

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring 2015



April 17, 2015

Dear alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends:

Before she arrived at Tulane, **Charisse Poston** grew up in a small town in Texas where generations of residents stayed close to home and people basked in the serenity and familiarity of rural life. She recalled her neighbors mostly maintaining the same political persuasions and church-going customs. They embraced land and farm. In high school, Charisse and friends would drive 45 minutes to San Antonio when they wanted to visit movie theaters, stores and restaurants.

Now she's a senior at Tulane, majoring in English and economics, and like countless students before her, she can reflect on the experience of coming to college and encountering a greatly widened spectrum of perspectives.

NEW PERSPECTIVES

In their first semester, members of the class of 2015 busily traded stories with each other, discovering the differences in their backgrounds. Charisse met people from large metropolitan areas who brought their own sets of rich cultural experiences. She met people from all regions of the country. Tulane, after all, is one of the most national universities, where students travel on average more than 900 miles from home. She heard about what it's like to live in cold weather climates. She found regional jargon and accents fascinating. She shared her stories about life in rural Texas. She found people who expressed a diverse range of political viewpoints.

This mixing of perspectives is one of the most important functions of the university. In society at large, people often cluster into similar groups, whether by ethnicity, religion, economics, politics, neighborhood, profession, talents or

COMMENCEMENT CONNECTIONS

Actress and comedian **Maya Rudolph**, who rose to fame as a cast member of "Saturday Night Live" and starred in films such as *Bridesmaids*, *The Way Way Back* and *Away We Go*, will deliver the keynote address at the Tulane Commencement Ceremony on May 16 in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome.

Rudolph has strong connections to Tulane. Her father **Richard Rudolph**, a musician, songwriter and producer, is an alumnus and plans to attend the ceremony. In addition, her cousin, **Sabrina Rudolph**, is a member of the 2015 graduating class.

The ceremony will feature the pageantry and New Orleans flavor for which Tulane commencements are known, including live jazz, herald trumpets, confetti cannons, a traditional New Orleans second-line procession and more.



PETER RICCHIUTI

TOPS IN BUSINESS TEACHING

The Burkenroad Reports program at the A. B. Freeman School of Business won top honors for best teaching delivery in the prestigious Wharton-QS Stars Awards, an international competition recognizing innovative approaches in higher education that enhance learning and student employability.

The program, founded and led by professor **Peter Ricchiuti**, gives students stock analysis experience by covering small-cap companies in the Gulf South. Each year 200 students meet top management, visit company sites and publish investment research reports on 40 “stocks under rocks” in six states.



DOUG HARRIS

FOCUS ON NOLA PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Education Research Alliance for New Orleans, a new Tulane center, has received \$3.5 million to study the long-term impacts of sweeping public education reforms enacted after Hurricane Katrina.

Economics professor **Douglas N. Harris**, its founder and director, says the center will “provide objective, rigorous and useful evidence for these reforms.” The Laura and John Arnold Foundation contributed \$3 million with an additional \$500,000 in funding from the W.T. Grant Foundation, two anonymous gifts, Tulane’s Murphy Institute and the School of Liberal Arts.

interests. Like-minded groups might even consume the same popular culture and watch the same cable channels.

This tendency of the broader world makes the college years all the more crucial. It’s an invaluable window for people of varying backgrounds to bump into each other, exchange ideas, broaden their viewpoints and grow. Learning springs from a process of having your most basic assumptions challenged. That doesn’t mean you have to change your mind. It means you get to know yourself better. Students need this experience to prime themselves for careers that will take them to new places and introduce them to new people.

EYE-OPENING INSIGHTS

I know this partly because I, too, experienced it as a student. I was raised in Philadelphia, but as an undergraduate found myself participating in middle-of-the-night philosophical conversations with new friends from distant corners of the country. The value of meeting people different from me grew even more vivid later, at the start of my legal career, when I clerked for Federal Judge Leon Higginbotham, a civil rights visionary. He became my mentor. Among the many insights he shared, he introduced me to issues of race and what it’s like to grow up with poverty.

Tulane is a great setting for eye-opening relationships to form. In addition to the national makeup of the student body, there’s its international makeup. We benefit from having more than 1,000 foreign students joining us from points across the world. More than 500 of our students this academic year have studied abroad. We have graduates living in every state and 177 countries. Earlier this year I made my first international visit as president, introducing myself to Tulane alumni and supporters in Panama and meeting the president

NEW HOME FOR TULANE CITY CENTER

An outreach program of the School of Architecture, **Tulane City Center** has a new home at 1725 Baronne St. in the heart of New Orleans’ Central City. At 7,000 square feet, the building features ample workspace for staff, fellows and interns as well as courses such as Engage Design Build studios.

In addition, the building houses a fully outfitted workshop for fabrication and staging of built projects.

Tulane City Center has been involved in designing and building dozens of neighborhood revitalization projects, including playgrounds, healthcare facilities, arts centers and urban farms.



