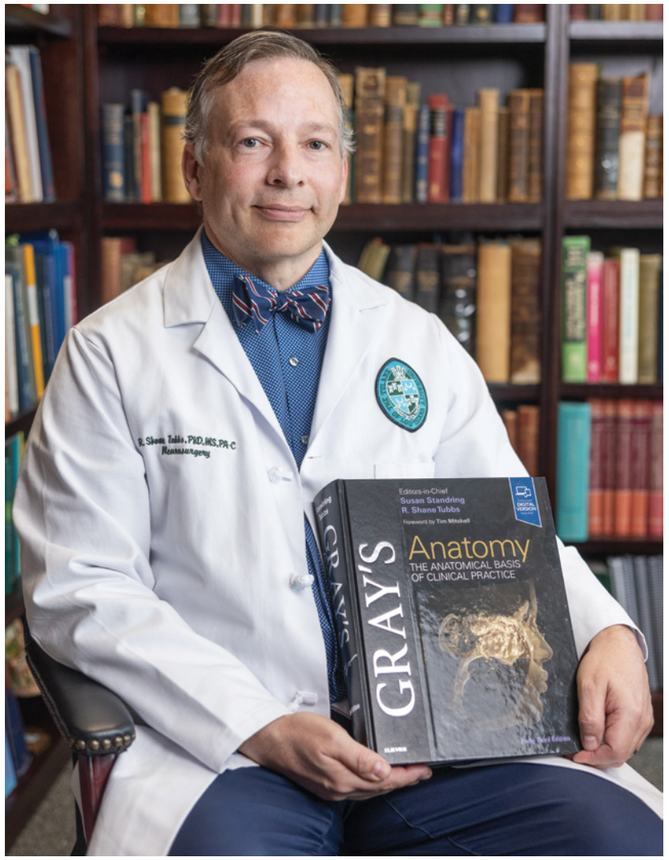
While the text's namesake author, Henry Gray, relied on cadavers and scalpels to reveal anatomical discoveries when he first published the textbook in 1858, Tubbs benefits from modern technology such as MRI machines, CT scanners and other imaging techniques.

This equipment, and Tubbs' own research in his clinical anatomy lab, inform his role as editor and allow him and his colleagues to challenge or refine traditional anatomical descriptions, discoveries that can be incorporated into new editions of the text.

"Human anatomy is not static," he said. "Our understanding continues to evolve as new technologies, such as advanced medical imaging, endoscopy and minimally invasive surgical techniques, reveal anatomical relationships that were previously inaccessible or poorly understood."

This is not Tubbs' first work on "Gray's Anatomy." He was a section editor for the 41st and 42nd editions before joining Susan Standring, emeritus professor of anatomy at King's College London, as co-editor-in-chief for the 43rd edition.

And of course, he continues to use the text as he teaches neurosurgery and structural and cellular biology at the School of Medicine — even while he gets to work on the 44th edition.



R. Shane Tubbs, anatomical research director in Tulane's Clinical Neuroscience Research Center and surgical anatomy director in the School of Medicine, served as the first American editor-in-chief of the international edition of "Gray's Anatomy."

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

We're on the Rise

Through strategic capital projects, expanded research capacity and strong community partnerships, Tulane University is shaping the future of New Orleans and Louisiana.

$700 million

INVESTED IN DOWNTOWN NEW ORLEANS

Anchoring Tulane University's downtown vision, the historic former Charity Hospital building will become a national hub for research, innovation and community impact.

$500 million

TO TRANSFORM THE FORMER CHARITY HOSPITAL BUILDING

$5.2 billion

ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

87%

INCREASE IN FEDERAL FUNDING OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

CREATING OVER

2,000 NEW JOBS



Newcomb Art Museum of Tulane University celebrates 30 years of preserving and uplifting the arts

BY KATE LORIO-DUVERNAY

For decades, the women who learned and worked in H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College drew creative inspiration from the world around them, as they crafted handmade pieces that helped define the artistic identity of the South. With every brushstroke and stitch, they fostered the development of not only their own minds but also the history of art and education in the United States.

This year, Tulane's Newcomb Art Museum is highlighting that historic influence as the museum celebrates 30 years of contributing to women's education, American decorative arts and contemporary fine art dialogue by displaying a variety of special exhibits.

One, titled "Quiet Reserve: Stitching an Ambitious New Woman," tells the story of how the college's embroidery program equipped a generation of independent artists to participate in the changing cultural and economic landscape at the turn of the 20th century. Displays of intricate needlework pieces crafted by those students illustrate how they engaged with the period's ideas of womanhood and labor.

Another exhibit, "The Moss Mystique: Southern Women and Newcomb Pottery," sheds new light on the enduring legacy of Newcomb Pottery and the artisans who created its iconic pieces. Drawing from new research, the exhibit examines how Newcomb's artists helped expand perceptions of the South through the ceramics they decorated with iconography inspired by its landscape and culture.

"These works are not only beautiful objects; they are windows into the social, cultural and economic history of the region and evidence of women's contributions to shaping Southern identities," said Maurita Poole, executive director and chief curator of Newcomb Art Museum.

Throughout its 30-year run, the free museum has built upon the legacy of H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College and its forward-thinking approach to unifying the decorative arts with educational opportunities. It was founded in 1886 as a coordinate college of Tulane and was the first such school in the United States to grant degrees to women. There, students received academic instruction in a variety of fields, including art.

In 1895, Newcomb Pottery developed out of the college's fine arts program as a means of translating the students' creative training into a professional practice they could use to earn a living.

While male potters gave the ceramics their forms, the female students ornately decorated them with motifs modeled after the plants and wildlife found throughout the region, producing somewhere between 70,000 and 100,000 pieces before the pottery facility closed in 1940. The ceramic pieces have since been internationally recognized for their meticulous craftsmanship and artistry.

"The fact that they prioritized the arts from the outset, combining it with industry and a commercial enterprise, was something very unique," Poole said.

In 1996, the Newcomb Art Gallery expanded to become today's Newcomb Art Museum. Located within Tulane's Woldenberg Art Center, the museum houses many examples of the pottery in addition to other works.

Today, the museum honors and maintains the legacy of H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College while complementing the academic programs offered to current Tulane students, as well as showcasing contemporary artists and contributing to conversations in the field of fine art.

"Newcomb began as an educational experiment that used art and craft to expand opportunities for women. That spirit of innovation remains relevant today," Poole said. "By the museum's 40th or 50th anniversary, I hope we will be recognized not only for preserving and interpreting Newcomb's history but also for exploring how art can address contemporary questions, foster civic dialogue and inspire new ways of learning," she said.





For Maurita Poole (left), executive director and chief curator of Newcomb Art Museum, the museum's pieces embody women's contributions to the artistic identity of the South. Above, Sierra Polisar, collections manager and exhibitions registrar for the museum, inspects some of the hand-decorated pottery, which incorporates motifs from the region's natural beauty.

PHOTOS BY KENNY LASS



The new 120-credit degree includes Newcomb-Tulane College core curriculum, nursing prerequisites and a four-semester professional nursing program, offering undergraduate students a route to an in-demand profession.

A NEW PATH INTO NURSING AT TULANE AMID GROWING WORKFORCE DEMAND

BY AMANDA VANCE

For Tulane undergraduates interested in nursing, a new major offers a way to pursue the profession while remaining part of the broader Newcomb-Tulane College experience.

Developed by the Tulane School of Medicine Program of Nursing, the major allows students to complete the NTC core curriculum alongside required nursing prerequisites before advancing into the professional Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Throughout the program, students maintain access to Tulane-based financial aid, housing, campus life and co-curricular opportunities.

The 120-credit degree includes the Newcomb-Tulane core curriculum, nursing prerequisites and a four-semester professional nursing program. Coursework combines online instruction with in-person laboratory, simulation and clinical experiences across the New Orleans area. Students complete more than 800 hours of supervised clinical practice before graduating prepared to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses.

Because the nursing program is housed within the School of Medicine, students also participate in experiences rarely available at the undergraduate level, including cadaver labs, standardized patient encounters, interprofessional simulations with medical students and clinical experiences through student-run clinics.

The program is designed to preserve flexibility before students enter the four-semester professional nursing sequence. With careful academic planning, students may pursue additional majors, minors, electives or study abroad opportunities.

Students also receive coordinated advising throughout their academic journey. Newcomb-Tulane College advisers guide them through core requirements and nursing prerequisites, while a dedicated nursing academic adviser supports students once they enter the major.

The new major comes as Louisiana — and the nation — faces a nursing shortage amid growing healthcare demand and continued staffing challenges. For students who already see nursing in their future, it creates a direct route from the traditional Tulane undergraduate experience to intensive clinical preparation for the profession.

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

MANGROVES MAKE GLOBAL COMEBACK

BY STACEY PLAISANCE

Mangrove forests, long considered among the world's most threatened coastal ecosystems, are showing signs of a remarkable recovery.

A new Tulane University study based on four decades of satellite data found that mangroves are no longer declining globally. After decades of losses from deforestation and coastal development, gains from natural regeneration and expansion have begun to outpace losses.

"We're finally seeing a global turning point for mangroves," said lead author Zhen Zhang, a postdoctoral scholar at Tulane School of Science and Engineering.

Between the 1980s and 2010, the world lost nearly 2,900 square kilometers of mangrove forest. But over the past 16 years, that trend has reversed. By 2023, the net decline over the full four-decade period had narrowed to about 1% — far less than previously estimated.

Healthier, denser mangrove forests capture more carbon, support fisheries and buffer coastlines from storms. And the rebound reflects the growing impact of conservation policies and restoration programs worldwide.

"What we're seeing now is a real shift," said Daniel Friess, Cochran Family Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Tulane and director of The Mangrove Lab.

Recovery is being driven by both conservation efforts and natural processes. Mangroves are reclaiming abandoned aquaculture ponds and spreading across newly formed mudflats in sediment-rich river deltas.

Along the Gulf Coast, warming temperatures are helping mangroves expand northward. In Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta, mangrove cover began increasing in the late 1990s, with stronger growth after 2012.

But researchers caution that the comeback remains fragile. Deforestation continues in some regions, and a severe freeze in Texas in 2021 caused a sharp decline in mangroves there, showing how quickly temperature extremes can erase gains.

"The most immediate and effective way to protect mangroves is to stop deforestation," Zhang said.



After decades of losses, mangroves are no longer declining globally, according to a new Tulane study. Photo by Daniel Friess

When news breaks or ideas emerge, Tulane experts are part of the conversation. Here's what they're saying.

"Reduction of nighttime light exposure should be considered as one of the potential strategies for preventing heart disease by clinicians and policy makers."

Lu Qi, the HCA Regents Distinguished Chair and Professor and director of the Tulane University Obesity Research Center, to CNN, on how too much light during sleep can impact heart health.

"It's combining the culinary arts with evidence-based medicine and educational techniques to teach nutrition in a way that young doctors and other healthcare professionals can use in counseling and talking to patients."

Ron Quinton, medical director of Tulane's Goldring Center for Culinary Medicine, to Fox News, on the benefits of teaching culinary medicine to medical students.

"It was really surprising. **The only other vertebrates we see something similar in are fish."**

Hannah Frank, associate professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, to Live Science, on new Tulane-led discovery of bats' unusual tolerance of viruses.

"I don't think anybody has a right answer right now. **Things are changing pretty rapidly."**

Nicholas Mattei, associate professor of computer science, to Nature, on how professors are adjusting to students' use of artificial intelligence.

"Ebola doesn't happen in a vacuum. It happens where there are failing health systems that are not protecting people from all the other diseases out there."

Lina Moses, Tulane epidemiologist and disease ecologist, to NPR, on the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo this year.



President Fitts welcomes Class of 2030 with World Cup spirit and 'Lasso lessons' at Convocation

BY KATE LORIO-DUVERNAY

The Class of 2030 kicked off its Tulane journey in August at the 2026 President's Convocation for New Students with sportsmanship, lessons from a beloved television coach and a jubilant New Orleans second line. Held in Avron B. Fogelman Arena in the Devlin Fieldhouse, the ceremony was the culmination of Hullabaloo Hello, Tulane's weeklong welcome for first-year and transfer students.

Sarah Pachon, master of ceremonies and a senior in the Class of 2027, opened the program by introducing one of the first Green Wave traditions new students would experience. As the Tulane University Marching Band performed the Alma Mater, gonfalons bearing the colors of Tulane's five undergraduate schools entered the arena. Pachon explained that those very same gonfalons would lead the procession of students at their Unified Commencement ceremony.

Tulane Trailblazer and alumnus Dr. Michael White (G '73, G '79) led the Original Liberty Jazz Band and the platform party through the crowd as Anneliese Singh, associate provost for faculty development and chief officer for academic excellence and opportunity, presented an invocation for the event. Then, Tulane President Michael A. Fitts took to the podium.

