



Leone Presidential Endowed Chair
Tulane University
New Orleans, Louisiana

THE SEARCH

Tulane University (Tulane), a leading private institution located in the heart of New Orleans, Louisiana, seeks an accomplished, internationally distinguished investigator in immunology to serve as the Leone Presidential Endowed Chair within the School of Medicine. The Chair will have a singular opportunity to build a world-class research program at one of the nation's most distinctive universities, whose tropical medicine heritage and translational infrastructure make it unlike any peer institution in the country. In defining Tulane's next chapter in immunology, the successful candidate will broaden the institution's influence in the field, while mentoring and developing the next generation of investigators.

Serving at the highest echelon of Tulane's academic ranks, [presidential chairs](#) are endowed, full-professor positions that serve a vital role in advancing Tulane's research mission. The presidential chairs at Tulane represent the most prestigious positions on the university's campus, uniting the eminence of a named chair with the vision of a multidisciplinary approach. They were created as part of the university's *Only the Audacious* campaign and carry forward as a cornerstone of its successor, [Always the Audacious](#), a continued commitment to transcending traditional field boundaries and catalyzing collaboration across the university.

The Leone Presidential Endowed Chair, located within Tulane's premier School of Medicine, offers an unparalleled platform to drive breakthroughs in immunology or parasitology, both areas of historic excellence at Tulane with exciting potential for additional impact. Within the School of Medicine, the Department of Microbiology and Immunology is the highest-ranked basic science department by both Blue Ridge rankings and NIH funding, representing a critical hub of infectious disease and immunology expertise at Tulane. Tulane's commitment to investigator-initiated research is reflected in the results. NIH funding within the School of Medicine has doubled over the last six years, driven by sustained institutional investment and the success of the ongoing Only the Audacious fundraising campaign, which has raised more than \$1.5 billion.

The Chair will play a critical role in convening cross-campus collaborations, partnering with leading research centers such as the [Tulane National Biomedical Research Center](#), the [Center for Translational Research in Infection and Inflammation](#), the [Vector-Borne Infectious Diseases Research Center](#), and the

[Center for Applied Malaria Research and Evaluation](#). The Chair may also play a consequential role in the institutional investments in pursuit of NCI designation for the Tulane Cancer Center.

The Leone Presidential Chair will be a dynamic mentor, coalescing other investigators around multidisciplinary research projects and inspiring and developing the next generation of scientists. While advancing science and discovery, the Leone Presidential Chair will support translation and innovation, creating impact in areas of local relevance from tropical diseases, vector-borne infections, and immunological health disorders. The successful candidate will attract federal research funding to drive innovation, drawing top-tier scholars and clinicians to the region.

THE ROLE OF THE LEONE PRESIDENTIAL CHAIR

Established through a [\\$5 million gift](#) from Tulane alumni Drs. Philip (A&S '64, MD '68) and Cheryl (NC '66, MD '69) Leone, the Leone Presidential Chair will bring a distinguished record of research in immunology to the institution. As one of Tulane's ten Presidential Chairs, the successful candidate will foster interdisciplinary connections across the university in emerging fields such as computational biology, bioinformatics, public health, AI, and vaccinology, among others. It is essential that the chair bridge immunology with another department or school at Tulane.

In addition to leadership in their own research area, the chair will be an intellectual leader on campus and will have the capacity to contribute to the overall strategic direction of their unit, ensuring that it is advancing new frontiers in the field and capitalizing on the strengths and assets of the university. This individual will be a catalyst for research, maintaining a high-impact research agenda, mentoring faculty and PhD students, and strengthening the university's reputation as a hub for impactful scholarship.

