

SoPA's Amanda Garcia named "Educator of the Year" by Advertising Club of New Orleans

October 30, 2020 11:15 AM Tamar Gregorian
tamar@tulane.edu



Under Amanda Garcia's tutelage, SoPA Digital Design students have received a combination of 29 awards on the local, state and national levels in 2020. (Photo courtesy of SoPA).

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Amanda Garcia, the director for Tulane University's School of Professional Advancement Digital Design program, has been named "Educator of the Year" by

The Advertising Club of New Orleans for her work in fostering the growth of the next generation of advertising professionals.

The Advertising Club of New Orleans is part of the American Advertising Federation (AAF), a nationwide organization comprised of 50,000 members. The AAF honors educators for mentoring students through research, teaching and advocacy.

“To be nominated for this award by my students, leaders and peers means the world to me.” Garcia said. “The hard work and countless hours mean nothing unless you actually make an impact and it’s nice to know I’m making a difference.”

Garcia’s design students are impressive in the classroom, but their award-winning work has also been recognized on the local, district and national levels with a combination of 29 awards across three AAF competitions during Spring and Summer 2020.

“I remember walking into her office during her first semester on campus,” said Tamzen Jenkins, SoPA Digital Design student. “I was a complete novice in the design world. Now, years later, I attribute her mentorship and the many priceless conversations we’ve had as defining moments, motivating me to continue learning and growing as a designer, and to never stop pushing the limits.”

In her dual roles as director of SoPA’s [Digital Design](#) and [Digital Media Marketing & Public Relations programs](#), Garcia is an advocate for her students and the university, creating pathways for collaboration and creativity with the greater New Orleans community. These include the [Design Co-op](#), which offers design services to organizations and non-profits while also providing students with substantive work experience.

“Under Amanda’s leadership, the SoPA digital design program has been completely transformed. Her clear vision for a rigorous digital design program with specialized [tracks](#), coupled with SoPA’s investment in new computer labs, software and other technology, gives our students a competitive advantage in the marketplace,” said Ilianna Kwaske, a professor of practice and associate dean for academic affairs.

Garcia holds a PhD in curriculum and instruction with a research focus on socially responsible coursework and pedagogy in higher education from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. She received a Master’s degree in graphic design and visual communication from The Savannah College of Art and Design. Her

undergraduate work was completed at Texas A&M University-College Station, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in environmental design.

Garcia serves on a number of local boards, including the co-president of the AIGA New Orleans. Prior to joining Tulane, Garcia was a faculty fellow and tenured full professor at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (a Hispanic-Serving Institution) for over 16 years.

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