Fitts compared the students' college experience to the FIFA World Cup. Much like the athletes from around the globe who visited the United States for soccer's premier international tournament, the Class of 2030 had arrived at Tulane from near and far, Fitts said, ready to pursue "the best trophy of all": a Tulane diploma.

"Like the teams in the World Cup, you don't have to be perfect, and you don't have to win every match," Fitts said. "You just have to focus on advancing."

Drawing inspiration from the hit television show "Ted Lasso," Fitts offered three lessons for navigating the "tournament" ahead. First, "Be curious, not judgmental." He urged students to ask questions when classmates see the world through a different lens, noting that curiosity strengthens Tulane's interdisciplinary culture and fosters an environment where academic excellence thrives.

Fitts pointed to recent graduate and Tulane 34 Award recipient Autumn Sommers, who fostered civil dialogue through leadership roles during her time at Tulane, including serving as one of the first members of the Ethics Bowl team. Sommers competed nationally with the Tulane team and also mentored local high school Ethics Bowl students, promoting civil discourse and respectful dialogue about critical issues. Sommers is now a congressional intern in Washington, D.C., working for a fellow Tulane alum.

PHOTOS BY TYLER KAUFMAN AND KENNY LASS



Fitts' second lesson — "Be the goldfish" — challenged students to have a short memory for mistakes and quickly move on from them. Fitts shared the story of Paresh Kolluru, a student whose initial rejection from Phi Delta Epsilon, a selective premedical association, did not stop him from reapplying. Not only was Kolluru accepted the following year, he went on to become president of Tulane's chapter and earn the Tulane 34 Award himself before graduating and entering medical school.

Fitts cited Kolluru's experience to demonstrate the value of moving forward after a setback.

"Newcomb-Tulane College has all the resources you need to keep you on the path to your trophy. And Tulane's supportive, relational community will cheer you on every step of the way — even when you stumble," Fitts said.

Fitts' final lesson for the students was to believe in themselves and one another. He highlighted Madeline "Dylan" Murray, the student speaker at the 2026 Unified Commencement who co-founded the biotechnology startup Exactics during her sophomore year after transferring to Tulane.



Murray and her teammates developed an at-home rapid test for Lyme disease with support from Monica Embers, a researcher with the Tulane National Biomedical Research Center.

After reminding the newest members of the Tulane community that success may look different than they expect, Fitts revealed a Tulane athletic jersey worn underneath his academic robe. "I believe in you, Class of 2030," he told the crowd, before encouraging them to sing along to the marching band's rendition of "Country Roads," the "unofficial anthem this summer," as Fitts put it.

Fitts was followed by Newcomb-Tulane College Dean Mollye Demosthenidy (PHTM '07, L '07), who advised the students to say "yes" to new opportunities before they felt ready to tackle them and let the questions and ideas they could not stop thinking about guide them toward their purposes in life.

Invoking Tulane's motto, *Non sibi sed suis,* or "Not for oneself but for one's own," she challenged them to measure success by the relationships they foster, the communities they build and the lives they change.

"When we say 'one's own,' we consider the local and global community to be our own, both here in New Orleans and across the world," Demosthenidy said.

For the final send-off, students reached under their seats to find plain white second-line umbrellas. The newest Tulanians were invited to decorate the parasols over the course of their Tulane years and bring them to Unified Commencement, where they will second line out of Caesars Superdome at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Marking the start of that tradition, Dr. Michael White and the Original Liberty Jazz Band led the new Tulanians out of the arena in their first second line as Tulane students — a joyful beginning to the journey ahead.

Sporting a Tulane jersey, President Michael A. Fitts mingled with students after the 2026 Convocation.

a New Beginning

The historic transformation of a New Orleans landmark will be the most consequential project ever for Tulane and perhaps for the city itself.

BY MIKE STRECKER



ARCHITECTURAL RENDERING



Tulane University President Michael A. Fitts remembers the first time he saw the former Charity Hospital building in downtown New Orleans.

The mammoth limestone structure stood gray and silent. Its darkened windows emitted no light, nor gave any clue as to what this mighty edifice had once meant to generations of New Orleanians who had been born there, cared for there or said goodbye to a loved one there. From the building's leaf-strewn approach to the apex of its 20th floor, there was no hint of its role beyond serving as a vestige of a bygone era, a sentinel of a shuttered past. Fitts, however, sensed something else in the gray stillness. *Hope.*

With the right plan, the right vision and the right partners, Fitts knew that the former Charity Hospital building, with its 1 million square feet and location in the heart of the city's burgeoning BioDistrict, could be the site of the most important and consequential redevelopment project in Tulane's history and, perhaps, in the city itself.

"I grew up in West Philadelphia and I have seen, firsthand, what growth around a major research university, growth grounded in scientific discovery and medical breakthroughs, can do for a neighborhood and region," Fitts said. "Startups and spinoffs based on a university's intellectual property can improve lives through better treatments and cures while also creating a thriving community for residents."

What Fitts envisions at 1532 Tulane Avenue is the creation of a true game changer that will reimagine one of the city's most cherished buildings as a hub of scientific innovation while remaking the New Orleans economy into one centered on bioscience exploration and its breathtaking advancements. When Fitts announced this summer that Tulane had signed a purchase and sale agreement for the Charity project that would transition Tulane to an ownership role and main developer of the project, leaders at the city, state and federal levels cheered, while media from The Washington Post to the Times-Picayune hailed the effort.

"For two decades, this building stood as an empty eyesore in the heart of New Orleans. Now, that changes," said Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry. "We're not just fixing our skyline — we're building a stronger future for our people. This project means new opportunities for homegrown talent and stronger investments in education and workforce development so our children can build their future right here in Louisiana. Thank you to Tulane University for helping bring this vision to life and investing in the future of our state."

More than 650,000 square feet of the former Charity building will become a new home for the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and the Tulane University Innovation Institute. Parts of the Tulane School of Medicine will also occupy the redeveloped structure, which will include state-of-the-art classrooms, community spaces and interdisciplinary labs for approximately 700 new researchers. The remaining sections of the building will be used for a mix of residential living, a food court, community gathering space and retail options.

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

"Startups and spinoffs based on a university's intellectual property can improve lives through better treatments and cures while also creating a thriving community for residents."

Michael A. Fitts, Tulane president

"This project will breathe new life into one of our most iconic landmarks while creating jobs, driving innovation, attracting talent and strengthening downtown as a center for research, education and economic opportunity," New Orleans Mayor Helena Moreno said. "New Orleans is on the rise, and the long overdue redevelopment of the former Charity Hospital demonstrates that people are increasingly choosing to invest in the promise and potential of our city."

Such bipartisan support of the project prompted The Washington Post to declare that Tulane's plan for the Charity site "has forged an alliance among political leaders of different parties in Louisiana, a rarity in a deeply divided nation, and symbolizes a powerful commitment to the power of research at a time when federal research funding is dwindling nationally."

Calling the endeavor a true public-private effort, Fitts lauded the enthusiastic support from all quarters.

"We are grateful to Governor Jeff Landry, State Senate President Cameron Henry, the entire Louisiana Legislature, Louisiana Economic Development Secretary Susan Bourgeois, New Orleans BioDistrict and its Board Chair Andy Kopplin, Mayor Helena Moreno, Councilmember Lesli Harris and the entire New Orleans City Council, our congressional delegation as well as the Goldring Family Foundation for their support of this project," Fitts said.

The Goldring Family Foundation issued a statement that called the planned transformation of Charity "a true watershed moment."

"This is an effort that has the potential to define Tulane as an institution and position New Orleans and Louisiana among the nation's most forward-thinking. The Goldring Family Foundation is honored to be a part of this historic moment and urges others to join it in what promises to be a new and exciting chapter for our university and hometown," the statement said.

The spirit of Tulane and Charity

Tulane and 1532 Tulane Holdco, LLC, the original developer, expect to finalize the financial closing on the project this fall. When construction is completed in 2029, the vast space of the art deco marvel will be filled with researchers from the widest array of disciplines working to find new treatments for numerous diseases. This hearkens back to Tulane's origins as an institution dedicated to eradicating the yellow fever epidemics that devastated 19th-century New Orleans.

"When Tulane was founded in 1834 as the Medical College of Louisiana, a partnership was formed with Charity, and working together with Tulane physicians, Charity was able to excel in its new role of a teaching hospital, providing high-quality healthcare to a growing population while also serving as one of the country's most important training grounds for future physicians," said Robin Forman, Tulane's senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. "Charity Hospital stood as a symbol of our city's commitment to public health. We are proud that this powerful legacy will continue and this new space will be a monument to public health."



Today, Tulane researchers are pursuing breakthroughs undreamed of in times past. One example is MAGIC-SCAN, the brainchild of J. Quincy Brown, the Mark and Diana Tipton Professor of Biomedical Engineering in the School of Science and Engineering, and Brian Summa, associate professor of computer science in the School of Science and Engineering. MAGIC-SCAN, which attracted bipartisan funding and a presidential visit to Tulane in 2024, will give surgeons the ability to confirm that all cancer tissue has been removed while the patient is still on the table. It is an advancement designed to save lives while reducing patient worry and costly additional surgeries.

Brown has co-founded the spin-out Instapath to bring MAGIC-SCAN technology to hospitals large and small.

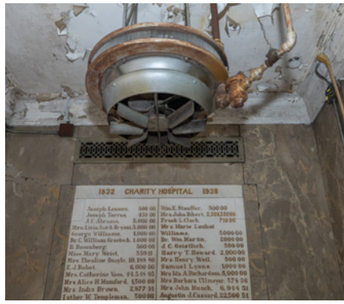
"This project will breathe new life into one of our most iconic landmarks while creating jobs, driving innovation, attracting talent and strengthening downtown as a center for research, education and economic opportunity."

Helena Moreno, New Orleans mayor

Previous page: Tulane President Michael A. Fitts envisions the former Charity Hospital building as a hub of scientific innovation centered on bioscience exploration and discovery. This page: A 20th-century aerial view of Charity Hospital's ivory edifice in downtown New Orleans. Next page: Scenes of the former hospital's dormant halls as plans take shape for its redevelopment.









PHOTOS BY KENNY LASS. (HISTORICAL PHOTO FROM TULANE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS)

"Supporting those who both conduct research and bring discoveries to market through startups is what we are all about," said Kimberly Gramm, David and Marion Mussafer Chief Innovation and Entrepreneurship Officer at the Tulane University Innovation Institute. "Researchers like Quincy and numerous others will find colleagues working with the same passion and curiosity within the same building along with entrepreneurs looking to bring advancement from the lab to the people who need it the most."

Downtown Dreams

The Charity project is the anchor of a more than half-a-billion-dollar investment Tulane is making in New Orleans, much of it focused on a historic expansion of its downtown campus. The effort, dubbed "We're on the Rise," includes the 60,000 square feet of newly renovated lab space on the fifth and seventh floors of the Hutchinson Building, home of Tulane's School of Medicine. Other related projects include converting space on the third and fourth floors of the former Tulane Medical Center (now the Downtown Campus Center) for Tulane's Program of Nursing and its simulation lab, where students learn to perform procedures using interactive patient manikins, as well as additional research-dedicated space.

Patrick Norton, Tulane's senior vice president, chief operating officer and treasurer, is the lead executive in directing the redevelopment of the Charity building and the university's broader downtown expansion. He said Tulane's growth in the city's core is being undertaken with a deep respect for the history and culture of both New Orleans and the university.

"Tulane's first home was downtown on Common Street, so downtown is both part of our origin and a central part of our future," Norton said. "The redevelopment of Charity is about far more than one building. It is about helping create an entire neighborhood — a vibrant ecosystem of research, education, innovation and opportunity that will generate jobs at every level."

With the addition of Charity, Norton said, Tulane's downtown presence will reach an entirely new scale.

"Our downtown footprint will grow dramatically, but we are also staying true to the historic mission of Charity. We are bringing this extraordinary building back to life as a place where scientists, students and entrepreneurs will work together on discoveries and innovations that can help produce the cures of tomorrow."

Tulane's downtown campus is also a vital component of BioDistrict New Orleans, a state-created public-private economic development area centered on the city's medical district and dedicated to advancing bioscience, healthcare and innovation. It stretches from the Central Business District in downtown to Xavier University on Carrollton Avenue.

"Tulane's research investments are the biggest untold economic development story of the past decade," said Andy Kopplin, chair of the BioDistrict's Board of Directors. "They are bringing in $100 million more a year to New Orleans than they were a decade ago — net new money to the region."

The latest economic reports support Kopplin's enthusiasm. Tulane has an annual $5.2 billion (and growing) impact on the state's economy, supports more than 30,000 jobs and contributes $88.2 million in annual state tax revenue. Much of that impact is fueled by the university's research mission, which has experienced a 75% increase in funding over the last decade. There are currently 2,700 Tulane employees based downtown and more than 2,600 students there. Over the next eight years, the university expects to add 2,500 more employees downtown and increase its annual research expenditures to $400 million.





