



# 2014

SPRING 2014

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

April 30, 2014

Dear alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends:

As I began to write this, I realized it will be my final President's Letter. That put me in the mood to relive memories of the past 16 years.

That mood didn't last long.

How can I look back when there are so many things to look forward to at Tulane? Not to mention so much to do before June 30, my last day as Tulane's president.

The most exciting news on the horizon, of course, is the arrival of our President-elect Michael A. Fitts. Mike and I have met on numerous occasions and will continue to do so in the months ahead.

Although he is well-acquainted with Tulane already—a member of his extended family is currently attending Tulane and one of his most influential mentors is a Tulane graduate—I am pleased to assist Mike in his transition. Mostly, I keep telling him how much he is going to love it here.

I have also explained to Mike that being a New Orleanian and a Tulanian means treasuring the past while continually focusing on the future. Take, for instance, the mighty Mississippi River that sweeps past Tulane's uptown, downtown and West Bank campuses. The river's primacy and impact have been celebrated in song and literature, as well as business ledgers, since before the founding of our country. It is one of the elemental forces that defines New Orleans. Indeed, it gave birth to the city.



SCOTT S. COWEN

At the "Great Scott" celebration on March 28, Scott Cowen poses with well-wishers.

### HOW COOL IS THIS?

The English Department's JOEL DINERSTEIN is co-curator of "American Cool," an exhibit on view through Sept. 7 at the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. An associate professor, Dinerstein also was primary author of the museum catalogue. He has been writing and lecturing on the subject of "cool" for 15 years.

"The short definition? Cool means rebellious self-expression," Dinerstein says. "The 100 icons of cool in the exhibit constitute the successful cultural rebels of American culture." The exhibit features fine art photography along with films and music clips.



JOEL DINERSTEIN





ADAM KLINE

### DEDICATION TO SERVICE

Sophomore ADAM KLINE founded the Tulane Service-Dog Training and Education Program on the uptown campus, a group of students who help raise puppies to become service dogs that assist people with physical disabilities. They are working with two young dogs this semester. "We are in charge of puppy raising," Kline said.



MAKE MUSIC NOLA

MAXIM SAMAROV, director of the Tulane University Orchestra, and his class of service-learning students help coach young musicians in Make Music NOLA, an after-school program that teaches music to children in first through eighth grade. The orchestra held a benefit concert earlier this year for Make Music NOLA.



LOOP PAVILION

TULANE CITY CENTER, housed in the School of Architecture, partnered with the Louisiana Outdoors Outreach Program (LOOP) to design and build a shaded pavilion on Scout Island in City Park, where LOOP's challenge course is located. The 900-square-foot pavilion will enable LOOP to expand its adventure programming for underserved youth.

But along with commerce and culture, its waters also traffic in runoff from upstream farmlands. This runoff contains excessive amounts of nitrogen and phosphorous, main ingredients of commercial fertilizers. When emptied into the warm waters off Louisiana's coast these nutrients create hypoxia, water so depleted of oxygen that no marine life can survive within it.

The resulting "dead zones" sometimes grow as large as New Jersey and threaten the environment and economy of Louisiana; water regions throughout the world face similar challenges.

To address this global problem, Tulane, with funding from beloved philanthropist, board member and alumna Phyllis Taylor, is offering a \$1 million prize for the best solution to combat hypoxia. "Water Innovations: Reducing Hypoxia, Restoring our Water" is what's known as a Grand Challenge, a response to President Obama's call for organizations, philanthropists and universities to address society's most pressing problems.

Prizes such as this have been the catalyst for numerous innovations ranging from Charles Lindbergh's famous transatlantic flight to the latest methods for cleaning up oil spills. You can learn more about the prize at [tulane.edu/tulaneprize](http://tulane.edu/tulaneprize).

Battling problems like hypoxia is all part of Tulane's commitment to public service. As you know Tulane is the country's first and only major research university to make public service a core curriculum requirement for all its undergraduates.