The Leone Presidential Chair will be appointed at the rank of full professor with the university's most prestigious endowed designation and will bring a record of national and international distinction — a current or credible trajectory toward membership in the National Academy of Medicine, sustained federal funding, society leadership, and recognition at the highest levels of the field.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Tulane University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist the search committee in its identification and review of candidates. Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, CVs and cover letters should be sent electronically and in confidence via the Isaacson, Miller website:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/tulane-university-school-medicine/leone-presidential-chair>

John Muckle, Partner
Ibaad Nazeer, Senior Associate

Kira Hamilton, Senior Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

Tulane University is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution committed to excellence through diversity. Tulane University will not discriminate based upon race, ethnicity, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, marital status, military or veteran status, or any other status or classification protected by federal, state, or local law. All eligible candidates are encouraged to apply.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Tulane University. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Tulane University would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

APPENDIX A: TULANE UNIVERSITY

Tulane University traces its origins to 1834 and is today recognized as one of the most respected educational and research institutions in the country. It is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities and is classified by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as a Research 1 Institution (R1). Tulane is known for its deeply collaborative culture and for its innovative, interdisciplinary research and educational programs that bridge disciplines across the university. It attracts exceptional students who are both intellectually curious and driven by community engagement, taking part in research at all levels of the university and providing thousands of hours of public service to the greater New Orleans community.

The university has an operating budget of just over \$1 billion and an endowment of \$2.3 billion. Tulane enrolls approximately 8,600 undergraduate and 5,200 graduate and professional students from every state in the U.S. and more than 85 nations worldwide. The Tulane faculty totals over 1,200 full-time members with a staff of approximately 3,000. The university is organized into ten academic divisions: [Newcomb-Tulane College](#), [A.B. Freeman School of Business](#), [School of Architecture](#), [School of Professional Advancement](#), [School of Law](#), [School of Liberal Arts](#), [School of Medicine](#), [Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine](#), [School of Science and Engineering](#), and [the School of Social Work](#).

For more information about Tulane University, please visit the [Tulane website](#).

APPENDIX B: RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AT TULANE

Over the past decade, Tulane has experienced historic growth, investing heavily in research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Nearly half of the \$1.5 billion raised through the *Only the Audacious* campaign (2017–2022) supported research: funding infrastructure improvements, endowed faculty positions, and Presidential Chairs. Building on this success, the next campaign, [Always the Audacious](#), will drive advances in climate science, infectious diseases, brain health, healthy aging, and health equity, while expanding lab space and translational research capacity.

The university continues to make major investments in infrastructure to keep up with the extraordinary growth in research activity and the ambitions of Tulane's faculty. This includes efforts like the [Tulane University Translational Science Institute](#) (TUTSI), which brings together researchers from Tulane School of Medicine, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, School of Science and Engineering, and School of Social Work to find better ways to diagnose, treat, and prevent disease and translate scientific discoveries into medical practices that improve patient care and public health. In 2023, longtime Tulane supporters Libby and Robert Alexander [donated more than \\$12 million to advance a university-wide data science initiative](#) with the goal of transforming teaching and research across all disciplines at Tulane and positioning the university as a leader in data pedagogy. Tulane's [Connolly Alexander Institute for Data Science](#), founded in 2021, fosters data literacy and science through education, research, and service to the community. The Tulane National Biomedical Research Center, one of just seven NIH-funded National

Primate Research Centers and home to a 40,000-square-foot Regional Biocontainment Laboratory, supports translational research in HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, and emerging infectious diseases using nonhuman primate models.

Tulane also supports a robust network of core facilities that enable cutting-edge investigation across disciplines. These include the [Tulane Center for Translational Research in Infection & Inflammation](#), [NextGen Sequencing Core](#), [Brain Institute Cell and Tissue Imaging Core](#), and [Tulane Transgenic Core Facility](#), among others. Additionally, the Tulane School of Medicine recently installed a new MRI machine research facility, the [Tulane Advanced Imaging Center \(TAIC\)](#), expanding the university's capabilities in neuroimaging and translational research. Among the most significant recent investments is the [\\$35 million transformation](#) of the Hutchinson Memorial Building which added nearly 50,000 square feet of modern laboratory and collaborative space for more than two dozen principal investigators and their research teams. Looking ahead, Tulane is leading the \$300 million redevelopment of the former Charity Hospital building into a 650,000-square-foot hub for education, health, research, and innovation, with capacity for 700 researchers and support staff.

