

Tulane receives transformational gift for Jewish Studies

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bbronst@tulane.edu

504-314-7444



Stuart Grant, left, and his wife Suzanne Grant flank their son Sam, a 2019 graduate of Tulane and a lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. (Photo courtesy of the Grant family)

Tulane University has received a generous gift from [Stuart and Suzanne Grant of Wilmington, Delaware](#), to establish the Stuart and Suzanne Grant Center for the American Jewish Experience. It is among the largest gifts to the Tulane School of Liberal Arts and the largest ever to the Department of Jewish Studies.

The gift from the Grants' [*I Could Do Great Things Foundation*](#) will double the number of research faculty in the Jewish Studies department. It provides funding for a new endowed chair that will allow the department to recruit a senior scholar, as well as to launch a national search for a junior faculty position. The gift will also provide operating support for the Center that will bear their name.

"With this visionary gift, Tulane is poised to become a national leader in the study of the American Jewish experience, with a particular, unique and interdisciplinary focus on the history of Jews in the Gulf South and the region more generally," Tulane President Mike Fitts said. "We are so grateful to the Grants for their support which will position Tulane as a hub of excellence and the global leader in the study of the American Jewish experience."

Michael Cohen, Sizeler Professor of Jewish Studies and chair of the Department of Jewish Studies, said the Grants' gift will strengthen the department as well as reshape the field of American Jewish Studies.

"Creating new intellectual connections, the Grant Center will transform the field by practicing across disciplinary and subfield boundaries, emphasizing the global orientation of the American Jewish experience," Cohen said. "Through the Grant Center, we will become the academic leader for the innovative and holistic study of American Jewry."

"Thanks to the tremendous generosity of [Stuart and Suzanne Grant](#), we will build a world-class faculty and implement a dynamic and innovative slate of programming," Cohen said.

School of Liberal Arts Dean Brian Edwards said the gift will enhance what is already one of the school's most popular departments and place Tulane at the forefront of American Jewish studies.

"There is great interest in Jewish studies among our students," Edwards said. "In the last few years, nearly one in four undergraduates enrolled in a Jewish Studies course while at Tulane. This gift allows us to expand the faculty dramatically, which will provide students with the opportunity to study with professors whose research is setting the direction of the field."

He added, "At a moment when the need to understand American Jewish history has never been more vital, the importance of establishing a center dedicated to the

American Jewish experience cannot be overstated.”

The Grants hope their lead gift will inspire more people to support [Jewish Studies at Tulane](#).

The Grants formed the I Could Do Great Things Foundation in 2009 to support a range of social initiatives related to education, Jewish causes and projects that strengthen communities. The Grants established the [Stuart & Suzanne Grant Center of Excellence](#) at the University of Delaware Hillel, making UD one of the first four Hillels in the country to have a Center of Excellence. The Grants are a mainstay in the Jewish community in Delaware as a major supporter of the Jewish Federation of Delaware and Congregation Beth Shalom. The Grants also provided an [initial gift to an initiative at Tulane University](#) that fosters academic collaboration between U.S. and Israeli universities to address shared energy challenges.

[Stuart Grant is the co-founder of Grant & Eisenhofer P.A.](#), a world- renowned law firm that specializes in such areas as corporate law, fiduciary responsibility, securities and investments, private equity and fixed income and appraisal remedies. He recently retired from Grant & Eisenhofer to devote more time to [Bench Walk Advisors](#), a litigation finance hedge fund he co-founded.

[Suzanne Barton Grant](#) is an accomplished businesswoman and philanthropist. A former senior vice president at Smith Barney, she currently serves as the chair of the board of the Delaware State Pension Fund. Suzanne is former president of the Jewish Federation of Delaware and the immediate past national campaign chair for Jewish Federations of North America.

The Grants’ son Sam graduated from Tulane in May 2019 with a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology. He is now a lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps.

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Michael Cohen, chair of Jewish Studies at Tulane