This commitment continues beyond graduation for many of our students. In fact, the Peace Corps recently ranked Tulane No. 2 on its list of top volunteer-producing graduate schools and No. 13 among the top volunteer-producing undergraduate schools of its size. On top of that, BestColleges.com also placed Tulane at No. 9 among medium-size schools for producing the most socially conscious alumni.

Now, thanks to the Tulane AmeriCorps Fellows Program, a new partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Aspen Institute's Franklin Project, Tulane graduates will have even more opportunity to serve. Tulane AmeriCorps Fellows will live on campus as they work full time with nonprofits in high-need neighborhoods throughout New Orleans. In addition to housing, Tulane AmeriCorps Fellows will receive a monthly stipend and, upon completion of their service, funding to cover student loans or to help pay for graduate school.

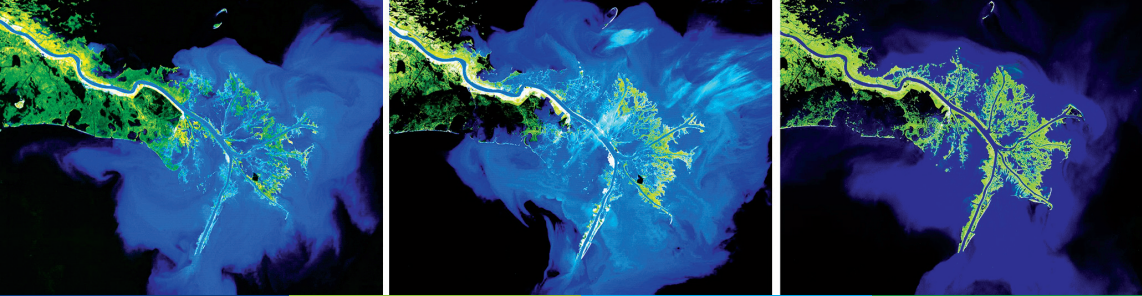
The Tulane AmeriCorps Fellows Program is a two-year pilot effort. It is hoped that this, like so many other Tulane service initiatives, will serve as a model for universities throughout the country.



A TULANE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER



TULANE BIOLOGIST DISCOVERS NEW SPECIES OF FLOWERING PLANT IN GRAND CANYON



**GULF OF MEXICO**  
 A Tulane \$1 million Grand Challenge seeks a solution to hypoxia and "dead zones" in the Gulf caused by agricultural runoff in the Mississippi River.

This innovative program promises to bring both positive change in the world and give our recent graduates the chance to develop professional skills that will serve them throughout their careers. Many of those careers will, no doubt, be inspired by the thriving and incredibly diverse research that students encounter on a daily basis at Tulane.

For instance, Tulane pathology professor Srikanta Dash was recently awarded two grants totaling \$2.6 million from the National Institutes of Health to study why some patients respond and others develop resistance to standard treatments for chronic hepatitis C. Around the same time a team led by Tulane biologist John J. Schenk discovered a previously unknown species of flowering plant in the Grand Canyon, the only place on earth it is known to exist.

Discovery is also at the heart of the Tulane National Primate Research Center, which celebrates its 50th anniversary next year. Research focused on developing vaccines, treatments and diagnostic methods for AIDS, Lyme disease, malaria, tuberculosis, bioterrorism agents and more are all part of the center's critical mission.

One of only eight primate research centers in the country funded by the National Institutes of Health, Tulane's Primate Center has long been a source of pride and renown for Tulane and our entire region.

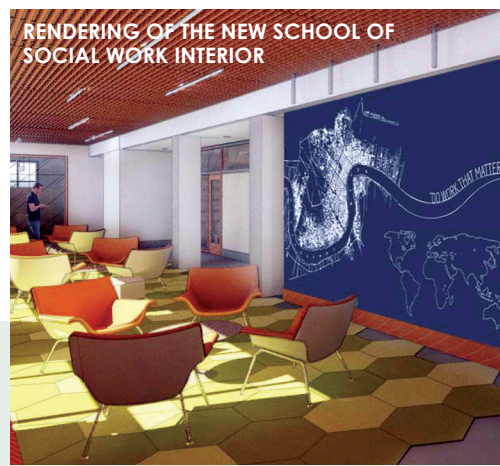
Another national leader at Tulane is the Stone Center for Latin American Studies. Few universities can boast a greater number of faculty, students, library holdings and research efforts dedicated to the study of this vital region that shares so many deep cultural, economic and historical ties with New Orleans.