Steadfast in its commitment to innovation, Tulane's downtown campus is home to the [Tulane Innovation Institute \(TUII\)](#), which acts as a combined technology and startup accelerator for faculty, researchers, staff, students, and community members. Furthering Tulane's entrepreneurial spirit is the University's dedicated investment and startup platform, [Tulane Ventures](#), which provides early-stage capital and strategic support to help translate Tulane research innovations into scalable commercial ventures that drive economic growth across New Orleans and beyond.

APPENDIX C: SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

[Tulane University School of Medicine](#) is part of the Tulane University Health Sciences Center in downtown New Orleans and serves as a central academic and clinical hub for the Gulf South. The School is led by the Senior Vice President and Dean, Lee Hamm, MD. It includes approximately 23 departments and over 750 faculty across clinical and basic science disciplines, with faculty distributed across a multi-site clinical enterprise through partnerships with regional health systems. The School enrolls about 190 medical students per class, with approximately 750–800 total MD students, and supports a broad graduate medical education portfolio, including 19 residency and 20 fellowship programs across affiliated hospitals and clinical sites. This distributed academic model integrates tertiary and quaternary care, community-based practice, and academic training across a diverse and medically underserved region.

The School maintains an active and growing clinical and translational research enterprise, with approximately \$74 million in annual funding, supported by federal, foundation, and institutional sources and anchored in strengths such as cardiometabolic disease, infectious disease, neuroscience, and population health. Research is advanced through interdisciplinary centers and infrastructure that support clinical trials, translational science, and community-engaged investigation. Since 2002, Tulane Medical School has secured over \$58 million in funding for NIH centers of excellence in hypertension, cancer genetics, regenerative medicine and translational research.

Tulane University School of Medicine is deeply integrated into the New Orleans healthcare landscape through a major, finalized partnership with LCMC Health, transitioning Tulane Medical Center into a broader network. This collaboration unites Tulane's academic research with community-based hospitals to enhance medical training and clinical care. Tulane University School of Medicine operates a faculty practice plan, Tulane University Medical Group, which acts as the clinical practice arm for its faculty physicians. This plan integrates patient care with the medical school's education and research missions, allowing faculty to practice in various specialties while training residents and students.

APPENDIX D: UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

Michael Fitts, Tulane's 15th president, has led the institution since July 2014 with a bold vision to expand cross-disciplinary education and research. Central to this vision are Presidential Chairs, which attract world-class faculty and fuel transformative, interdisciplinary scholarship. Before Tulane, Fitts served 14 years as Dean of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, where he was recognized for advancing interdisciplinary education. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University and a Juris Doctor from Yale Law School.

Dr. Robin Forman was appointed Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost in September 2016. He previously served as Dean of the Emory College of Arts and Sciences and as the Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Mathematics at Emory University. Earlier in his career, he held faculty and administrative appointments at Rice University and served as an instructor at MIT and a visiting professor at the University of Burgundy, Harvard University, and the Mathematical Research Institute. Dr. Forman earned both his Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees in mathematics from the University of Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. in mathematics from Harvard University. His research focuses on combinatorial methods in topology and geometry. He is funded by the National Science Foundation, the National Security Agency, and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

APPENDIX E: NEW ORLEANS, LA

Famed for its history, music, and cuisine, New Orleans is one of the world's most extraordinary cities. Iconic events such as Mardi Gras and Jazz Fest draw thousands of visitors each year, while the city's distinctive neighborhoods reflect its French, Spanish, African, and Caribbean influences. The Tulane experience is deeply interwoven with this rich cultural tapestry, and many students choose to remain in New Orleans after graduation.

Tulane has long been deeply engaged with its home city. Students, faculty, and staff contribute thousands of hours of service annually, strengthening the fabric of the New Orleans community. This shared commitment to the region attracts students and faculty across disciplines who are eager to connect scholarship with impact. Tulane also maintains a strong and enduring partnership with the State of Louisiana. The university is recognized annually during Tulane Day at the Capitol and through legislative

resolutions commending its research and educational contributions. The Louisiana Legislature has consistently affirmed Tulane's role as an economic engine and innovation hub, citing its \$5.2 billion annual impact (2024), leadership in the health sciences, and commitment to advancing lifesaving research through state-supported initiatives and scholarships.