

Diboll Foundation gift funds Presidential Chair at Tulane's Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine

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David F. Edwards, chair of the Diboll Foundation's board of trustees, played a critical role in the establishment of the Collins C. Diboll Presidential Chair.

Tulane University has received a major gift from the Collins C. Diboll Foundation to help ensure the continued leadership of the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine in preventing disease and other worldwide health threats.

The gift will establish the Collins C. Diboll Presidential Chair Endowed Fund and expand the university's ability to recruit and support world-class scholars who bridge traditional academic boundaries to address complex public health challenges. The funding will support a distinguished interdisciplinary faculty member at the [Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine](#).

"This vital support will help bring more world-leading faculty to Tulane to address some of the most urgent public health issues of our time," Tulane President Michael A. Fitts said. "We are deeply grateful to the foundation for its vision and commitment to advancing the health and well-being of communities in Louisiana and around the world. This chair epitomizes the kind of forward-thinking generosity that enhances and propels our mission."

Presidential Chairs have been one of Fitts' top priorities as he seeks to attract world-renowned faculty members in areas such as biomedicine, coastal restoration, global health and fields not yet explored. Ten Presidential Chairs in a wide variety of interdisciplinary fields have been established thus far.

"With this gift, we hope to fuel the interdisciplinary leadership that Collins Diboll believed was essential to solving society's most pressing challenges," said David F. Edwards, chair of the Diboll Foundation's board of trustees. "We believe that Tulane is uniquely positioned to carry that legacy forward. The Diboll Presidential Chair is a way of ensuring that outstanding faculty have the resources and recognition they need to lead transformative work."

"This chair will give us the flexibility to support bold, innovative faculty whose work spans traditional academic silos," said [Thomas A. LaVeist](#), the school's dean and the Weatherhead Presidential Chair in Health Equity. "We are looking for scholars who are not only exceptional in their fields but also eager to collaborate across disciplines. The Diboll Presidential Chair will serve as a catalyst for both academic excellence and measurable impact."

The Diboll Presidential Chair's creation comes at a pivotal moment for the school. In 2024, the university renamed the school in honor of Celia Scott Weatherhead, solidifying Tulane's role as a national and global leader in advancing health, innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Formed in 1987 from Diboll's estate, the Collins C. Diboll Foundation has been a longtime supporter of education, research and public service in New Orleans. It has donated extensively to Tulane over the decades, including for the renovation of Richardson Memorial Hall and the construction of the Malkin Sacks Commons, the Collins C. Diboll Complex, and the Collins C. Diboll Auditorium and Gallery.

The latest gift from the Diboll Foundation builds upon a legacy of philanthropic support established by Collins C. Diboll (1904-87), a prominent New Orleans architect, businessman and civic leader who graduated from Tulane in 1926.