



2011

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Scott S. Cowen



Oct. 21, 2011

Dear alumni, faculty, staff and friends,

“If it is not in your DNA to rebuild Tulane and New Orleans, don’t come back.”

I can still remember saying those words to a large gathering of students and parents who had returned to campus to retrieve their belongings and survey the damage Hurricane Katrina had inflicted on our university and city. Tulane was closed for the semester and the students present that day were already enrolled in universities across the country.

So why was I suggesting that some of them shouldn’t come back when we reopened for the spring semester?

Because I knew things were changing. Soon after, we became the first and only major research university in the country to integrate public service into the undergraduate core curriculum. This year marks the fifth anniversary of this exciting initiative, which is helping to transform Tulane University and communities the world over.

Above: First-year students exit convocation on their way to start their Tulane adventure. Right: Breaking ground for the new Donna and Paul Flower Hall for Research and Innovation are, from left, benefactors Mary Catherine and Paul Flower, Wade Herpin of the Economic Development Administration and Tulane President Scott Cowen.

LAW STUDENTS ASSIST MARDI GRAS INDIANS

Mardi Gras Indians are receiving help from Tulane Law School students in filing for copyright protection for their intricately made suits. Costumes and other apparel cannot be registered for such protection under law, but Ashlye Keaton, an adjunct professor at Tulane Law School, found a way around this by classifying the suits as works of art.



Previously, many Mardi Gras Indians felt helpless in gaining compensation from commercial photography featuring their suits, but now Tulane law students participating in the Entertainment Law Legal Assistance (ELLA) project are helping to get Indian suits registered.

Through ELLA, law students have provided more than 10,000 hours of free legal assistance to local, low-income artists since 2005, says Keaton, supervising attorney to ELLA, which is a partnership between the law school, the Arts Council of New Orleans and Tipitina’s Foundation. View a video on this project here: <http://tulane.edu/empowers/mardi-gras-indian-copyright-issues.cfm>

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HERTZ CENTER TO OPEN

The Hertz Center, a major addition to Green Wave athletics, will be dedicated in November. A training facility for men's and women's basketball and women's volleyball, it is destined to be a major new resource for recruiting and training top athletes in these sports.

The \$13 million building, with two courts, a strength-training center, film rooms, offices, lockers and conference rooms, is located on Ben Weiner Drive, between the Reily Student Recreation Center and the Goldring Tennis Center.

It is named in honor of philanthropist Doug Hertz, an Atlanta businessman and chair of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee of the Board of Tulane.



The Hertz Center

HEALTHY START

Construction teams are making progress on the new Ruth U. Fertel/Tulane Community Health Center at 711 N. Broad Street, which is slated to open in spring 2012. The Tulane Community Health Center at Covenant House will relocate into the new facility and offer both adult and children's services. Ruth's Hospitality Group donated the site, formerly Ruth's Chris Steak House.



Ruth U. Fertel/Tulane Community Health Center

WELCOMING WEATHERHEAD HALL

Weatherhead Hall (both photos at right) officially opened its doors on Aug. 26 as the newest Tulane residence hall. The

\$28 million structure is more than a home for 269 students—it's also a symbol of resurgent New Orleans. It is named in honor of the late philanthropist Albert J. Weatherhead III and his wife, Celia, a member of the Board of Tulane.

The Weatherhead Foundation has pledged \$100 million to Tulane for universitywide professorships as well as scholarships to students interested in community engagement.



What a difference five years have made. During this time Tulane students have helped rebuild homes and lives. They are designing and building safer and stronger houses to replace those destroyed by Katrina. They are heavily involved in K-12 public education—establishing debate clubs, tutoring students and sponsoring science and engineering events to develop the next generation of innovators and problem solvers. They have developed software to track damage from last summer's BP oil spill.

They also are designing the Grow Dat urban youth farm in City Park that will expand fresh produce options for New Orleanians and increase jobs and educational opportunities for underserved high school students. They are traveling to Tanzania to repair medical equipment in local hospitals. They are helping to revive a Native American language by publishing a book featuring Tunica-Biloxi tribe fables (see sidebar, back page). They are developing arts-based curriculum to help Haitian children express and process trauma. They are working to get copyright protection for the marvelous suits produced by Mardi Gras Indians (see sidebar, front page). They are volunteering at community health clinics.

They are, to put it simply, "Helping people build a better world." This is the motto of Tulane Empowers (read more at tulane.edu/empowers) a bold, new initiative to harness the knowledge, expertise and energy of Tulane's students, faculty and staff to bring about positive change in the world through efforts that empower others to become agents of change.

Tulane Empowers was a natural outgrowth of the public service requirement. While



using their classroom knowledge to address societal problems throughout New Orleans and the world, our students, faculty and staff began to notice an interesting byproduct of their efforts. Not only was their engagement with the community providing students with invaluable real-life experience, it was also inspiring community members to become more involved in their neighborhoods. Grow Dat Youth Farm mentioned above is a good example of this.

