

Letter from the President



FALL 2017

Dear [NAME],

Millennials get a bad rap. Think pieces mourn the death of the “9-5,” “modern romance,” and even “The American Dream;” all killed, apparently, by the Anti-Midas touch of the Millennial Generation. These authors would have you believe that Millennials are lazy, uninspired, and disinterested in the world outside their phones.

Today, I would like to offer you my own possibly controversial take: Millennials aren’t the harbingers of doom they’ve been painted to be. In fact, I believe they’re quite the opposite.

Millennials – the largest and most diverse generation in American history – have arrived not a moment too soon, an electric shock to the nervous system of a complacent nation. They are passionately trying to use their boundless talents to make the world a better place. They are open and excited by the notions of change and diversity. They want to solve traditional problems in untraditional ways.

Tulane Millennials are community-driven, answering the call to action at every opportunity. Our graduate program produces more Peace Corps volunteers than any other school in the nation.

Tulane Millennials are “woke” with a penchant for supporting a culture of inclusivity. Student leaders serve on my Presidential Commission on Race and Tulane Values, where they provide valuable insight on how to ensure Tulane’s community is one where everyone is made to feel like they belong.

Tulane Millennials are pioneers of innovation, who revel in the complexity the modern world demands. The 2016 graduating class is a shining example; nearly 40 percent were double majors, with 41 students somehow finding the time to add on a third.



“I don’t think there’s a place on earth that better captures the spirit of this supercharged generation.”

Our student body is ranked

#1

for most engaged in community service

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PROTECTING THE WORLD FROM INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Tulane researchers are at the front lines of discovering a cure and drug treatment for Lassa fever, a severe and often fatal hemorrhagic illness.

Tulane University School of Medicine virologists Robert Garry and Dr. James Robinson are part of a team of collaborators who have been researching Lassa fever in West Africa for more than 14 years. The National Institutes of Health recently awarded Tulane more than \$12 million to test a promising drug treatment and develop a vaccine.

The deadly disease is endemic in parts of West Africa and there is no vaccine against the virus, which infects more than 300,000 annually.



Top Producer of Fulbright Grant Winners

Twelve Tulane students and one recent graduate received grants from the Fulbright U.S. Student Program to conduct independent research or work as English teaching assistants abroad in 2017-18. Pictured above are five of the 13 Fulbright Award recipients. Top row from left: Vanessa Castaneda and Sarah Haensly. Seated, from left: Gabriel Rodriguez, Hannah Kaufman and David Chatelain.

The Fulbright Program is the U.S. government’s flagship international educational exchange program. Earlier this year, Tulane was recognized as a top producer of Fulbrights for 2016-17.

The Tulane Fulbright winners will use their expertise to explore a variety of subjects, including evaluating archival texts from 1791-1804 in Spain, examining the perceptions of the health of adults over 60 years old in Paraguay and evaluating archaeological sites in Guatemala.

FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT

The Tulane University School of Science and Engineering has created an academic department dedicated to research and education in river-coastal issues.

“Improving our understanding of river-coastal systems is vital today in order to find protection and restoration solutions to the acute problems resulting from rising sea levels, climate change and the effects of destructive storms,” said Tulane Earth and Environmental Sciences professor Mead Allison, who will chair the new Department of River-Coastal Science and Engineering. The department will begin offering classes in spring 2018.

The department will be unique because it will focus on the world’s river, deltaic and coastal systems using a combined science and engineering approach. It will recognize the linkages among these settings – such as the effects of engineered structures like river dams – on the health of deltas and the adjacent coast.



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This past spring, a team of Millennials – all Tulane PhD candidates – traveled to Silicon Valley to compete at the International Business Model Competition – the Olympics of Entrepreneurship. Two of the students, David Tulman and Peter Lawson, are in Tulane’s Biomedical Innovation Program. There, they learn how to create unique medical advances and immediately bring them to market. Their teammate, Mei Wang, is a member of Tulane’s Biomedical Engineering Program. She studies the connection between engineering and medicine – pioneering the machines that could one day save your life, or mine.

Although the team was well prepared, they would have to design and present something truly remarkable in order to succeed at the competition.

Today, when surgeons test for cancer, they typically perform a biopsy in order to determine a targeted course of treatment. Unfortunately, the current process for harvesting and evaluating biopsies is inaccurate, costly, and painful. As a result, repeat biopsy surgeries are commonplace; every year, five million Americans have biopsies to diagnose cancer. And, every year, one million of us have to go back for a repeat surgery.

After five years of back breaking work, and writing their own federal research grants, our Tulane team had found an answer to this problem. They developed a test that immediately diagnoses entire biopsies for cancer, without any cellular loss. It’s called “Instapath,” and it’s accurate 90 percent of the time. It’s a revolutionary idea – a perfect storm of health, medicine, and computer science – and it will immediately change the world and benefit humanity.

As you can probably guess – the Tulane trio won the competition, defeating nearly 6,000 teams from 27 different countries around the world.

Their story is just another illustration of how Millennials continue to embody the Tulane motto, “Not for one’s self, but for one’s own.” So if you were thinking of writing this generation off, don’t. They just might surprise you.

As the new academic year begins, we usher in the Class of 2021. I wonder – how will they make their mark on the world in their time here?

Mike

▼ Tulane PhD students who triumphed over nearly 6,000 other teams to win the International Business Model Competition, “the Olympics of entrepreneurship.” From left to right are, Peter Lawson, Mei Wang and David Tulman.



“This generation tackles the world and its challenges with fresh eyes and creative solutions in a way no generation before them ever has.”

Student applications up
36%
since 2015

Tulane's Own 'Heir to Faulkner'

Jesmyn Ward, associate professor in the Department of English, is being hailed by the national press for her latest novel *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, which has been nominated on the fiction long list for this year's National Book Awards.

WHAT THE CRITICS SAY: In August, Ward was hailed in *TIME* magazine as the "heir to Faulkner."

WHY I LOVE TO TEACH: "I love working with student writers to help them revise and polish and transform their work, and I love watching students find their voices. It really is very rewarding work."

AWARD-WINNING: Ward is the 2011 National Book Award winner for her novel *Salvage the Bones*.



PHOTO: ARIELLE PENTES

MAKING HISTORY: TULANE WELCOMES FAMED HISTORIAN TO FACULTY

Walter Isaacson, the former chairman and CEO of CNN and managing editor of *TIME* and noted biographer of Steve Jobs, has joined the Tulane history department as a University Professor.

NOTABLE QUOTE: Isaacson believes that the discoveries of the future will demand interdisciplinary intelligence.

"This innovation will come from people who are able to link beauty to engineering, humanity to technology, and poetry to processors."

FIRST COURSE AT TULANE: The History of the Digital Revolution: From Ada Lovelace to Mark Zuckerberg

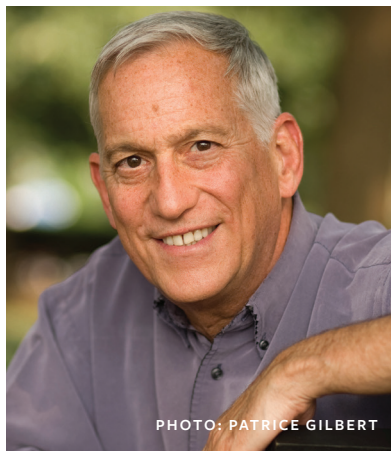


PHOTO: PATRICE GILBERT

126.1
MILLION
dollars raised
and 20,492 donors
made 2017
a record-breaking
fundraising year