"I can't think of a better thing to happen downtown, or really for the state of Louisiana, than what Tulane is doing at the former Charity Hospital building," said Dennis Lauscha, a member of the Board of Tulane and president of the New Orleans Saints and Pelicans. Both franchises will be neighbors to the redeveloped Charity site.

Brain Gain

On a recent trip back to West Philadelphia, Fitts was enjoying a hamburger at one of the many eateries within the innovation district of the neighborhood in which he was born and raised. Thanks in large part to the discoveries produced by the nearby University of Pennsylvania, thriving high-tech industries now occupy a once-moribund area. Midway through his burger, Fitts was recognized by a former Tulanian.

"He asked me what I was doing there. I said, 'I'm having a hamburger. What are you doing here?'" Fitts recalled.

It turns out that the Tulanian, a research scientist, had relocated from New Orleans to West Philly, drawn by the district's opportunity. Fitts' goal is to reverse precisely this kind of brain drain from the state of Louisiana.

> "The redevelopment of Charity is about far more than one building. It is about helping create an entire neighborhood — a vibrant ecosystem of research, education, innovation and opportunity that will generate jobs at every level."
>
> **Patrick Norton,** Tulane senior vice president/chief operating officer/treasurer

Though more Tulane graduates are expressing a desire to build their careers and lives in New Orleans post-graduation, Fitts knows the city has a long way to go in stanching the outmigration of its best and brightest.

"Tulane graduates have every reason to stay in New Orleans after graduation," Fitts said. "They either grew up here or they came here from other states and fell in love with the city. So, there is the incentive. What they need is the opportunity to have a successful career, to start their own venture or to become part of a vibrant economy with the promise of future growth."

As much as he enjoyed returning to his old neighborhood, Fitts is looking forward to a thriving high-tech corridor complete with a walkable residential area and a welcoming street

Left, above: Architectural renderings of the planned redevelopment of the former Charity Hospital building. The project is expected to anchor Tulane's more than half-a-billion dollar investment in New Orleans and the expansion of the university's downtown campus.









Above, right: Architectural renderings show how Tulane's downtown campus will be a vital component of BioDistrict New Orleans, a state-created public-private economic development area centered on the city's medical district.

life around Charity. Then he can imagine another lunch with a Tulanian — perhaps this one over a po'boy rather than a hamburger — right in the heart of New Orleans.

A Beacon of Hope

The former Charity Hospital — or Big Charity as it was known locally — is actually the sixth Charity Hospital in New Orleans. The first opened in 1736 in the French Quarter. When the current building was completed in 1939, it was the country's second-largest hospital.

"The group of young doctors who founded the Medical College of Louisiana, the forerunner of Tulane, actually practiced at what was the fifth Charity Hospital building. Our roots are here — and now we are returning to our roots," said Lee Hamm, senior vice president and dean of the Tulane School of Medicine.

Few will have a more poignant return to the reimagined Charity building than Hamm. In 2005, when the levee system collapse following Hurricane Katrina brought historic devastation to the city, Hamm was treating patients in Tulane Hospital across the flooded avenue from Charity. Between shifts he used a canoe to visit Tulane doctors as they tended patients in the waterlogged and misery-laden corridors of Charity. There was no running water or electricity and diminishing quantities of supplies and hope. Hamm was one of the last people evacuated from Tulane Hospital — which had a heliport that airlifted patients and physicians from both hospitals.

Hamm relishes coming back to a new building when components of the expanding Tulane School of Medicine will take up residence there.

"A lot of good things happened in that building," he said. "The hospital has taken on the symbolism of compassionate care to those that need it most. To be back in that building will be terrific."

Thomas LaVeist, dean of the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, also sees the redeveloped building as a full-circle moment.

"It seems fitting that Charity will once again be used to protect and serve the health of the people of New Orleans," LaVeist said.

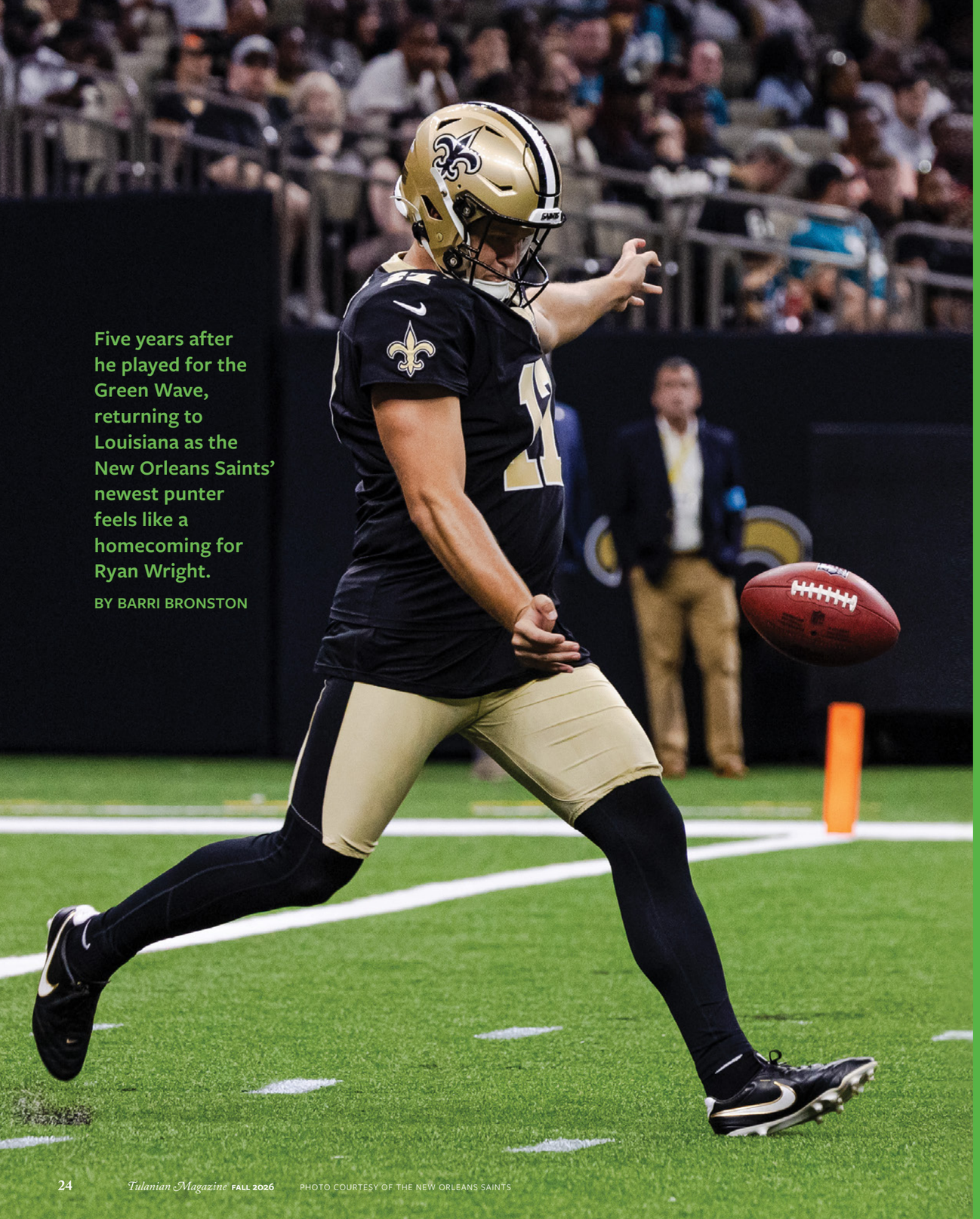
New Orleans' Time

Fitts is fond of quoting the late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan and his famous dictum, "If you want to build a great city, create a great university and wait 200 years."

"Some people feel that they have heard me say that for 200 years," he laughed. "But it is so true and prescient and so applicable to us. By us, I mean Tulane and New Orleans. Tulane is approaching its 200-year anniversary, and New Orleans recently celebrated its 300th, so our time has arrived. We have the funding, we have the vision, we have the team and we have the will. This is New Orleans' time."

"For two decades, this building stood as an empty eyesore in the heart of New Orleans. Now, that changes. We're not just fixing our skyline — we're building a stronger future for our people. ... Thank you to Tulane University for helping bring this vision to life and investing in the future of our state."

Jeff Landry, Louisiana governor



Five years after he played for the Green Wave, returning to Louisiana as the New Orleans Saints' newest punter feels like a homecoming for Ryan Wright.

BY BARRI BRONSTON

RETURN PUNTER

Back Where It Began

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

The date was Jan. 2, 2023, and Ryan Wright (B '21), a rookie punter for the Minnesota Vikings, was nervously juggling a team meeting and the drama unfolding on his phone. It wasn't long ago that Wright was booming punts at Yulman Stadium during a four-year run with the Green Wave from 2018-2021.

Now, his Greenies were seconds away from beating the USC Trojans and Heisman Trophy winner Caleb Williams in the Goodyear Cotton Bowl.

There was just one problem. Wright was supposed to be paying attention to the Vikings' special teams meeting.

"I had the game on between my legs," Wright recalled. "I kept looking down and looking up, trying to pay attention at the same time."

When Tulane's Alex Bauman caught the winning touchdown with nine seconds remaining, clinching a dramatic end to a remarkable 12-2 season, Wright struggled to contain himself.

"I almost jumped up and ran out of that meeting," he said. "I was so happy."

Sneaking glances at a football game during a team meeting wasn't exactly standard procedure for Wright. By then, the undrafted free agent had beaten out a veteran punter to earn Minnesota's starting job, and he took the responsibilities of his new career seriously.

"I would usually never do that because I'm in a meeting," Wright said. "I am trying to pay attention. I'm very focused on what I am doing for my career. But some things you just can't avoid."

Tulane — and now, New Orleans — are among them.

More than three years after that Cotton Bowl afternoon, Wright has returned to the city where he spent his formative years as a student-athlete. After four seasons in Minnesota, Wright signed a four-year, $14 million contract with the New Orleans Saints in March 2026, making him the fourth-highest paid punter in the league.

"I enjoyed every minute of my time up in Minnesota, but when I heard the Saints reaching out, I was very excited to come back to a place that kind of made me who I am," Wright said. "I embraced the culture when I was here at Tulane, and I'm excited to be part of that again."

"When I heard the Saints reaching out, I was very excited to come back to a place that kind of made me who I am. I embraced the culture when I was here at Tulane, and I'm excited to be part of that again."

Wright at home

Wright is just one of several Green Wave players to find success in the NFL in recent years, an upward trajectory that matches the rise of the university's football program: In the last four years, Tulane secured two conference championships and the Cotton Bowl victory before earning its first-ever College Football Playoff berth last season.

David Harris, the Ben Weiner Director of Athletics Chair, sees the professional achievements of Wright and other former Green Wave players such as Tyjae Spears (Tennessee Titans), Darnell Mooney (New York Giants) and Dorian Williams (Buffalo Bills) as examples of the lessons the program seeks to instill.

"The players who go on to succeed in their careers afterward remind us of the true value of what we do: hard work, teamwork and leadership," Harris said. "Their stories motivate us all to aim higher, both on the field and in life."

Growing up in San Ramon, California, Wright wasn't planning to become a punter. A multisport athlete, he played quarterback in high school and was a three-star prospect heading into his senior season. He also played baseball as a catcher.

Punting was almost an afterthought, "more of a hobby," as Wright described it.

That changed when Tulane needed a punter. Then-head coach Willie Fritz reached out to kicking specialist Jamie Kohl, director of Kohl's Professional Camps, who recommended Wright.

"I loved the school. I loved the coaching staff. I loved the teammates that I met there," Wright said. "So I committed right on the spot."

The transition wasn't seamless, with Wright admitting he was homesick at first.

But as he settled into college life, New Orleans began to feel like home. "I think it made me grow up in a way," he said.

He remembers living with teammates on Delord Street, just across the fence from Yulman Stadium, and afternoons spent around the backyard pool. "It reminded me how cool it was to finally meet my lifelong friends and what a great city to do that in," Wright said.

His teammates became close friends, almost like family. Years later, they remain part of his life, and two of those college roommates were groomsmen in his wedding.

PHOTO BY KENNY LASS

Rising to the challenge

Wright's evolution into starting punter happened nearly as unexpectedly as his arrival at Tulane. The original plan was for him to redshirt in his first year. But during the opening kickoff of a 2018 game at Ohio State, the Green Wave's starting punter and kickoff specialist was injured.

Suddenly, Wright was punting in one of college football's most iconic venues — The Horseshoe.

"What a way to be thrown into the fire," he recalled. "I think going into it, I felt like I deserved to be that punter, but I also had a lot more room to grow. That was kind of when I started taking my technique a lot more seriously instead of just kicking the ball."