HILLARY BO ARCHITECTURE A WORK SPACE



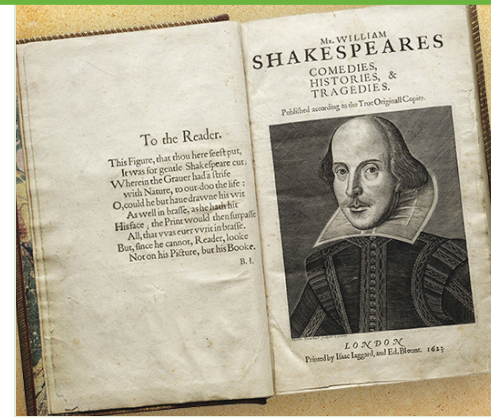
At our artists' retreat on the West Bank, *A Studio in the Woods*, artists and scientists are able to collaborate on ways to interpret and fuse art and research.

of Costa Rica, **Luis Guillermo Solís**, who holds a master's degree in Latin American studies from Tulane.

The structure of Newcomb-Tulane College ensures our undergraduates also enjoy a multifaceted intellectual experience. They enter a unified college and explore subjects taught all over campus before specializing in a major. That's how Charisse arrived at a dual emphasis on English and economics. Those are the classes she found herself gravitating to the most during her early, exploratory semesters. Friends at other universities, she said, had their courses of study rigidly planned for them based on the programs they entered.

WORKING ACROSS DISCIPLINES

Perhaps Tulane's greatest driver of potential, the trait we can enhance to become one of the most innovative leaders in higher education, is its propensity for collaboration. Working across disciplines sparks ideas among people with differing focuses. This plays out in multiple ways. The Newcomb Scholars Program gathers undergraduate women with every kind of academic interest to explore the principles of 21st century leadership together. The Altman Program in International Studies and Business instills undergraduates with a mixture of knowledge from business, the liberal arts, foreign languages and study abroad. At our Studio in the Woods retreat in Lower Coast Algiers, Tulane scientists collaborate with artists to produce creative, visual expressions of their research.



TULANE LANDS SHAKESPEARE EXHIBIT

Newcomb Art Gallery has been selected to host "First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare," a national traveling exhibition featuring the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays that was published in 1623. The exhibition, scheduled for the spring of 2016, marks the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death.

English Department chair **Michael Kuczynski** spearheaded the effort to bring the exhibit to Tulane, which was selected as the Louisiana host site for the month-long exhibition by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C.



CASH, A FIFTH-YEAR ARCHITECTURE STUDENT, BUILDS A MUSEUM.



CITY CENTER PROJECT—THE DONALD HARRISON, SR. MUSEUM PRESERVES MARDI GRAS INDIAN CULTURE



Plan to join us for our Homecoming, Reunion and Family Weekend this year on Nov. 6, 7 and 8. We will be celebrating the reunions of the classes of 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014, and we will take on the UConn Huskies in Yulman Stadium. Don't miss it!

NEWEST JOINT DEGREE: MD/MBA

Recognizing the growing need for physicians with business training, the School of Medicine and the A. B. Freeman School of Business have created a new four-year, accelerated program for medical students to earn a master of business administration with their medical degrees.

The program, which begins this summer, is one of only a very few of its type in the country. It will be offered in addition to Tulane's existing five-year MD/MBA degree, which began in 2004 and requires a global leadership component.

"Future leaders in medicine must excel as clinicians as well as managers in today's rapidly evolving healthcare market," said **Dr. Lee Hamm**, senior vice president and dean of the medical school.



ATTACK ON MALARIA

The School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine is part of a new consortium that aims to eliminate cases of malaria on the island of Hispaniola, home of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, by 2020. There were more than 20,000 confirmed malaria cases in Haiti in 2013.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention received a \$29.9 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to launch the work. Tulane will receive \$2.9 million of the funding to lead operations research and provide evidence for implementing elimination strategies.

An area where Tulane already excels for linking different experiences is public service. Teaching in New Orleans schools gave Charisse a deeper introduction to a community that varies from the place where she grew up. Another student who found expanded horizons at Tulane, sophomore **Roxanne Heston**, learned about her new city by working as a liaison between nonprofit groups in New Orleans and service learning classes at the university.

Roxanne, who is in the Altman Program double majoring in economics and finance, approached Tulane from a different direction than Charisse, in terms of the size of her home town. She grew up in Los Angeles. It's big enough that residents can feel like tourists visiting different sections of the same city, she said. The population is mobile. She found a strong sense of community in New Orleans and learned how people can be more geographically rooted. Her friends who grew up in New Orleans taught her about stopping to appreciate moments, such as scenes that unfold during Mardi Gras parades, showing her a different mindset than the often task-, goal- and career-centered Los Angeles. In Los Angeles she was surrounded by people of a different political orientation than Charisse's community in Texas, but she also found more diversity of thought in New Orleans and at Tulane.

Roxanne said her Tulane experience has highlighted the concept of emotional intelligence. It has piqued an awareness of how other people's priorities can differ from your own. She sees Tulane sending students into the world with an inclination for helping others. Breaking down intellectual, cultural and social barriers is something Tulane has the capacity to do better than any other higher education institution. I see it across our campuses and programs. Charisse, Roxanne and thousands of Tulanians live it every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mike'.

Mike Fitts