

# Tulane scholars honored at first Research, Scholarship and Artistic Achievement Awards ceremony

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*Outstanding Tulane scholars were recognized for their exceptional research at the first Tulane University Research, Scholarship and Artistic Achievement Awards on*

*Thursday, Nov. 4. (Photo by Cheryl Gerber)*

The Tulane University Office of Research held the first Research, Scholarship and Artistic Achievement Awards on Thursday, Nov. 4, to honor outstanding Tulane scholars and recognize their exceptional research. A number of affiliates with the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine received awards.

The awards ceremony was held at the Higgins Hotel in downtown New Orleans with Meg Farris, WWL-TV medical and general assignment reporter, as the emcee.

Dr. Giovanni Piedimonte, vice president for research, opened by thanking all who supported the awards ceremony coming to fruition and noted that award recipients included a wide and diverse array of researchers from multiple disciplines.

Piedimonte noted that 2020 was a record year in Tulane's history for total research and federal research funding in Tulane's history. "Even more remarkable, these records were set in the midst of the worst pandemic of the century. Thus, allow me to say thank you to every single Tulanian involved in research, scholarship and the arts for their efforts during unprecedented challenges," he said.

President Michael Fitts opened by stating that the event being held in person was a testament to Tulane's 98% COVID-19 vaccination rate. He also noted that the pandemic highlighted the importance of the university's research.

He went on to address the researchers by saying, "In looking at you, you really are the past, present and the future of Tulane University, and I'm really proud of all of you."

Fitts noted that the university's research has experienced an incredible period of growth. "Over the last five years our federal funding has gone up close to 50 percent."

Fitts said that the awards honor Tulane researchers' "extraordinary work that makes a difference to the lives of the world."

"We are a great academic research university, and our impact is felt here and across the globe," Fitts said.

Fitts presented the Research Hall of Fame Award to four recipients. The award is for lifetime achievement and recognizes scholars who have made substantial

contributions to advancing knowledge during their academic careers.

Robin Forman, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, also took the stage. He said that although it's the first time the university has held the event, the university's researchers and their work are often discussed among colleagues.

"We're sharing our sense of excitement and pride in your latest discoveries, ideas and creations, in your latest books and papers and latest collaborations," Forman said.

He continued, "It's great to have this chance to celebrate together and to celebrate all the ways in which you make our communities healthier, safer, happier, more resilient and more just."

Forman presented the recipients of the Innovation Award, which recognizes those who explore novel ideas, approaches and insights through interdisciplinary scholarship to address clinical, public health or societal challenges. He also presented the Galaxy Award, which recognizes achievement of scholars who have a strong five-year history of funding and enhancing the university's research mission. Lastly, Forman presented the Provost's Award for Excellence in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, an award that recognizes scholars for their excellence in research that address societal inequalities and promotes social change.

Piedimonte presented the Funding Awards, which honors scholars in the STEM and non-STEM fields who have been awarded the largest combined dollar amount of funding during the previous year.

Dr. M. "Tonette" Krousel-Wood, associate provost for the health sciences and associate dean for public health and medical education, presented the Student/Trainee Research Mentoring Award, which recognizes exceptional research mentors. She also presented the Rising Star Award. The award honors the work of assistant professors, within five years of appointment at Tulane, who demonstrate exceptional growth and impact in research areas.

The SPHTM awardees were:

**2021 Research Hall of Fame Award:** [Jiang He](#), Joseph S. Copes Chair and Professor, Department of Epidemiology

**2021 Innovation Award:** [Tanika Kelly](#), Vice Chair and Professor, Department of Epidemiology

**2021 Galaxy Award:** [Lydia Bazzano](#), Lynda B. and H. Leighton Steward Professor in Nutrition Research, Department of Epidemiology

**2021 Provost's Award for Excellence in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:** [Brigham Walker](#), Assistant Professor, Department of Health Policy and Management

**2021 Funding Awards:** [Chad Roy](#), researcher at the School of Medicine and Tulane National Primate Research Center, as well as a 1993 alumnus with an MSPH in Environmental Health Sciences

**2021 Student/Trainee Research Mentoring Award:** [Patricia Kissinger](#), Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Development, and Professor, Department of Epidemiology

**2021 Rising Star Award:** [Maeve Wallace](#), Assistant Professor, Department of Social, Behavioral, and Population Sciences