Former teammate Ethan Hudak saw that development up close. Hudak served as Wright's long snapper for three seasons and today is Tulane Sports Properties' associate NIL (Name, Image, Likeness) business development manager.

"Ryan's work ethic and dedication have always set him apart," Hudak said. "Watching him develop from our days at Tulane to now excelling in the NFL has been incredible."

Wright also learned by watching teammates who approached football with the seriousness of professionals, including future NFL players Patrick Johnson (Las Vegas Raiders) and Cam Sample (Atlanta Falcons).

"Those guys were just true to their craft," Wright said. "They worked their butts off every day, and they led the team. They were vocal, and they just wanted to hold that standard high."

There was another NFL player Wright was watching closely, too — longtime Saints punter Thomas Morstead, who occasionally worked out at Tulane.

"When you ask any punter in the league right now who's their Mount Rushmore of punters, I think Thomas is included in 99, probably 100% of those lists," Wright said. "It was really cool just being able to pick his brain all those days that he would come out to Tulane and work out."

Morstead noted Wright's dedication to improvement.

"I've punted with Ryan quite a few times over the years," Morstead said. "He's done what you hope every player will do — he has continued getting better every year."

Back where it began

By the end of his first season at Tulane, Wright had a new goal — playing in the NFL. He honed his skills over the next three years, finishing his Tulane career with 8,909 punting yards and a 44.5-yard average while earning First Team All-AAC honors in each of his final two seasons.

After graduating from Tulane with a bachelor's degree in management and marketing and going undrafted in 2022, Wright signed with Minnesota and beat out veteran Jordan Berry for the starting job. Four years later, he is back in New Orleans, returning at a different stage of his life than when he first arrived as a homesick teenager from California.



"Trust your process. Go to work every day, do what you need to do, have one goal in mind each day and make sure you accomplish that goal and get better."

He is now married and the father of a baby boy. And after years of discovering New Orleans for himself, Wright gets to introduce the city to his own family.

"It's kind of cool being able to bring my wife here, and I have a son now," Wright said. "I experienced the city, so now I kind of get to teach them what it is about New Orleans that's so great and show them all the cool spots, all the historic sites, all the history and food."

Brennan's remains Wright's favorite New Orleans restaurant, and after signing with the Saints, he celebrated there with former Tulane roommates and their families.

His infant son, meanwhile, has already had his own introduction to Dad's profession, coming out to watch Wright punt at practice.

Wright also hopes his return will give him more opportunities to reconnect with Tulane football. He knows many of the people with the program, including head coach Will Hall, who was Tulane's offensive coordinator during Wright's sophomore season, as well as former teammates who have returned in new roles.

And events such as a Saints training camp day held at Yulman in August ensure Wright will never be far from campus.

"Having him back in New Orleans will be a treat, not only for Saints fans but for those who had a chance to see him play in Yulman Stadium," Hudak said.

For current Tulane players hoping to follow Wright's path to the pros, the punter's advice is simple.

"Trust your process," Wright said. "Go to work every day, do what you need to do, have one goal in mind each day and make sure you accomplish that goal and get better."

Punting is a craft built on precision, where fundamental mechanics work to ensure the ball lands where expected.



But Wright's journey is a reminder that not all things are so predictable — and you may still land exactly where you're meant to.

"If you don't get drafted, don't lose hope," Wright said. "You can still get that undrafted contract. You can still get that rookie minicamp invite. If you show effort and you show what you are capable of — what you know you're capable of — it's going to work out."

Left: Saints punter Ryan Wright gets some well-deserved rest during training camp as he sits in the grass with his wife Ashley and their son. Above: Wright watches the trajectory of one of his signature booming punts inside the Caesars Superdome.

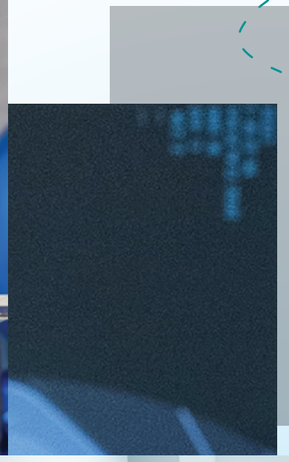
PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE WRIGHT FAMILY AND THE NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

CLOSER TO CARE

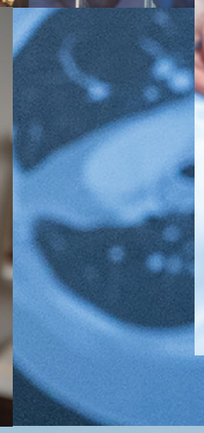
From functionally curing a sickle cell patient to advanced robotic surgery and a pioneering eye cancer treatment, Tulane University and LCMC Health are redrawing the map of destination healthcare in the South — with New Orleans at its center.

By Andrew Yawn













PHOTOS BY AMELIAH KOLP AND KENNY LASS





On a spring day in 2026, Daniel Cressy lay in his hospital bed knowing it was the first day of his new life.

Cressy, a 23-year-old from Metairie, Louisiana, had been born with sickle cell disease, a painful blood disorder once thought incurable. The condition had shaped his life from infancy and eventually put his dream of becoming a commercial airline pilot on hold after the Federal Aviation Administration rejected his application for a medical certification.

That rejection letter sat framed in the hospital room as Benjamin Watkins, section chief of pediatrics hematology/oncology at Tulane School of Medicine, infused Cressy with stem cells that had been taken from Cressy's body and genetically edited to prevent sickling in his bloodstream.

"I did not think I'd get this far — my life is changing forever as we speak," Cressy said at the time. "Thank you, Dr. Watkins, so much."

Exactly 100 days after the infusion, Cressy returned to Manning Family Children's to celebrate becoming the first person in the Gulf South — and one of only dozens nationwide — to be functionally cured of sickle cell disease since the treatment was approved by the FDA in 2023.

And the success of his treatment is already ensuring he won't be the last.

"I like to say there's before Daniel and there's after Daniel," Watkins said. "When we became an authorized treatment center for gene therapy in 2024, we saw interest out the gate from people across Louisiana, from New Orleans to Shreveport. Daniel was our first patient. After Daniel's story went viral, we've received interest in consultations from across the region, across the country and even places as far away as Barbados, Nigeria, Kenya and Australia.

"Across the world, people are calling and emailing, interested in learning more about these options."

Cressy's treatment represents a significant milestone for the academic healthcare partnership between Tulane, LCMC Health and its network of hospitals, including Manning Family Children's, where Watkins directs the Stem Cell Transplant, Cell and Gene Therapy Program.

Announced in 2022, the Tulane-LCMC Health partnership combines the research and discovery of academic medicine with the care and clinical infrastructure of a large health system. The result is lifesaving specialty care options that patients from Louisiana and other southern states have previously had to travel to Houston or Atlanta to find.

And the success of Cressy's sickle cell treatment was only one in a year of "firsts" that have helped position Tulane and LCMC Health as a destination healthcare option for the region and beyond.

At East Jefferson General Hospital, Tulane ophthalmic oncologist Paul Finger began using a novel radiation system he invented to treat certain eye tumors in minutes instead of days — bringing a treatment offered at only four other U.S. health systems to the Gulf South. Meanwhile, Tulane thoracic surgeon Wassim Abi Jaoude performed the first single-port robotic lung cancer surgery in Louisiana, Arkansas and Mississippi.

These are just a few examples from a year of medical advances at Tulane that also included Louisiana's first gene therapy for hemophilia as well as regional breakthroughs in urology and another novel lung cancer treatment that uses microwaves to kill tumor cells.

"This is destination healthcare at its best," Tulane University President Michael A. Fitts said. "It is providing lifesaving, life-improving treatments and cures — among the most advanced anywhere — to the residents of our city, state and the entire Gulf South. It is fulfilling, through the latest discoveries and breakthroughs, the founding mission of Tulane to heal our city and region."

Greg Feirn, CEO of LCMC Health, said these "medical firsts" underscore the power of what he calls a "transformational partnership" with Tulane, a leader in academic medicine and patient care.

"We can do more for our patients, communities and region together than would be possible as separate organizations," Feirn said.

The future of eye cancer treatment

Paul T. Finger (M '82) came to New Orleans to create something that did not yet exist.

When Finger joined Tulane as a professor of ophthalmology at Tulane University School of Medicine and director of the Ocular Tumor Service in 2025, he recognized a regional need for eye cancer treatment options, particularly for choroidal melanoma, the most common form of eye cancer in adults.

"Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama are basically unserved states," said Finger, one of the world's preeminent authorities on ophthalmic oncology and a 1982 graduate of Tulane School of Medicine. "There's a deficit of care for eye cancer. People were traveling to Houston, Memphis and sometimes Atlanta to get their care, or if they couldn't travel, people were unnecessarily losing their eyes and sight because they got eye cancer."

Earlier this year, Finger, Tulane and LCMC Health launched Louisiana's first comprehensive ophthalmic plaque brachytherapy program at East Jefferson.

The treatment uses a small plaque containing radioactive seeds that is positioned on the outside of the eye to deliver radiation directly to the tumor. Traditionally, the procedure requires two surgeries: one to attach the plaque over the tumor and another, several days later, to remove it.

In March 2026, a patient who lives more than an hour from New Orleans became one of the first in Louisiana to receive the treatment after a routine eye appointment revealed a tumor. Following this success, the program quickly saw a surge of interest from beyond the New Orleans area.

"The service is growing exponentially," Finger said. "We did an analysis, and approximately 70% of the patients coming to us have never been to Tulane-LCMC Health before. Many of them are from Mississippi and northern Louisiana. I think we've had a few from Alabama, and there is also no eye cancer center in the Florida Panhandle."

Months after pioneering the first use of the treatment in the state, Finger is already referring to ophthalmic plaque brachytherapy as "the old way."

He and his team have begun treating patients with a device he invented to deliver a form of radiation therapy available at only a handful of health systems nationally — and, Finger said, nowhere else in the South.



"Across the world people are calling and emailing, interested in learning more about these options."

Benjamin Watkins

Previous page, clockwise from top: Daniel Cressy expresses gratitude to Tulane University and LCMC Health after becoming the first patient in the Gulf South to be functionally cured of sickle cell disease. Tulane thoracic surgeon Wassim Abi Jaoude shakes a patient's hand after conducting the region's first single-port robotic lung cancer surgery. An aerial view of East Jefferson General Hospital. Tulane ophthalmic oncologist Paul Finger holds a device he invented that can eliminate eye cancer tumors in minutes, the first device of its kind in the world.

"The old way, you sew the plaque onto an eyeball and leave it there for five to seven days, because that's how long it took for the radiation to get out of the seeds and into the tumor," Finger said. "I invented a device that delivers the same amount of radiation needed to kill the tumor in 10 or 15 minutes."

Instead of two surgeries, only one is required. Days of treatment are reduced to minutes. And the plaque only needs to be held onto the eye — no stitches required.

The device is the first-ever light-guided, light-defined brachytherapy radiation delivery system in the world. Finger's key innovation was to apply four lights around the disc. During treatment, the lights allow physicians to look through the pupil and see exactly where the radiation is being delivered.

By August, Finger had successfully treated a handful of patients with the cutting-edge device. He expects the reach of the program to continue growing.

"We are bringing people in from across the South, but eventually I think we will bring in people from across the country," Finger said.

The next frontier in robotic surgery

In another operating room in East Jefferson, Wassim Abi Jaoude set out this year to perform a lobectomy with a standard goal: to remove a portion of a patient's lung containing cancer.

The way he performed the procedure was anything but standard.

Using the da Vinci Single-Port robotic system, Abi Jaoude, assistant professor of surgery at the School of Medicine, performed the first single-port robotic lung cancer surgery in Louisiana, Arkansas or Mississippi.

Lobectomies have long been a standard surgical treatment for patients with operable early-stage lung cancer, and surgeons have performed them robotically for years. But conventional robotic surgery typically requires multiple ports, or points of entry into the body. This means multiple small incisions are made between the ribs to accommodate a camera and surgical instruments.

The single-port system changes that approach, placing the camera and multiple articulated instruments through one opening below the rib cage. Once inside the chest, the camera and other instruments spread apart to give the surgeon room to operate.

That difference can translate into an easier recovery for patients.

"Less trauma means less pain," Abi Jaoude said. "That means less inflammation. That means less drainage. That means the tube can come out earlier, and the patient can go home earlier."

The FDA cleared the single-port robotic system for thoracic procedures in 2024. After joining Tulane in August 2025, Abi Jaoude immediately began working to get credentialed to use a single-port robot for lobectomies after discovering East Jefferson already had the technology.

"I saw the opportunity to bring this technique to this area because nobody's doing it," Abi Jaoude said. "There are only two single-port robots in the entire state of Louisiana. We have one and I believe the other is in Lafayette being primarily used for colorectal cancer. This is a rarity, and it brings cutting-edge technology to an area that needs it."

