Netscape co-founder, Saints hero, Grammy winner, healthcare advocate to be honored at Tulane commencement

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Netscape co-founder James H. Clark, Saints hero and ALS activist Steve Gleason, Grammy-winning singer Irma Thomas and Dr. Paul E. Farmer, who has dedicated his life to improving health care for the world’s poorest populations, will receive honorary degrees at Tulane University’s 2018 Commencement. The ceremony will take place at 9 a.m., May 19 in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome.

“Each of these individuals reflect the best of humanity through their achievements, their triumphs over adversity and their service to others,” Tulane President Mike Fitts said.

Steve Gleason, who earned an MBA from Tulane in 2011, played eight seasons in the NFL, but his
professional career was defined by the punt he blocked during the first game the Saints played in
the Superdome after Hurricane Katrina. The play and ensuing victory became a symbol of New
Orleans’s post-Katrina recovery. In 2011 Gleason was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
(ALS), which robs its victims of the ability to move, speak and breath without assistance. With his
wife, Michel, he founded Team Gleason whose mission is to find a cure for ALS while showing
patients that they can not only live with the disease but thrive. For his work as an advocate for
people with ALS, Gleason was recently nominated to receive the Congressional Gold Medal, the
highest civilian honor awarded by Congress. Gleason will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane
Letters from Tulane.

Irma Thomas is a Grammy award-winning member of the Blues Hall of Fame and a national musical
legend. Known as “The Soul Queen of New Orleans,” she has recorded 21 albums and numerous
singles, including the hits “It’s Raining” and “Wish Someone Would Care.” Thomas gives her time
and energy to numerous civic causes, including the Irma Thomas Center for W.I.S.E. (Women in
Search of Excellence) at Delgado Community College. Thomas will receive an honorary Doctor of
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Tulane President Mike Fitts

James H. Clark is a computer scientist and former Tulane student who co-founded Netscape, one of
the internet’s first browsers, and two other innovative companies, that have changed the way
society interacts with technology. These include Healtheon, an online medical records technology
that merged with WebMD, now one of the world’s leaders in online health information. In addition,
Clark is co-founder of Silicon Graphics Inc., one of the nation’s leading options for Hollywood visual
effects and 3-D images. Clark will receive an honorary Doctor of Letters from Tulane.

Dr. Paul E. Farmer is a medical anthropologist and physician who has dedicated his life to
improving health care for the world’s poorest populations. He is a founding director of Partners In
Health (PIH), an international nonprofit organization that provides direct healthcare services on
behalf of the sick and impoverished. Farmer is chair of the Department of Global Health and Social
Medicine at Harvard Medical School and has written numerous books on health, human rights and
the consequences of social inequality. Farmer will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters
from Tulane.