

Library takes a stand on studying comfort

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A collaboration between Tulane's Undergraduate Student Government and the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library led to the creation of 70 new seats and work spaces for students. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

When Tulane senior Caroline Scott began feeling discomfort while spending long hours studying at [Howard-Tilton Memorial Library](#) on the uptown campus, she set out on a mission to improve her fellow students' studying experiences along with her own.

"I started getting chronic neck pain when I studied, and a way to ameliorate that is to use a standing desk," said the public health major. "Standing while working burns more calories, is better for your cardiovascular system and has additional benefits."

Scott, an Undergraduate Student Government (USG) senator, first contacted Dorothy Mackendrick, director of the library's administrative and strategic services, with the idea of installing more standing workspaces in September 2017.

Following an initial meeting and library tour, the scope of Scott's original goal grew.

"The booths located in the PJ's Coffee on Willow Street are the no. 1 study spot on campus," said Scott. "I began thinking that this project could be bigger than just standing desks and asked if we could have the same style of booths for the first floor learning commons."

Scott collaborated with Tyler Margaretten, vice president of finance for USG, to make the project a reality.

"She filed the project as a capital improvement to the university, and, after meeting with the library administration and the USG senate, we approved \$86,161 to fund the booth seating and the standing desks on the 4th and 5th floors," said Margaretten, a finance and management double major.

The new booth seating was recently installed on the library's first floor. Overall, 70 additional seats are now available.

"The new booths are now fostering group work," said Mackendrick. "Getting a project like this pushed through during the course of the school year was a Herculean feat, so we're really excited that we made it happen."

During the summer, the library aims to add electrical outlets to the booths so that students can charge their laptops.

"When I come in here, it's such a good feeling when every booth is taken," said Margaretten. "This is proof that students can make a tangible change on campus before they even graduate."

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— Tyler Margaretten, Tulane senior