

Taylor Fellow looks to N.O. for inspiration

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(Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Documentary artist and community media pioneer [jesikah maria ross](#), who uses all lowercase in spelling her name, is visiting Tulane University this month, and again in April, as a [Taylor Center Senior Fellow](#).

Her February visit includes leading a [Changemaker Institute](#) workshop, class presentations, fieldwork and site visits with local social innovators. She is working with professors Vicki Mayer and Rebecca Mark to help design a socially engaged media course at Tulane titled “Beyond Neutral Ground: Digital Public Intellectuals, Higher Education, and Root Culture in New Orleans.”

In her effort to seek out “the interdisciplinary sweet spot between art, community development and journalism,” ross uses her job as the senior community engagement strategist at Capital Public Radio in Sacramento, California, to create new models for community-engaged journalism, or “civic storytelling.”

Her résumé includes several multi-platform and collaborative documentaries, such as the award-winning Saving The Sierra: Voices of Conservation in Action. Ross has also worked abroad creating youth projects in participatory media.

“This fellowship presents a unique opportunity to follow my passions and share my skill set while building new knowledge,” said ross, adding that she is intrigued by the human-centered design mindset at the Taylor Center, especially in relation to her work in community development and action research.

Ross’ decision to participate in this program developed from her interest and experience in university-based community engagement. The goal, she said, is to incorporate “new thinking and new ideas on how to structure university engagement models” into her own work.

Hannah Dean is a senior majoring in political science and Latin American studies.

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