

Tulane University

Tulane receives \$2 million for chair in Jewish studies

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Tulane student Jon Cowen reads a book about Israel in front of the Tulane Jewish Studies building on Freret Street. (Photo by Arielle Pentes)

The [Tulane University Department of Jewish Studies](#) has received an anonymous \$2 million gift to establish the Chair in Contemporary Jewish Life Endowed Fund.

“We are honored to be able to endow Tulane’s Chair in Contemporary Jewish Studies,” said the donors, who are parents of a recent Tulane graduate. “It embodies Jewish and universal values so important to the humanities today in shaping and inspiring the future.

“With Tulane’s interdisciplinary approach to education, it will not only make Tulane a leader in the field, but will also serve as a model for national and international collaboration,” they added.

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By enhancing scholarship and teaching on the diversity of the American Jewish experience, we are committed to combatting anti-Semitism through knowledge, a vision we share with these donors."

Brian Edwards, dean of the Tulane School of Liberal Arts

Tulane President Mike Fitts said the gift will support an important and growing area of study at Tulane for generations to come. "The donors may wish to remain anonymous, but the impact of their generosity in furthering scholarship and discovery in this ever-evolving and fascinating field will be known far and wide within the Tulane community and beyond."

Michael Cohen, Sizeler Professor of Jewish Studies and chair of the Department of Jewish Studies, agreed on the significance of the gift.

"Tulane University is becoming the international leader in understanding the essential role Jews have played in American culture and society," Cohen said. "This gift allows us to add an internationally recognized scholar to our faculty, whose work will inspire students and spark open discussion about the Jews' role in the contemporary world. Our strength in the American Jewish experience will make this Chair of Contemporary Jewry the most impactful of its kind in the nation."

Brian Edwards, dean of the School of Liberal Arts, where the Department of Jewish Studies is housed, added: "This wonderfully generous gift allows us to establish a permanent faculty position that bridges an understanding of American Jewish history to questions that matter in the 21st century. By enhancing scholarship and teaching on the diversity of the American Jewish experience, we are committed to combatting anti-Semitism through knowledge, a vision we share with these donors."

The gift will be used to support a chair at the [Stuart and Suzanne Grant Center for the American Jewish Experience](#), established last fall with a generous gift from Stuart and Suzanne Grant of Wilmington, Delaware.

The income from the gift will be used for salary and other expenses directly associated with the chair's academic work. The chair will participate in the work of the Grant Center which, when it opens on July 1, will have a world-class faculty, dynamic and innovative programming associated with the American Jewish experience and cutting-edge research opportunities.