In May, 77-year-old Dennis O'Neil became Abi Jaoude's — and the region's — first single-port robotic lobectomy patient. At a postoperative visit a week later, O'Neil said he felt no pain.

"We are bringing people in from across the South, but eventually I think we will bring in people from across the country."

Paul Finger



Tulane ophthalmic oncologist Paul Finger, along with Tulane and LCMC Health, helped launch Louisiana's first eye cancer treatment program of its kind.



"I saw the opportunity to bring this technique to this area because nobody's doing it ... This is a rarity, and it brings cutting-edge technology to an area that needs it."

Wassim Abi Jaoude

"I don't know how I could have gotten better care than I received here," O'Neil said.

By the end of the summer, Abi Jaoude had performed two more of the procedures. He said his patients have experienced noticeably less postoperative pain compared to what he often sees following multiport operations.

Single-port lobectomies remain a new offering, and not every patient is a candidate. A patient's height and anatomy, for example, can determine whether the instruments can safely reach the necessary areas of the chest.

Still, Abi Jaoude said being the first to embrace new medical procedures is emblematic of how academic-clinical partnerships can result in regional impact and pave the way for more skilled healthcare professionals in the future.

"It's critical to be early adopters when technology progresses, and I'm sure we will be getting referrals specifically for this surgery," Abi Jaoude said. "Our residents will also be able to graduate with training on the single-port, which is so important for us as we train the next generation of surgeons."

Building beyond the breakthrough

Months after Cressy celebrated the completion of his therapy and a chance to live a normal life, Watkins reflected on the shift that's occurred in just a few short years since he joined Tulane and Manning Family Children's in 2023.

For generations, treatment for sickle cell was largely centered on managing symptoms, preventing complications and controlling pain.

Now, there's a functional cure. Now, there's hope.

Nowhere is that hope needed more than in the South, which sees the highest prevalence of sickle cell disease in the U.S. An estimated 3,000 people live with the condition in Louisiana.

"No one else is able to deliver gene therapy right now in Louisiana or Mississippi or large parts of the South," Watkins said. "We're excited that it's time for Louisiana to lead the way and not just follow."

While the treatment is difficult and not for everybody, given its requirement for chemotherapy and a weekslong hospital stay, Watkins is already hard at work delivering the therapy to new patients: a 15-year-old boy from Alexandria, Louisiana, and a 14-year-old girl from Slidell, Louisiana.

"We're perfectly situated here to meet this moment, and we have a population that is both interested and in need," Watkins said. "But we also benefit from the buy-in by both Tulane and our hospital administration to prioritize this and make sure there's visibility around gene therapy."

The program's reach is also beginning to extend beyond sickle cell disease.

Watkins said he will soon see two patients from Florida who chose to come to New Orleans to receive treatment for thalassemia, an inherited blood disorder in which the body makes an abnormal or reduced amount of hemoglobin, resulting in anemia and potential developmental issues.

If their treatments proceed as expected, Watkins said, these patients could become the first in Louisiana to receive gene therapy for the condition.

"They shopped around, looked at other centers and ended up choosing us as their authorized treatment center," Watkins said. "This is the result of a partnership with a shared mission of expanding access to lifesaving therapies for all patients, not just the ones who can afford it or the ones who live in our backyard.

"This is not the endpoint. This is the starting point."

Wavemakers

$1 MILLION GIFT TO CREATE MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION WING

Tulane University's School of Liberal Arts has received a $1 million gift from Tulane alumna, parent and marketing executive Alison Friedman Brod (NC '91) to support a media and communication wing in the newly renovated Newcomb Hall on the university's uptown campus.

The space, which will be named the Alison Brod Media and Communication Wing, will include media production studios, a digital editing lab, flexible collaboration spaces, a recording studio and technology that supports emerging forms of storytelling and scholarship. From film editing to podcast creation and digital journalism to multimedia research, the wing's resources will mirror professional standards and prepare students to engage meaningfully with the rapidly evolving landscape of communication and media.

Brod, who graduated from Tulane's Newcomb College in 1991, made the gift in celebration of her 35th Class Reunion.

"This is a tremendously exciting gift for the future of the liberal arts at Tulane," said Robin Forman, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs. "The renovation of Newcomb Hall represents our commitment to giving our faculty and students world-class spaces that match their ambition, creativity and curiosity."

Brod's gift will support construction, program enhancement and the long-term vision of the School of Liberal Arts. The Alison Brod Media and Communication Wing will be located on the fourth floor of Newcomb Hall, which is undergoing a renovation that will reimagine the historic structure as a dynamic home for creativity, collaboration, digital scholarship and humanistic inquiry.

Brod is the founder and owner of Alison Brod Marketing + Communications, one of the country's most influential public relations and brand marketing firms. She is also a Tulane parent and serves on the President's Council and the university's Family Leadership Council. She credits her Tulane education with helping set the stage for her entry into the communications and creative industries.



As the founder of a major New York agency known for launching early-career talent, she has long been an enthusiastic supporter and employer of young professionals — including fellow Tulane graduates — who pursue careers in public relations, marketing and media.

"Tulane opened doors for me in ways I could never have imagined as a student," Brod said. "I'll always remember two unique classes that created the foundation for my career success: Professor Van Cagle's famous pop culture course, as well as my class on rhetorical communication, which focused on ethos and pathos to create persuasive arguments.

"This gift is my way of honoring that experience and ensuring future generations have access to the most forward-thinking spaces for creativity, communication and collaboration," she said. "I'm thrilled to support the renovation of Newcomb Hall and to help create a wing that will inspire students for decades to come."

Brian Edwards, dean of the School of Liberal Arts, expressed deep gratitude for the impact this gift will have.

"Alison Brod's inspiring gift allows us to bring together two of our most dynamic programs under a shared roof, both literally and figuratively," Edwards said.

Newcomb Art Museum's pre-1950 collections to expand after $2.43 million gift

Tulane University has received a $2.43 million gift from the estate of alumna Anne Robertson Sellin (NC '62) to expand the collections of the Newcomb Art Museum, one of the university's most significant repositories of art, material culture and creative scholarship.

The Anne Robertson Sellin Endowed Fund will provide permanent support for exhibitions and the acquisition of works of art created before 1950. The bequest reflects Sellin's commitment to Tulane and to Newcomb College, where she earned her bachelor's degree in art history in 1962.

"We are deeply grateful for Anne Sellin's extraordinary generosity and her belief in the transformative power of art," said Maurita N. Poole, executive director and chief curator at the museum.

Sellin earned a master's degree in art history from the University of Pennsylvania. After marrying art historian David Sellin, she moved to Washington, D.C., where she devoted more than four decades to civic and preservation work.

Sellin never lost her connection to Tulane or to Newcomb College.

"Anne was very intentional about wanting to make an impact on the museum's collecting and exhibitions programs," said her brother Charles Robertson, who served as executor of her estate.

By documenting her bequest during her lifetime, Sellin was able to work with Tulane to ensure that her intentions were clearly understood and that her legacy would be honored as she envisioned.

"Legacy gifts like Anne's are among the most meaningful expressions of commitment to Tulane," said Ginny Wise, senior vice president for advancement. "They remind us that alumni and friends can make a lasting impact while also enjoying the satisfaction of seeing their plans take shape. Anne's generosity is an inspiration to our entire community."



PHOTO BY PAULA BURCH-CELENTANO

WAVE OF SUPPORT MARKS FIVE YEARS OF 'CARING OUT LOUD'

For five years, Wave of Support, a signature Tulane program initially made possible through the philanthropy and leadership of Drs. Kathy Fields and Garry Rayant, has strengthened a campus culture of care by providing students, faculty and staff with tools and resources to support student mental health and well-being.

Officially launched in 2021, the Wave of Support program has handed out hundreds of Red Folders, which provide mental health information to faculty and staff. The Wave of Support Leadership Academy has empowered multiple cohorts of students to champion wellness, and the annual Failure Tales event normalizes failure as part of life and something to learn from. The Green Bandana project empowers students to connect peers with available resources.

Since its launch, more than 1,300 students have been trained as student mentors, and over 4,400 Tulanians have completed Question, Persuade, Refer suicide-prevention training. Every September, the TUgether for Mental Health campaign invites the entire Tulane community to increase awareness.

"Our university's motto — not for oneself, but for one's own — could have been written specifically about Kathy and Garry," Tulane President Michael A. Fitts said.

Fields and Rayant helped endow the program so that it will continue in perpetuity.

"We're grateful for all the lives we've impacted," Fields said. "I hope they go forth and share it with the world. As we say at Tulane, Wave of Support is about 'caring out loud.'"

$2 MILLION GIFT TO ESTABLISH ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

A new scholarship fund will help Tulane University attract and retain the best and brightest students for generations to come, thanks to a $2 million commitment from longtime university supporters Robert I. Grossman (A&S '69) and Elisabeth J. Cohen.

The gift will establish the Robert I. Grossman, MD and Elisabeth J. Cohen, MD Scholarship, which will provide merit-based scholarship support to undergraduate students across Tulane's schools.

For Grossman, a 1969 Phi Beta Kappa graduate and scholarship student at Tulane who is widely regarded as one of the most influential academic medical leaders in modern American medicine, the gift reflects a profoundly personal commitment to ensuring that future students have access to the same transformative opportunities that helped shape his life and career.

"Elisabeth and Bob understand firsthand the life-changing difference scholarship funding can make for students," Tulane University President Michael A. Fitts said. "Bob's experience as a scholarship recipient at Tulane helped launch a remarkable journey that would lead him to become one of the most esteemed academic medical leaders of his generation, while Elisabeth has distinguished herself as a pioneering physician-scientist, educator and mentor whose impact has been felt by countless clinicians and researchers. Their extraordinary accomplishments embody the power of educational opportunity."

"This merit scholarship reflects our belief that talented students should have every chance to pursue their aspirations and realize their potential," said Cohen. "Bob and I are impressed with the superior education offered at Tulane."

"Tulane gave me an opportunity as an undergrad that changed the course of my life, and now it's nice to give a little back," Grossman said. "As a scholarship student, I benefited from an education and experiences that widened my horizons, challenged me intellectually and opened doors I never could have imagined.

"We are honored to support future students whose curiosity, determination and leadership will help address the challenges and possibilities of the future," added Grossman, who is an emeritus member of the Board of Tulane.

The new scholarship continues a legacy of generosity from Cohen and Grossman, who were recently inducted into the Paul Tulane Society, the university's most prestigious philanthropic recognition, reserved for individuals and organizations whose cumulative giving exceeds $1 million. In 2015, the couple



Robert I. Grossman, MD and Elisabeth J. Cohen, MD

established the Robert I. Grossman, MD and Elisabeth J. Cohen, MD Endowed Fund for Study Abroad.

In addition to his Board of Tulane service, Grossman has served as a member of the President's Council, the School of Science and Engineering Board of Advisors and multiple reunion committees. In 2024, he was honored with the Tulane Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award.

From 2007 to 2025, Grossman served as chief executive officer of NYU Langone Health and dean of the NYU School of Medicine, leading a period of historic growth and transformation that helped establish NYU Langone among the nation's premier academic health systems and elevating the medical school to national prominence. In 2019, the school was named the NYU Grossman School of Medicine in his honor. He currently serves as executive vice president to the board of trustees of NYU Langone Health.

Cohen is a distinguished ophthalmologist, educator and researcher who retired as a clinical professor in the Department of Ophthalmology at the Grossman School of Medicine. During her career, she has trained generations of clinicians and researchers, published more than 300 peer-reviewed papers and earned numerous honors for her contributions to medicine and education.

Cohen served on the editorial board of the Archives of Ophthalmology from 1994 to 2013 and became a member of the American Ophthalmological Society in 2009. In 2015, the Cornea Society awarded her the Castroviejo Medal, its highest honor.

Tulanians

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



CHEERS TO TULANE'S GRADUATING LEADERS! Tulane graduating students smile and celebrate their achievements at the Senior Leader Toast 2026, held at the Bea Field Alumni House.

PHOTOS BY THEO MITCHELL

How did your education at Tulane shape the trajectory of your life?



As a member of the first class following Katrina, public and community service was literally built into our curriculum. To this day, giving back to my community remains an important aspect of both my professional and personal life.

Nicholas Brasier (SSE '10)



It played a major role in my perspective on different cultures and societal norms. One of my favorite courses was anthropology. Tulane does a great job of offering teachings on many different cultural aspects and sociological interpretations.

Leroy Carter (SLA '11)

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

1970 — 1979

KENNETH DUCOTE (A&S '71) presented at the Conference of the International Society for Educational Planning, held at Nelson Mandela University in Gqeberha, South Africa. His presentation examined the complex dynamics of renaming public schools, highlighting parallels between New Orleans' renaming efforts and similar initiatives in South Africa.

