

[President Fitts spreads holiday cheer to deserving staff members](#)

December 17, 2018 11:00 AM Photos by Paula Burch-Celentano and Sally Asher today@tulane.edu

The 2018 President's Staff Excellence Awards were recently presented to several of Tulane University's staff members who best represent high achievement in their contributions to the university. President Mike Fitts surprised winners at the downtown, uptown and Elmwood campuses and the National Primate Research Center. Scroll for photos of the surprise deliveries.



With coworkers looking on, Antoine Young, center, responds to comments made about him by Tulane President Mike Fitts before receiving the award. Young is an IT Security Manager in the Office of Technology Services.



Adam Maese, center, Program Director in the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, responds to the surprise award. In his 16th year at Tulane, Maese recruits and assists students in the MD/MPH Dual Degree Program at the School of Medicine.











Miguel Alonso Solares, right, a case manager in Community Pediatrics and Global Health in the School of Medicine, receives a congratulatory hug from a coworker after receiving a visit from Tulane President Mike Fitts.

Still shocked by his unannounced appearance in her office, Jill Barbay, left, listens as President Fitts tells her she has received the award. Barbay is a senior department administrator in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the School of Medicine.

With balloons and a check in hand, Kathryn Pierce, left, thanks President Fitts for presenting her a 2018 President's Staff Excellence Award. Pierce is an executive assistant in the School of Medicine Dean's office.

Andra "Andie" Strain, right, offers a fist bump to President Fitts after hearing she won the award. Strain is an accountant in the Facilities Management Finance & Business Office.

Award winner, Heather Cooper, senior academic and career adviser in the Advising Center, pauses for a photo op with Amjad Ayoubi, right, Senior-Associate Dean of Newcomb-Tulane College.

Christa Payne, bottom left, feels the love from her coworkers after receiving her award. Payne, the assistant dean of administration and operations in the School of Professional Advancement, received 17 nominations for the award —the highest number ever received.

President Mike Fitts poses with members of the staff of Undergraduate Admissions Communications who won one. Team members are from left to right: Corinne Watson, Rachel Rosenberg, Duane Pitre, Dillon Nuanes, Leila Labens. Not present are Lindsey Hoyt, Jorge Nunez Mendez and Katherine Socha.

Victoria Danner, Veterinary Medicine Vet Tech Supervisor at the National Primate Research Center, gets her surprise.

Tulane's budget and planning team enjoyed a not-so-normal morning meeting as President Mike Fitts stopped by to announce their award.

Howard Boyd, Associate General Counsel in the Office of General Counsel can't hide his excitement as he's presented with a check from the president.