

Making connections and finding an international path

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David Gladow dgladow@tulane.edu

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The graduate program at the [Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine](#) has always produced internationally minded graduates, but the same also can be said of the [undergraduate BSPH program](#). That is especially true for BSPH graduate Ella Jongebreur, who will move to Copenhagen later this summer.

Jongebreur, who graduated with a 4.0 with a major in public health and a minor in sociology, earned a scholarship to pursue a master's in Global Health at the University of Copenhagen.

This next step in her academic journey comes on the heels of an undergrad experience dedicated toward exploring both the larger New Orleans community and international study.

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Ella Jongebreur, BSPH

Jongebreur has always loved travel, food, and exploration. When she was pointed to the [DIS Copenhagen program](#) by her advisors, she jumped in with both feet.

"It was amazing -- a highlight of my undergraduate career, by far," Jongebreur said. "I got to know so much about public health history and other places. I think Tulane emphasizes [study abroad]. And I think they have a wonderful program. Almost all of my friends did study abroad, and we all had a fantastic time."

Jongebreur's excellent academic track record led to multiple scholarship offers at other prestigious universities – including three in London – but the opportunity at Copenhagen, which itself came with a full Danish government scholarship to cover tuition for two years, was too good to pass up.

Familiarity was a factor in the choice, but she also already understands the benefits of studying abroad.

"Not just academically, it builds your character so much. It forces you to be independent and forces you to be comfortable with being uncomfortable," Jongebreur said. "It makes you learn how to live by yourself and really push yourself and still know that you'll be okay."

"You'll figure it out," she offered as advice to future study abroad students.

Travel played a part in her choice of Tulane in the first place. Coming from the Atlanta metro area, she and her family had always loved Mardi Gras and the city at large, and studying in the community seemed an obvious fit.

"Part of the reason why I chose Tulane is because I was familiar with the city. And I really love the culture of New Orleans. I wanted to get more immersed in it."

She's taken on work in New Orleans (both on and away from campus), volunteered in community outreach, and has even joined the Krewe of Tucks. She's also made the most of her time on campus by joining a service fraternity ([Alpha Phi Omega](#)), helping to [relaunch Tulane's Public Health Zine](#), and serving as a [Wave Leader](#), helping to orient new students.

"I definitely made the right choice. I have nothing but good things to say about this program. I think that choice alone would justify coming to Tulane, and I feel like the work life balance is excellent here. But the public health program I feel has definitely opened a lot of doors for me. So yeah, I would just say it's been a wonderful four years. And I love it."

And what does the future hold? That's not defined yet, but if her undergraduate career is any indication, Jongebreur will continue to stand out by making connections – between people, between places, and between fields of study.

"I'm really interested in a 'one health' perspective of environmental health playing into infectious disease transmission and climate change and how that all interacts as one. I would love to work somewhere in the middle of all that."