

Persistence, patience pay off for Tulane grad

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When Eric Lane received his degree in applied computing with a concentration in cybersecurity and homeland security and a minor in political science from the School of Professional Advancement, he realized a dream that began over 20 years ago. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Eric Lane has taken the road less traveled for most college graduates, but that did not stop him from achieving his goal of earning a degree from Tulane University. When Lane received his degree in applied computing with a concentration in cybersecurity and homeland security and a minor in political science from the School of Professional Advancement (SoPA) last week, he realized a dream that began over 20 years ago.

Tulane University

Born in Metairie and raised in Chalmette, Lane's family moved to Kiln, Mississippi, where he graduated high school in 1998 and planned on returning to New Orleans for college. However, difficult circumstances intervened. Lane's father died during his senior year of high school, and he put off college to take care of his ailing mother.

In 2005, Lane saved enough money to start college and enrolled at Delgado Community College, but Hurricane Katrina struck the Crescent City, and he was forced to evacuate and use all of his college savings. Undeterred, he began working in the restaurant industry and once again saved his money.

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Eric Lane

Nine years later, Lane enrolled at Delgado, but this time because of an agreement the school had in place with Tulane, which creates a pathway for Delgado graduates to complete bachelor's degrees at Tulane.

"It would have been nice to go to Tulane (out of high school), but it wasn't necessarily in the books," Lane said. "I chose Delgado because they had the two-plus-two agreement and allowed me to transfer to Tulane and finish out my four years. So, that made the decision pretty easy."

Lane completed his associate's degree at Delgado in web development in 2015 and enrolled at Tulane that same year. Fast-forward to 2019, and Lane already has employers lining up for his services before he even has his degree in hand - something he credits to his time in the SoPA program.

"SoPA allowed me to take the core components of what I needed to graduate and follow my interests like Egyptology, political science and anthropology. I was able to study and donate my time to internships and volunteer work while at Tulane," Lane said.

Lane is currently completing an internship with the New Orleans Police Department and plans to take a position with a federal agency following graduation.