**AIDS DRUG DISCOVERY**  
 The TULANE NATIONAL PRIMATE RESEARCH CENTER was part of an important research study showing that injections of a novel long-acting AIDS drug, GSK744, protected monkeys against infection with a virus similar to HIV. These pre-clinical animal studies give strong support for clinical testing of GSK744 in humans as a next-generation HIV prevention drug.



**IS FOOTBALL DANGEROUS?**  
 A new Tulane study of high school football players found no link between years of play and any decline in neurocognitive function. Lead study author DR. GREGORY STEWART, associate professor of orthopaedics, found that risks of sport-related brain injuries are relatively low. The results came after studies of 1,289 New Orleans high school football players, reviewing years of participation, age and concussion history, and scores on common neuropsychological tests.





**KERMIT RUFFINS**

*Kermit Ruffins plays for the crowd at the "Great Scott" celebration on March 28.*



**NICK SPITZER**

**RIVERS PRIZE FOR SPITZER**

Professor NICK SPITZER, center (above), who also is producer and host of the "American Routes" weekly music program on National Public Radio, received the James Williams Rivers Prize in Louisiana Studies from the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. The annual award honors significant contributions to Louisiana culture.

**PHYSICS HONOR TO REED**

WAYNE F. REED, professor and founder of the Center for Polymer Reaction Monitoring and Characterization at Tulane, was invested as the second holder of the Murchison-Mallory Chair in Physics at the Tulane School of Science and Engineering.

**HONORED FOR LIFETIME WORK**

Child psychiatrist DR. MICHAEL SCHEERINGA received a lifetime achievement award from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry for his pioneering research on the emotional and behavioral problems of very young children. He is the Remigio Gonzalez, M.D., Professor of Child Psychiatry at the School of Medicine.

**DR. MICHAEL SCHEERINGA**



The Stone Center's influence and reputation promise to grow even further with the recent arrival of a \$6.1 million gift from an anonymous donor. This gift will establish three new endowed chairs in Latin American studies, bringing the number of Stone Center endowed chairs to seven. Such chairs are among the most coveted gifts a university can receive.

Two of the chairs will be named the Scott and Marjorie Cowen Chairs in Latin American Social Sciences. These chairs will support joint appointments for faculty throughout Tulane who study Latin America. Margie and I are deeply touched to have these important chairs named in our honor.

The gift will also establish the Thomas F. and Carol M. Reese Distinguished Chair in Latin American Studies, which will endow the position of the director of the Stone Center for Latin American Studies. This chair is named for Tom Reese, the longtime director of the Stone Center, and Carol Reese, the Christovich Associate Professor of Architecture. In addition, the gift will establish the Yvette M. Jones Latin American Special Collections Fund, which will support the Middle American Research Institute and the Latin American Library. The fund is named for Yvette Jones, Tulane's executive vice president for university relations and development.

Another big change on campus will be the relocation of the School of Social Work from the uptown campus to the heart of Tulane's downtown campus at 127 Elk Place. The move will nearly triple the classroom and administrative space available to the School of Social Work and locate the school more centrally within the community it serves. The move will also bring back to life another area of downtown New Orleans, which is currently undergoing an amazing rebirth.

By the time the School of Social Work's move begins in August, my time as Tulane's president will have come to an end and a new chapter, yet to be written, will begin. Maybe then I will have a moment to look back on what were the best and happiest years of my life.

Scott S. Cowen



**EXECUTIVE STROLL**

*President Scott Cowen and President-elect Michael Fitts, left, head across campus.*