DEBORAH SABALOT DEANE (NC '74) received a Doctor of Philosophy in Law from Te Herenga Waka — Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand in December 2025. Her dissertation subject was "The Evolving Client-Firm Relationship: Fiduciary Duties and Regulatory Rules — Are the English Courts and the UK Financial Conduct Regulator on a Collision Course?"

LLOYD N. "SONNY" SHIELDS (A '74, L '77) was inducted into the National Trust Advisors Program with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

TOMMIE GRAHAM JR. (A&S '76) recently retired after 45 years in the energy industry in which he served in sales and operations management in locations around the world. Currently, he serves as a mentor at a middle school in the Spring Branch Independent School District and is also volunteering for a candidate for the U.S. House during midterm elections.

1980 — 1989

SCOTT FLEMING (A&S '83) published "The Quest of Kip Saunders." The novel explores themes of regret, redemption and the choices that shape a life.

JILL LEWIS SMITH (A '85, A '88) was elected regional director of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. The organization facilitates licensure and credentialing for architects in the United States.

STEVE CARPENTER (B '86) recently published his book "The Allure and Peril of the Appalachian Trail" with Globe Pequot Press. The book explores the joys of the Appalachian Trail along with its storied history.

THOMAS M. FLANAGAN (L '89) has been recognized in the 33rd edition of "The Best Lawyers in America" directory.

LAETON PANG (M '89, PHTM '89) received the American College of Radiation Oncology Gold Medal Award on Feb. 6, 2026.

How did your education at Tulane shape the trajectory of your life?



It opened doors to opportunities while teaching me lessons that have stayed with me throughout my life: responsibility, adaptability, reflection and the courage to take action when I wanted a different outcome.
Georgia Davis (UC '94)



I met "my people" who allowed me to find myself and who I was as a young adult. Tulane was the launchpad that started my journey toward a fulfilling life.
David Vinson (A&S '92)



Tulane retrospectively taught me that not all institutions of higher learning are as truly open-minded and encouraging of thoughtful discourse as Tulane was. I didn't even know how good I had it until I was gone!
Jennifer Jewell (E '03)

1990 — 1999

SARAH AHMAD (NC '92) was named to Modern Healthcare's 2025 List of the 100 Most Influential People. She has headed the payer-backed data and processes organization DataSpring, powered by CAQH, since 2023.

SARAH GILBREATH FORD (G '92, G '97) published "Of Women and Water: Submersion Stories in Eudora Welty's Fiction" with University Press of Mississippi.

MORGAN STONE GRETHER (A&S '92) married Elaine Schimek on Dec. 5, 2025, in Portland, Oregon.

ROBERT HENRY YOUNG (A '92) has been elevated to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects, one of the highest honors in the architecture profession.

KEITH GERCHAK (A '93) made his directorial debut with the film "Lost & Found in Cleveland," which premiered at the Newport Beach Film Festival and was shown in 500 theaters nationwide.

MONTE HURST (A&S '93) joined the Dallas office of Munsch Hardt as a shareholder in the Labor & Employment practice group. Hurst brings decades of experience advising businesses on employment challenges.

LESLIE SNADOWSKY (NC '93) received the Public Relations Society of America's first-place 2026 Silver Anvil Organizational Award for "Best In-House Team: Associations/Nonprofit Organizations."

LEIGH VERBOIS (NC '97) was named CEO of Rx-360, a consortium that works to protect patient safety by securing quality and security across the pharmaceutical supply chain.

SUZANA I. SINATRA (L '98) was recently elevated to principal at nationwide employment law firm Jackson Lewis P.C. She is an attorney in the firm's San Diego office, where she represents management in employment litigation matters.

2000 — 2009

BRAD MILLER (L '01) was appointed chief executive officer of ComplyAuto, the leading compliance software and services provider to the automotive industry.

ANGIE CHRISTINA (L '03) recently joined Flanagan Partners LLP, where she will continue her practice in commercial litigation, government contracts and insurance law. She has also been recognized in the 33rd edition of "The Best Lawyers in America" directory.

VICTOR LI (L '04) recently published "Supreme Pressure: The Rejection of John J. Parker and the Birth of the Modern Supreme Court Confirmation Process." The book examines the 1930 Supreme Court nomination of John J. Parker, a turning point in American judicial politics that symbolized a profound clash of ideologies, political agendas, economic doctrines and interpretations of the Constitution.

LAURENT DEMOSTHENIDY (L '06) has been recognized in the 33rd edition of "The Best Lawyers in America" directory.

DAMIAN AUFIERO (SLA '07) was awarded the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the U.S. Senate Excellence in Civic Education Award on Oct. 26, 2025, as part of the Institute's 10th Anniversary Celebration.

MATTHEW GRAND (B '07) was chosen to be the new chief strategy officer at Rodale Institute, where he will support the institute in strategic financial planning, mission-driven strategy and sustainable food systems.

IMPRESSION

KOBI JONES

BY ANDREW YAWN



Kobi Jones (SSE '20) didn't arrive in New Orleans expecting Tulane to shape his career. In fact, he didn't even expect to attend Tulane. But a single engineering course provided a spark that would lead him from Tulane's School of Science and Engineering to the manufacturing floor of a battery technology startup.

Jones, who graduated from Tulane in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering, is now a manufacturing engineer at South 8 Technologies in San Diego. The company develops battery electrolyte technology designed to work in extreme cold, with applications that include military communications equipment, drones and other systems that need reliable power in subzero conditions.

"I didn't know I would go to Tulane, but this amazing school, this amazing opportunity, just appeared in front of me," Jones said. "As soon as I stepped foot on campus, I was like, 'I need to get involved with this.'"

Growing up in Maryland, Jones developed an early interest in chemistry after a high school teacher encouraged him to enter a science fair. He moved to New Orleans after enrolling at Xavier University of Louisiana, his father's alma mater, to study chemistry. There, he learned about a dual-degree program that allowed students to complete foundational science coursework before pursuing engineering studies elsewhere.

He signed up for a class on materials and energy balances at Tulane. Almost immediately, he knew the school was a fit.

"I'd already completed the fundamental math courses, so this class moved me directly into engineering, solving equations for actual machines and thinking about real-world applications," Jones said. "I saw the facilities and thought, 'This is really an engineering school.'"

Jones transferred to Tulane in 2018. He made friends on campus who pushed him to further his knowledge in the field and consider which industries aligned with his skill set. He became vice president of Tulane's chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers, a student organization that gave him key leadership and management experience. And he still uses lessons learned from some of his professors.

Jones credits Hank Ashbaugh, now chair of chemical and biomolecular engineering at the School of Science and Engineering, with teaching him to strip complicated problems down to the variables an engineer can control.

"The real education was around process-based thinking," Jones said. "And as I've gone out into the workforce, it's very much like that: Cut through the nonsense, do good work and solve problems."

Jones' interest in the science of batteries began at Xavier. At Tulane, he was able to expand on those studies, and he worked with Advano, a New Orleans-based battery startup that spun out from the university, for his capstone project on optimizing battery material production.

In Jones' words, "the opportunities aligned."

Since 2021, Jones has worked at South 8, where he helps build battery cells and improve the manufacturing processes behind them. His work includes laser welding and collaborating with technicians as the company develops technology that can retain performance at temperatures where batteries typically struggle.

As the technology continues to evolve, the next generation of engineers may find themselves working in fields they've never imagined. The enduring skill is learning how to solve a problem.

"I love my job, and battery manufacturing is a growing industry," Jones said. "Getting into this modern style of engineering and working on cutting-edge technology, for sure, was because of Tulane."

PHOTO BY TINA KROHN

IMPRESSION

RACHEL LIVERMAN

BY BARRI BRONSTON

Long before Rachel Liverman (B '07) built a skincare brand with 30 studios, she got her first taste of entrepreneurship by running a business of her own on the campus of Tulane University.

As an undergraduate in the A. B. Freeman School of Business, Liverman entered a business plan competition with an idea for a fair-trade store selling artwork, jewelry and crafts made by artisans from around the world. The proposal placed third, earning her and her teammates space in the Lavin-Bernick Center for University Life to run the shop.

They hired employees, ordered merchandise, managed finances and learned the realities of operating a true brick-and-mortar business.

"My love for brick-and-mortar actually started at Tulane," said Liverman, who graduated in 2007. "I learned firsthand all the different elements of what it means to run a retail business."

Today, Liverman is founder and CEO of Glowbar, a fast-growing skincare company built around customized 30-minute facial treatments. What began with one New York location has grown to 30 studios — with more planned — across eight East Coast states, with nearly 500 employees.

For Liverman, the company is the culmination of lessons that began long before Glowbar opened its doors.

Growing up, she watched her grandmother Catherine Hinds, founder of the Catherine Hinds Institute of Esthetics, and her mother build the first accredited esthetics school in the country. Their example convinced her entrepreneurship was possible.

"If you see something, then you can believe it for yourself," she said. "I saw firsthand that women could start businesses, run businesses, grow businesses and be really successful."

Tulane gave her the chance to do it herself. She credits the Freeman School with fostering an entrepreneurial mindset through coursework, including an entrepreneurship class and hands-on experiences that challenged students to turn ideas into reality.

Liverman found an environment that encouraged independence. Professors challenged students academically but also treated them like adults, she said, giving them room to navigate the responsibilities and distractions of life in New Orleans.

After graduation, Liverman deliberately spent a decade working in the beauty industry — specifically female-owned startups and small- to medium-sized businesses — before launching her own company.

"I knew I wanted to learn from others first," she said.



PHOTO BY O ZHANG

The idea for Glowbar came from her own frustration. Traditional facials were expensive, time-consuming and inconsistent. Liverman envisioned something simpler: a professional, 30-minute facial offered through an affordable monthly membership.

"I like to say that my grandmother pioneered skincare, and I reinvented it," she said.

She raised $1 million from friends and family to open the first Glowbar in New York. Six and a half years later, the company continues to expand.

"It's the most rewarding thing in my life," she said. "It's my dream come true."

Although she built her career in New York, Liverman still returns to New Orleans regularly and says the city helped shape her as much as the classroom.

"Tulane does a really good job of saying, 'We're going to support you, but we're also going to expect you to be an adult, show up and do the work,'" she said.

Her advice to today's students has little to do with skincare or entrepreneurship. Instead, she urges them to invest in the friendships they build in college.

"College is so important to your future network and your support system," she said. "Go get coffee with someone. Maintain those relationships."

For Liverman, her friends have become investors, customers, advisers and lifelong supporters.

"Everything about Glowbar is only because of the relationships that I've nurtured and maintained," Liverman said. "And some of my closest supporters and friends are from Tulane. For that, I am endlessly grateful."

How did your education at Tulane shape the trajectory of your life?



Classroom lessons are one thing. But it was time outside the classroom that really made an impact. Those formative successes and mistakes are ones I still return to today as a leader and entrepreneur.
Drew Dickson (SLA '08)



I feel a responsibility to share my time, skills and experiences when and where I can.
Derek D. Bardell (G '01, '02)



Tulane broadened my horizons in such important ways, teaching me to be curious and inventive. My engagement as an alum is invaluable and has had a tremendous influence on my professional journey.
Shala Carlson (NC '93)

2010–2019

JAMES H. GILBERT (SLA '11, L '15) was named to the 7th edition of the "Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America" list.

CAMILLE E. GAUTHIER (L '12) has been recognized in the 33rd edition of "The Best Lawyers in America" directory.

ANDERS HOLMGREN (L '12) has been recognized in the 33rd edition of "The Best Lawyers in America" directory.

CHRISTIAN TRUMAN (SLA '12) became a partner at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP on Jan. 1, 2026.

GRACE FARY (SLA '15) and Peter Clifton (SLA '15) were married in November 2025 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

SPENCER SINCLAIR (L '15) was named a partner at Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP.

BROOK LAFLOE (SSE '16) was named a 2026 National Girls & Women in Sports Day-Minnesota honoree for the Breaking Barriers Award. She was recognized during the 2026 National Girls & Women in Sports Day-Minnesota Celebration on Feb. 4.

CARLY CRUICKSHANK (SLA '17) has joined Mika Meyers PLC as an associate. She will work at the firm's Grand Rapids office, where she will concentrate her practice on municipal and employment law.

GABRIELLE A. BALL (SLA '18, L '20) was named to the 7th edition of the "Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America" list.

2020–2026

PRICE CIOLINO (L '21) joined the law firm Norris McLaughlin, P.A., as an associate in the Litigation Practice Group. He represents domestic and international businesses, educational institutions, municipalities and government entities in complex commercial and employment-related disputes in state and federal courts.

BRIAN MOUNCE (L '21) was appointed chief legal counsel to the Memphis Independent Monitor for Police Reform as well as assistant city attorney for Germantown, Tennessee.

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)

Right: Four Tulanians (left to right: Bobby Yan (TC '96), Ryan Cunningham (TC '04), Lena Franklin (B '16, SLA '16), Greg Wasserstrom (B '18, L '24)) share their insights about the entertainment industry to members of the Tulane Alumni Association Board at a summer panel in Los Angeles. Below: Two friends smile while attending the Welcome Reception for members of the Tulane Alumni Association Board on a summer day in Los Angeles.





