

Tulane launches Tulane Innovation series with Walter Isaacson and leading experts

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The first installment of the Tulane Innovation series will feature Tulane history Professor Walter Isaacson, left, as moderator, Susan Hassig, associate professor of epidemiology at Tulane, and Thomas LaVeist, dean of the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Tulane University will kick off the virtual Tulane Innovation series Monday, May 4, with a webinar on COVID-19's health disparities and public impacts.

Moderated by best-selling biographer Walter Isaacson, who is also the Leonard Lauder Professor of American History and Values at Tulane, the first installment of the series will feature Thomas LaVeist, a national expert on equity and health and dean of the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. LaVeist will be joined by Susan Hassig, a leading expert on infectious disease outbreaks and associate professor and director of the Master of Public Health program in Tulane's Epidemiology Department.

The webinar will begin at 10 a.m. (CST) on Zoom. It is free and open to the public, but participants must register [here](#).

"Such discussions are an essential part of Tulane's mission to communicate knowledge in order to empower individuals, organizations and communities to lead with integrity and wisdom."

Tulane President Mike Fitts

The series will feature discussions by leading Tulane experts from a wide variety of fields, offering insights and solutions to today's greatest challenges.

"Such discussions are an essential part of Tulane's mission to communicate knowledge in order to empower individuals, organizations and communities to lead with integrity and wisdom," Tulane President Mike Fitts said. "Never has this mission been more relevant than today as the world continues to combat COVID-19."

LaVeist, the Weatherhead Presidential Chair in Health Equity, is a national expert on equity and health. Prior to joining Tulane, he spent 25 years at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health where he was a professor and director of the Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions.

A member of the National Academy of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, LaVeist has published more than 130 articles in scientific journals. He is also executive producer of the documentary "The Skin You're In," which explores the health disparities between African Americans and whites.

Hassig is a leading expert on infectious disease outbreaks, vector-borne disease, HIV and associated infections. Prior to joining the Epidemiology Department at Tulane, she spent more than a decade working in HIV research and associated infections.

She has also served in the Peace Corps, where she worked to improve disease diagnosis methods and blood transfusion safety in Thailand.

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hassig has become a go-to source for public health information on efforts to stop the spread of the virus, and she has been quoted in a wide range of media outlets from The New York Times to Fox News.

Isaacson is the past CEO of the Aspen Institute, where he is now a Distinguished Fellow. He is also the former chairman of CNN and former editor of Time magazine. His most recent biography "Leonardo Da Vinci" (2017) offers new discoveries about the artist's life and work, weaving a narrative that connects his art to his science.

Isaacson is also a host of the show "Amanpour and Company" on PBS and CNN, a contributor to CNBC and host of the podcast "Trailblazers, from Dell Technologies."

The second installment of the Innovation series (date to be determined) will be titled "Tulane Innovation: The Race for COVID-19 Treatments, Tests and a Vaccine." It will be moderated by Kimberly Foster, dean of the Tulane School of Science and

Engineering and feature Tulane virologist Robert Garry and Skip Bohm, associate director and chief veterinary medical officer of the Tulane National primate Research Center.