Grow Dat provides educational and employment opportunities for underserved youth in New Orleans by hiring them to grow fresh produce on a three-acre site in New Orleans City Park. Crew members with Grow Dat receive training both in cultivation as well as classes in nutrition and hands-on experience preparing fresh produce meals for local shelters. Grow Dat youth, in turn, have begun urban gardens of their own, thus increasing the availability of fresh produce within their families and neighborhoods and becoming ambassadors of healthy eating to their parents and peers.

Simple, “change reactions” like this, multiplied many times over around the globe, day after day, year after year, can have a profound effect on society. They can build a better world.

Besides changing the world, public service initiatives and Tulane Empowers also are changing Tulane and its students. While the Green Wave has a long, proud tradition of public service and community engagement, today’s Tulane students want more.

When the public service requirement was first enacted, many wondered if we were asking too much of students already facing challenges balancing their academic, work and social lives. It turns out we weren’t asking enough. We found many students wanted to



RICK AUBRY

“The university has a bold vision to be preeminent among research universities in community engagement and social entrepreneurship,” says Rick Aubry, the university’s first-ever assistant provost for civic engagement and social entrepreneurship. A lecturer in management at Stanford Graduate School of Business before coming to Tulane, he is founder and CEO of Rubicon National Social Innovation.



MELISSA HARRIS-PERRY

“This is an exciting time in the university’s history that offers unmatched intellectual and professional opportunities,” says Melissa Harris-Perry, a new professor of political science, national media commentator and author of the new book, *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes and Black Women in America*. This semester she is teaching Women in Politics, Media, and the Contemporary United States.



IRA SOLOMON

“I like the strategic direction I see the campus going, and I think the Freeman School is well positioned to move in that direction,” says Ira Solomon, new dean of the A. B. Freeman School of Business. He was the R. C. Evans Endowed Chair in Business and head of the Department of Accountancy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

HELPING REVIVE A TRIBAL LANGUAGE

When members of the Tunica-Biloxi tribe wanted help restoring their native language, they turned to students and faculty in the Tulane Interdisciplinary Program in Linguistics for help.

Professor Judith Maxwell and visiting faculty member and Tulane alumnus Nathalie Dajko, along with undergraduate and graduate students, parsed together two Tunica fables and two prayers. With funding from the tribe, they published a book containing the newly rewritten material.

"Language is important because it's a way of uniting the tribe," said one student involved in the project. "Language is an important facet of identity."

H-hch, tayak tsahch teihlakat, pan'uwani.

Now Deer's tail was quivering as he passed and went on.

H-hch, hatikan, kat eihpun yak'arahch yukawihch hatikan, takohkuku ka'urani.

Again, he got to a bend and again, Turtle was already there.

"Hishtahahk tirish ahkini," unikoni.

"I am still ahead," he told him.

Tawish kich kimuchupataweni.

Then he dove into the water.



SCHWEITZER FELLOWS TACKLE HEALTH PROBLEMS

Eight Tulane graduate students studying in medicine or public health are among the 2011–12 class of New Orleans Albert Schweitzer Fellows who will spend the next year developing leadership skills while addressing health disparities throughout the city.

Joining approximately 250 other 2011–12 Schweitzer Fellows throughout the United States, these New Orleans fellows will partner with community organizations to develop service projects. They will provide yoga to homeless youth at the Youth Drop-in Center; develop a community health leadership program at a high school; train adolescent girls as peer leaders; and reduce youth violence through family-based mentoring.

delve deeper into public service and embrace a course of study focused entirely on it. Our task is to help these students become engaged citizens and leaders of the world.

So this summer, two years after committing \$50 million to retain and recruit top faculty members, the Weatherhead Foundation pledged another \$50 million to help Tulane attract more students whose intelligence and academic achievements are matched only by their passion to make a difference.

The Weatherhead Scholars Program will exponentially increase the impact of community engagement at Tulane while advancing our reputation as a world leader in this area. Weatherhead Scholars will receive funds to help cover the costs of attending Tulane, including tuition, fees, books, supplies, room, board and personal expenses. Best of all they will have the opportunity to pursue their passion, a curriculum focused on civic engagement that transforms classroom knowledge into community action.

Tulane's efforts in public service continue to garner national attention. *U.S. News and World Report's* latest rankings listed our service-learning program among the top 24 in the nation. The same rankings also place us sixth among "Up-and-Coming" universities who have "recently made the most promising and innovative changes."

Some prime examples of these "promising and innovative changes" are: Ira Solomon, the new dean of the A. B. Freeman School of Business, who has made community engagement a top priority of the business school; Richard Aubry, professor of practice of business and sociology and assistant provost for civic engagement and social entrepreneurship; and Melissa Harris-Perry, a national news fixture, professor of political science and founding director of the Anna Julia Cooper Project on Gender, Race, and Politics in the South (see sidebar on page 3).

Helping others build a better world is at the heart of these newest members of the Tulane community.

It is also what defines us as an institution and as individual students, faculty, staff and alumni of Tulane. You might say it's part of our DNA.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Scott S. Cowen".

Scott S. Cowen