PHOTOS BY THEO MITCHELL

Farewell

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

John Lyon (A&S ’45)
Muriel MacHauer (NC ’45)
Kopel Burk (A&S ’46)
Joel Clarkson (A&S ’47)
John Hodges (A&S ’47, G ’50)
Paul Jensen (A&S ’47, B ’49)
Dorothy Bolding (SW ’48, PHTM ’89)
Rita Zerr (NC ’48, G ’59)
Laura McLemore (NC ’49)
Helen Sperling (NC ’49)
Joseph Young (B ’49)
Thomas Birdwell (E ’50, B ’55)
Shirley Friend (A&S ’50, L ’55)
Vera Thibaut (NC ’50)
Renee Burk (NC ’51)
Betty Chouest (NC ’51)
Shirley Cohen (SW ’51)
Daniel Hurley (A&S ’51, L ’54)
Gertrude Terry (NC ’51)
Frank Blue (A&S ’52)
Charles Gomberg (M ’52)
Ann Haack (NC ’52)
Sheldon Klotz (A&S ’52)
Paul Scheib (A&S ’52)
Yvonne Miller (NC ’53)
Richard Parise (A&S ’53)
Nannette Walton (NC ’53)
Harold White (L ’53)
Frances Zadeck (NC ’53)
Adelaide Benjamin (NC ’54, L ’56)
John Carney (M ’54)
Edith Mossy (NC ’54)
Jan Mounger (NC ’54)
George Pankey (A&S ’54, M ’57)
Texas Reardon (B ’54)
Elroy Waltzer (E ’54)
Martha Barfoot (NC ’55)
Edward Beheler (M ’55)
David Carre (E ’55)
Donald Collins (B ’55, L ’62)
Edmond Lamperez (A&S ’55, M ’58)
Joan Coon (NC ’56)
Jorge Huerta (E ’56)
Shirley Kulwin (NC ’56)
Maury Midlo (A&S ’56)
Carol Rosen (B ’56)
Graham Shaw (A&S ’56, M ’59)
Stanton Shuler (A&S ’56, M ’59)
Malcolm Dinwiddie (A&S ’57)
Albert Hanemann (B ’57, L ’59)
Joan Hoppe (NC ’57)
Richard Hunter (A ’57, A ’57)
Kennon Rohbock (UC ’57)
Bushnell Seavey (B ’57)
Linda Wilson (NC ’57)
George Albury (A&S ’58)
Paul Brierre (B ’58)
Nancy Ford (NC ’58)
Lane Hartle (NC ’58)
Katherine Hill (NC ’58)
Anne Hudson (G ’58, G ’61)
Cooper Mackin (G ’58)
Lynnette Menconi (NC ’58)
Sybil Patten (NC ’58)
James Shaver (M ’58, I ’59, R ’63)
Leon Vial (L ’58)
Larry Wadler (A&S ’58)
Adele Bland (NC ’59)
Ida Brown (NC ’59)
Gerald Eure (SW ’59)
Eugenia Goff (NC ’59, SW ’65)
John Hauser (B ’59)
Richard Joiner (A&S ’59)
Robert Kelly (E ’59)
Edward Kottick (G ’59)
Paul Leaman (B ’59)
Louise McClendon (NC ’59)
Carolyn McFarland (NC ’59)
Eugenia Pearson (UC ’59)
Lionel Sutton (B ’59)
Linda Wheeler (SW ’59)
Phillip Wicker (L ’59)
Shellie Bartlett (NC ’60)
Joseph Cavazos (A&S ’60)
Franklin Endom (A&S ’60, L ’63)
Patricia Fitzpatrick (NC ’60)
Richard Freeman (B ’60)
Crawford Henry (A&S ’60)
Sharon Hubert (NC ’60)
Jane Huffard (NC ’60)
Ronald Jacob (E ’60, E ’69)
Gail McDonough Evans (NC ’60, L ’63)
Henry McIntosh (B ’60)
Robert Nehls (M ’60)
Ronald Reso (E ’60)
Martin Schagrin (A&S ’60)
Vallie Staten (SW ’60)
Demetri Vlahos (E ’60)
Robert Wilson (A&S ’60)
German Beltran (F ’61, F ’62)
James Buie (M ’61, R ’68)
Carl Davis (A&S ’61)
Richard Dodge (A&S ’61)
Carol Lubritz (NC ’61)
Noel Mills (M ’61)
Katharine Montgomery (NC ’61)
Lincoln Paine (M ’61, F ’69)
Beverly Steele (NC ’61)
Daniel Triplett (M ’61, R ’65)
Vincent Vincent III (A&S ’61, M ’64, I ’65, R ’68)
Bonnie Bailey (NC ’62)
Margot Billet (NC ’62)
Lynn Crystal (NC ’62)
Edward Doran (A&S ’62)
Morgan Grant (A&S ’62)
Denni Mack (NC ’62)
Gregg Mahlkov (B ’62)
Linda Miller (NC ’62)
Jeane Parker (A ’62)
Berta Richardson (NC ’62)
Sylvia Sapsky (UC ’62)
Garland Standrod (A&S ’62)
Lee Train (A&S ’62)
George Barker (A&S ’63)
Adam Ewert (G ’63)
Eleonora Galvanek (F ’63)
John Graves (A&S ’63)
Frances Jeanfreau (NC ’63)
Philip Knieper (E ’63)
Ann Lange (NC ’63)
Gwendolyn McAllen (NC ’63)
Arthur Monroe (A&S ’63, L ’66)
Maunsel Pearce (M ’63, R ’68)
Lawrence Beckman (E ’64, G ’69)
W. Clark (B ’64)
Howard Hinkel (G ’64, G ’68)
William Hopkins (A&S ’64)
Janet Langford (NC ’64)
Charles Reeves (L ’64)
William Serchak (G ’64)
Maxwell Shofstahl (A&S ’64)
Maria Viguerie (NC ’64)
Richard Virr (A&S ’64)
Stephen Zimmerman (L ’64)
Thomas Adams (A&S ’65)
Ronald Alonzo (A&S ’65)
William Bailey (M ’65, R ’70, F ’72)
William Bohart (M ’65)
Robert Boisvert (A&S ’65)
Patricia Brady (NC ’65, G ’66, G ’77)
Joseph Hardin (B ’65)
Eleanor Krimerman (G ’65)
Henry Larzelere (A&S ’65, L ’68)
Jimmy Lu (M ’65)
Mary Montevecchi (UC ’65)
Stephen Smith (G ’65)
Corky Steiner (A&S ’65)
Dora Valdes-Fauli (NC ’65)
Robert Yeager (A&S ’65, L ’69)
Leslie Carter (G ’66)
William Crouch (A&S ’66)
Philip Davidson (A&S ’66)
George Farber (R ’66)
Richard Griffin (A&S ’66)
Janice Grijns (NC ’66)
Mark Herman (A&S ’66, L ’69)
William McFatter (A&S ’66)
Gabriel Perjessy (A&S ’66)
Eric Pratt (B ’66, B ’68)
Daniel Ryan (A&S ’66)
Horace Thompson (A&S ’66, L ’68)
Susan West-Mapp (UC ’66, G ’70)
Richard Bobbin (G ’67, G ’69)
Glenn Garte (E ’67, E ’68)
Linda Hyslop (NC ’67)
Davis Jahncke (A ’67, A ’67)
Anna Napoli (G ’67, G ’69)
Randall Nichols (E ’67)
Lucile Puett (NC ’67)
Judith Thorne (NC ’67)
Arnold Atkins (M ’68)
Philip Baldwin (A ’68, A ’68)
Keleal Hassin (A ’68, A ’68)
Thomas Herd (A&S ’68)
Glen Magnuson (L ’68)
Refugio Medina (A&S ’68)
Kanwar Singh (B ’68)
Craig Valenti (E ’68)
Otis Ward (G ’68)
Phyllis Alltmont (UC ’69)
Connie Bailey (NC ’69)
Leonard Bernstein (R ’69)
Stephen Fisher (G ’69, G ’72)
John Frazer (G ’69)
Paul Friedman (A&S ’69)
Curtis Graf (M ’69)
Danny Kilpatrick (E ’69)
Annette Klein (NC ’69)
Virginia Laurent (PHTM ’69)
Stephen Murdoch (B ’69)
Preston Summers (L ’69)
Joseph Sutton (A&S ’69, L ’75)
David Band (L ’70, L ’80, L ’81)
William Bassett (L ’70)
Frank Bove (G ’70)
Douglas Casserleigh (A&S ’70, L ’74)
Price Dodson (UC ’70)
Ann Estensen (NC ’70)
Donald Grodsky (L ’70)
Michelle Heidelberg (NC ’70, G ’74)
Joyce Holfeld (PHTM ’70)
J. Hutcheson (B ’70)
Sidney Jones (A&S ’70)
Joe Reese (G ’70)
Lawrence Taffaro (A ’70, A ’70)
David Williams (M ’70)
Timothy Cloudman (L ’71)
Peter Emigh (A&S ’71)
Steven Feder (A&S ’71)
Douglas Holt (SW ’71)
James Moorehead (B ’71)
Irvin Morgan (A&S ’71)
Wayne Ondiak (A&S ’71)
John Ricard (SW ’71)
Adin Webb (PHTM ’71)
Ronald Weiss (A&S ’71)
Dan Williams (SW ’71)
Melvin Abend (R ’72, R ’74)
Alvord Branan (G ’72)
Irenita Brooks Assensoh (SW ’72)
John Colman (M ’72)
Richard Diehl (B ’72)
Jaclynn Faffer (SW ’72)
James Jost (M ’72)
John Keller (A&S ’72)
Irene Krebs (SW ’72)
Michael Lane (G ’72)
Philip McKinley (M ’72)
Elsie Wright (SW ’72)
Gerald Burnett (L ’73)
Lester Jargowsky (PHTM ’73)
Margaret Katz (G ’73)
Larry Keil (UC ’73)
James Orth (E ’73)
Bernard Vondrachek (SW ’73)
Thomas Amadio (A&S ’74)
Ralph Asbury (M ’74)
Steve Bauman (A&S ’74, L ’77)
Emma Bromon (PHTM ’74)
Alfred Chiles (A&S ’74)
Sandra Crane (SW ’74)
Patricia Davenport (NC ’74)
Monica Knight (PHTM ’74)
Ann Patteson (SW ’74)
Adolfo Ramirez (E ’74)
Janet Waller (NC ’74)
John Cassanova (L ’75)
Deborah Cherry (NC ’75)
Margarita Greene (UC ’75, SW ’81)
Alan Karpman (M ’75)
Michael Keeffe (A&S ’75, B ’76)
Mary King (NC ’75)
Richard Theriot (E ’75)
Christopher Bonvillian (UC ’76)
Gerald Herrmann (B ’76)
Elvin Hyatt (E ’76, B ’82)
Douglas Spoehr (SW ’76)
Arthur Witherup (UC ’76)
Keith Budner (A&S ’77)
Jonathan McCall (L ’77)
Robert Rooth (L ’77)
Harriet Bos (G ’78)
James Carter (L ’78)
Carol Cocke (G ’78)
Nelson Gibson (A&S ’78)
Dracos Sloss (A&S ’78)
Peter Brown (M ’79)
Susan Haught (B ’79)
Larry Tortorich (A&S ’79)
Howard Weiss (B ’79)
Philip Cossich (A&S ’80, L ’83)
Mark Meunier (E ’80)
Edward Moore (E ’80, E ’80)
Carrie Morrell (SW ’80)
Kenneth Yanow (A&S ’80)
Shryl Bagneris (L ’81)
Thomas Cheviot (A&S ’81)
Benjamin Cody (E ’81, E ’81)
Marcus Ward (M ’81, I ’82, R ’93)
Robert Yokum (E ’81)
Patrick Byrd (E ’82)
Bryan Gary (A&S ’82, PHTM ’86, B ’86)
Jonathon Pratt (L ’82, L ’83)
Theresa Wolin (E ’82)
Alyssa Frank-Martin (NC ’83)
John Thompson (L ’83)
Michael Watson (M ’83)
Scott Burkholder (E ’84)
Charles Garner (B ’84)
Cynthia Swan (UC ’84)
Steven Chanto (A&S ’85)
Bonnie Mandel (B ’85)
Stephanie Bourgeois (SW ’86)
Migel Elie (M ’86, PHTM ’90, PHTM ’90)
Lisa Heller (L ’86)
Richard Levy (A&S ’86, M ’90, I ’91, R ’95)
Jay Rhodes (UC ’86, UC ’86)
Jan Benjamin (L ’87)
Judith Burks (G ’87)
Sarah Newman (L ’87)
Elizabeth Donaldson (B ’89)
Ricardo Izquierdo (R ’89)
Salvadore Giangrosso (L ’90)
Thomas Meyer (UC ’90)
Harry Nunez (UC ’00)
Wayne Mullen (A&S ’91)
Kevin Nesis (A&S ’91)
Michael Skinkus (A&S ’91, G ’03)
Je-Jen Chiu (A ’92, A ’92)
Helen Gioe (UC ’92)
Jianhua Liu (G ’92)
Diane Majoue (UC ’92)

FAREWELL continued

Catherine Ferrier (UC ’93)
Bettye Parker (PHTM ’93, G ’12)
Maria Sands (SW ’93)
Gerson Martin (L ’94)
Judith Akin Smith (A ’95, A ’95)
Olga Pounders (UC ’95)
Jane Assadzadeh (NC ’96)
Ricardo Hubler (A&S ’96)
Jeffrey Lentz (R ’96)
John Drazkowski (L ’97)
Jean Knorr (NC ’00)
Katherine Beahm (NC ’01)
Melanie Hyer (B ’01)
Matthew Keane (M ’03, R ’07)
John Theriot (B ’04)
Laura Whites (SW ’04)
Tara Arnold (L ’05)
Mary Carter (NC ’05, G ’06)
Hilda Garrison (UC ’05)
Clinell Williams (SW ’05)
Neal Bakare (L ’06)
Brian Hopkins (TC ’06)
Laura Keels (UC ’06)
Cynthia Mathieson (B ’07)
Terrell Washington (B ’08)
Benjamin Malbrough (SCS ’15)
Jacob Frady (SCS ’17)
Clifford Roysden (SoPA ’18)
Keith Silverman (SLA ’20)
Emily Loubiere (SW ’26)

KEY CONTINUED

F (Fellowship)
R (Residency)
I (Internship)



TRIBUTE

RICHARD W. FREEMAN JR.

Richard W. Freeman Jr. (B ’60), whose family name has been synonymous with business education at Tulane for more than four decades, died June 10, 2026, in New Orleans. He was 88.

Freeman was a business executive, civic leader, philanthropist and lifelong supporter of Tulane known for an unwavering commitment to his community and generosity of spirit. Along with his father, Richard W. Freeman Sr. (B ’34), his brother Louis M. Freeman (B ’63) and his sister, Tina Freeman, he played an instrumental role in the 1984 endowment and naming of Tulane’s business school for his grandfather, New Orleans businessman and civic leader A. B. Freeman.

“Richard Freeman’s leadership in the naming of the school is the most visible example, but his contributions to the university went far beyond that, spanning everything from service on boards, councils and committees to funding major initiatives including the A. B. Freeman Chair in Finance, the R.W. Freeman Distinguished Lecture Series and the Freeman Center for Doctoral Studies and Research,” said Paulo Goes, dean of the A. B. Freeman School of Business.

Born in Chicago, Freeman attended Isidore Newman School, Culver Military Academy and Tulane University, earning a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 1960.

In 1971, he succeeded his father as president of the Louisiana Coca-Cola Bottling Co. and served in that role until the family sold the business to the Coca-Cola Co. in 1986.

Freeman next turned his attention to a different pursuit while maintaining his characteristic drive for excellence. He founded Oak Hill Ranch and was credited as a pioneer of Danish Warmblood horse breeding in the U.S., eventually cofounding the North American Danish Warmblood Association as his horses garnered national acclaim. He operated the ranch until it was sold in 2021.

Freeman was a member of both the Business School Council, serving as chair in 1989-90, and the Board of Tulane from 1995-2009. In 1988, he was named the Freeman School’s Outstanding Alumnus. He served as an Administrator Emeritus from 2009 until his passing.

Throughout his life, Freeman remained active in the community. Among the organizations to which he devoted his time were The Chamber/New Orleans and the River Region, the Ella West Freeman Foundation, the RosaMary Foundation, the Vieux Carre Commission, United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area, the Alton Ochsner Medical Foundation and Hibernia National Bank. One of Freeman’s most treasured honors was his reign as Rex in 2003, when his position atop a float gave him a once-in-a-lifetime view of the community spirit of New Orleans.

“Richard is among the very small number of people whose impact on business education at Tulane can truly be called transformative,” Goes said.

ALUMNI 2026 AWARDS

The Tulane Alumni Association celebrated its 52nd annual gala on April 18, 2026. This evening of celebration, held at the historic Civic Theatre, honored distinguished graduates for their professional achievements, philanthropic leadership and steadfast commitment to service in their communities.

A. B. Freeman School of Business Outstanding Alumni Award

Lisa Kelloway Madden (NC ’88, B ’89)

Lisa Kelloway Madden spent over 35 years working for KPMG before her retirement. Madden served as vice chair of risk management and led the firm’s enterprise and operational risk strategy, governance and practices.

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

Sue Griffey (PHTM ’83, PHTM ’93)

Sue Griffey is a career strategist and founder of SueMentors, a global mentoring consultancy for people in career transitions. Griffey co-founded the mentoring program at the Tulane University Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Tulane Medical Alumni Association Outstanding Alumni Award

Karen B. DeSalvo (M ’92, PHTM ’92, R ’95, R ’96)

Dr. Karen B. DeSalvo is chief health officer at Google and former acting assistant secretary for health with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 2020, she received the Lisa P. Jackson Professional Achievement Award.

Robert V. Tessaro Young Alumni Volunteer Award

Shelby R. Brown (PHTM ’17, SoPA ’23)

Shelby R. Brown is the senior director of volunteer services and donor relations at Met Council, America’s largest Jewish organization combating poverty. Brown serves as president of the Tulane Club of New York and sits on the executive committee of the Tulane Fund Advisory Board.

Graduate of the Last Decade (GOLD) Professional Achievement Award

Maxwell “Max” Steitz (SLA ’20) & Franziska “Fran” Trautmann (SSE ’20)

Maxwell Steitz and Franziska Trautmann are co-founders of Glass Half Full. This visionary and innovative New Orleans-based glass recycling company recycles glass waste into sand and gravel to restore eroding coasts and create new glass.

Bobby Boudreau Spirit Award

Libby Connolly Alexander (NC ’84)

Libby Connolly Alexander, the former CEO of Connolly Inc., is a distinguished executive, board director, author and philanthropist who has demonstrated a deep and abiding commitment to the university through her visionary leadership and dedicated service.

Scott Cowen Service Award

Dottie Reese (SW ’79, PHTM ’80)

Dottie Reese is the co-founder and principal of DMM & Associates, an award-winning consulting firm in New Orleans. For 40 years, Reese has mentored and guided countless Tulane students and graduates as they built successful careers in social work.

Community Builder Award

Shawn M. Barney (B ’11)

Shawn M. Barney is a co-founder of Campaign for Equity New Orleans, which works to educate, connect and mobilize leadership throughout the city in order to build a better future for New Orleans.

International Award for Exceptional Achievement

Odaline de la Martínez (NC ’72)

Odaline de la Martínez is the founder and long-time artistic director of the Lontano Ensemble and the founder of the classical label LORELT. De la Martínez is a Cuban-born British composer and conductor whose work has played a significant role in shaping contemporary music.

Lisa Jackson Professional Achievement Award

Ellyn W. Ogden (NC ’82, PHTM ’84)

Ellyn W. Ogden is a globally recognized expert in polio eradication and infectious disease surveillance. Ogden has designed and led effective outbreak response and immunization campaigns, including in conflict-affected and hard-to-reach areas.

Distinguished Alumni Award

Steven M. Paul (A&S ’72, G ’75, M ’75)

Dr. Steven M. Paul is the founder and chair of the board at Seaport Therapeutics and a venture partner at Third Rock Ventures. He has over 40 years of experience as a physician-scientist specializing in neuroscience and molecular neuropharmacology and has authored or co-authored more than 600 papers and book chapters.

Dermot McGlinchey Lifetime Achievement Award

Scott Ballard (UC ’95)

Scott Ballard is the owner of Ballard Brands LLC, a fast-casual dining leader based in Covington, Louisiana, and the founder of Ballard Hospitality LLC, a logistics company that provides lifestyle services, housing and all logistical support to remote sites, among others. Named one of Gambit’s “40 Under 40” businessmen to watch in 2007, Ballard is a dedicated member of the Louisiana community, sharing his talents with numerous boards and councils.

A NEW STORY FOR NEW ORLEANS AND LOUISIANA

BY MICHAEL A. FITTS, President



In a region confronting some of the nation's greatest health challenges, the planned Charity Hospital transformation aims to produce breakthrough discoveries that benefit the entire Gulf South.

This summer, Tulane made headlines with the announcement of a major milestone in the most significant project in the university's history and perhaps even in the history of New Orleans: the planned transformation of the former Charity Hospital building, an iconic New Orleans landmark, into a national hub for bioinnovation and lifesaving medical advancements. The revitalized space will provide a world-class new home for the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, the Tulane University Innovation Institute and parts of the Tulane School of Medicine, alongside welcoming public environments designed to strengthen community life in New Orleans.

It's an exciting new chapter in a story that spans centuries. In 1736, Charity Hospital was founded to provide care for those who could not otherwise afford it. About 100 years later, the Medical College of Louisiana — which would become Tulane University — partnered with Charity to provide free medical care in exchange for land granted by the state. And in the early 20th century, Charity's million-square-foot building on Tulane Avenue was built through President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Public Works Administration, becoming the second-largest hospital in the United States.

Behind its classic art deco façade, the partnership between Charity and Tulane University grew and thrived. Generations of physicians completed their training there, caring for patients from across New Orleans, Louisiana and the Gulf South. From Maine to California and beyond, it's not uncommon to meet medical professionals who recount how their careers were shaped by their time in Charity's emergency department, operating rooms, clinics and wards.

But alongside its legacy of exceptional medical training and compassionate care, Charity's history is also about pioneering medical innovators. Alton Ochsner, the longtime chief of surgery in the Tulane School of Medicine, was among the first to identify smoking as a major cause of lung cancer. One of his students at Tulane, Michael DeBakey (A&S '30, M '32, G '35), became known as the "father of modern cardiovascular surgery" for his visionary innovations. Sister Stanislaus Malone is credited with introducing modern antiseptic practices into general use at Charity, where she founded the School of Nurse Anesthesiology and served for 63 years. The list goes on and includes Nobel laureates, trailblazing physicians and nurses, and visionaries who helped establish New Orleans as a center of medical excellence.

Perhaps above all, the story of Charity belongs to the people of New Orleans. Take Ernie K-Doe, the late R&B legend and self-proclaimed "Emperor of the Universe." K-Doe's larger-than-life spirit echoes through his hometown to this day, and his most famous tagline, gleefully shouted in live performances and over the airwaves on his WWOZ-FM radio show, was "I'm a Charity Hospital baby!"

K-Doe's pronouncement wasn't just a catchphrase. It was, and still is, a common badge of honor among New Orleanians, reflecting the rich history and deep significance of Charity Hospital to the local community. It was more than a hospital; it was an institution built on a belief that every community member deserves accessible, compassionate care at all stages of life.

When Charity flooded as a result of the levee breaks following Hurricane Katrina, the heartbreaking scenes were etched on our national memory. For all the tremendous strides New Orleans has made since Katrina, the recovery is incomplete as long as the massive art deco building on Tulane Avenue stands vacant. This understanding informed Tulane's decision to sign on as lead developer for the Charity Hospital revitalization, transforming this historic space into an anchor for our downtown campus with support from the city, state, BioDistrict New Orleans and private philanthropy, including a lead gift from the Goldring Family Foundation.

Tulane will occupy more than 650,000 square feet in the reimagined building with state-of-the-art classrooms, interdisciplinary laboratories, offices and gathering spaces. The remaining sections will invite the broader community inside through housing, retail and food outlets, as well as an exhibit devoted to Charity's storied history. The renewed building will create connections that will spark new business ideas, inspire breakthrough innovations and improve lives.

The Charity initiative is a bold investment by Tulane in the future of this city and in Louisiana's potential to become a national leader in healthcare, discovery and bioinnovation. In a region confronting some of the nation's greatest health challenges, our ambition is to create a destination that provides advanced care and produces breakthrough discoveries that benefit the entire Gulf South. I am grateful to the many partners who are helping us write a new story for Charity, for New Orleans and for the region we call home.



WAVE'26

HOMECOMING • REUNION • FAMILY WEEKEND

November 5–8, 2026

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

HOMECOMING GAME • SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7
Tulsa vs. Tulane · Yulman Stadium

FOR MORE DETAILS, VISIT HOMECOMING.TULANE.EDU

TULANE UNIVERSITY

TULANE
UNIVERSITY
6823 St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70118-5624

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

FSC
www.fsc.org
MIX
Paper | Supporting responsible forestry
FSC® C006571



Students traverse Tulane's sun-dappled uptown campus as another semester unfolds. PHOTO BY KENNY LASS