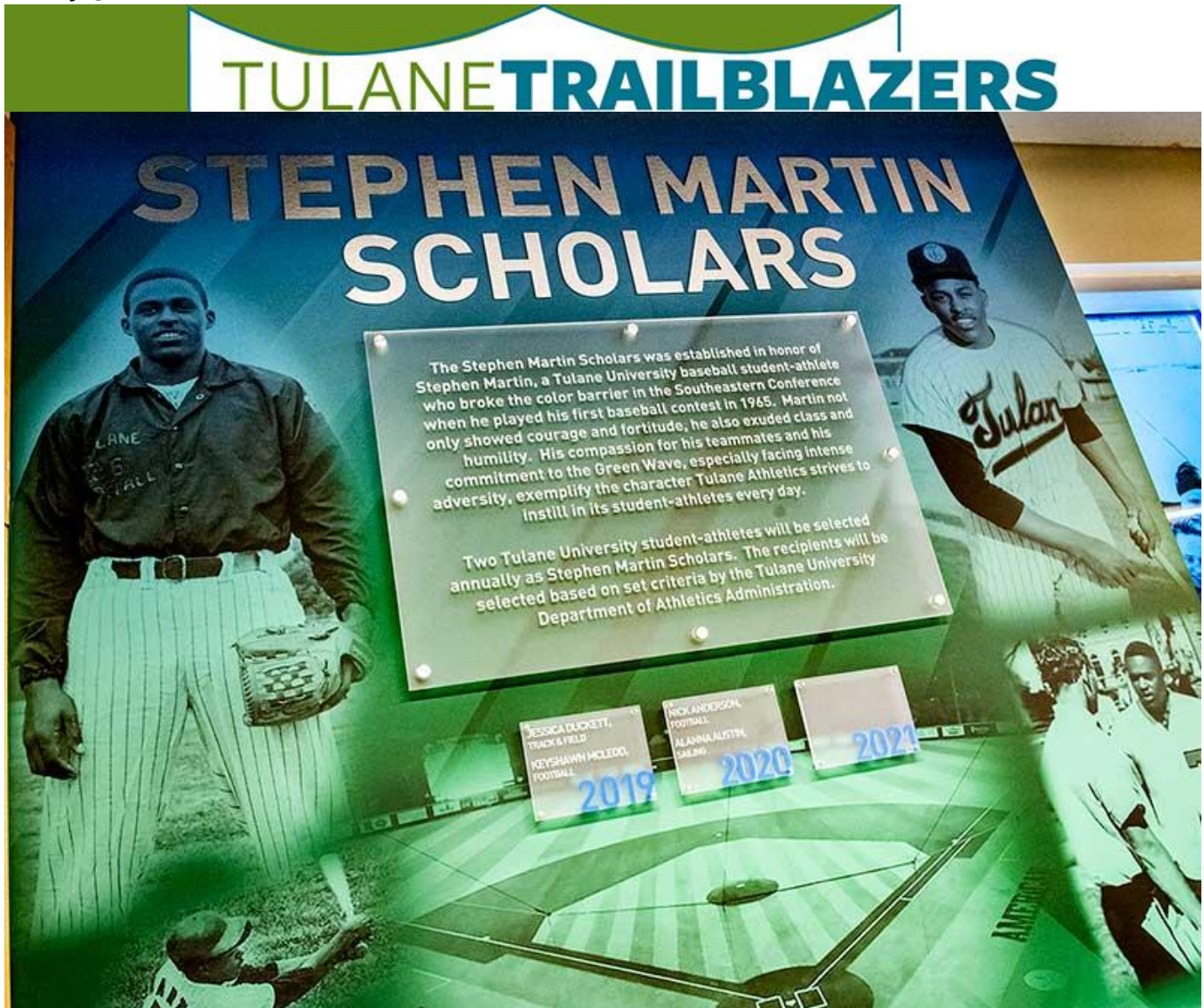


Stephen Martin Scholars program honors achievements of Tulane alumnus

March 30, 2021 10:45 AM Tulane Today staff
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The Stephen Martin Scholars honor wall located in Yulman Stadium recalls the achievements of Tulane alumnus Stephen Martin as well as those students who uphold his legacy. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Fifty-six years ago this week, on April 3, 1965, Tulane baseball player Stephen Martin broke the “color barrier” for the Southeastern Conference. Martin became the

first African American to compete in that conference when he took to center field with the Tulane freshman baseball team, in a game against LSU. The next year, Martin became the first African American to compete in a varsity sport for any Southeastern Conference school when the Tulane baseball team played against Spring Hill College in the 1966 season opener. He graduated from Tulane in 1968 and returned to earn a graduate degree in 1973.

Martin established the internal auditing department at Tulane and served as the director of internal auditing from 1991 to 1994.

A cherished figure in Tulane history, Martin died in 2013.

The university honors this Tulane Trailblazer with a recognition program named for him. Tulane student-athletes who receive this honor are known as Stephen Martin Scholars. An installation honoring Martin and bearing the names of the scholars is on view in Yulman Stadium.

The Stephen Martin Scholars excel academically and athletically and display leadership skills and civic participation. The program is in its second year. Scholars for 2019 included [Jessica Duckett](#) and [Keyshawn McLeod](#); in 2020 [Nick Anderson](#) and [Alanna Austin](#) received the honor.

Martin's son, Dr. Stephen Martin Jr., who graduated from Tulane with degrees from the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, recognized the importance of the program.

"The Stephen Martin Scholars have and will continue to make real and powerful differences in their communities and beyond," he said. "These scholars truly reflect Stephen's ideals of continuous learning and lifelong service and exemplify everything that Stephen stood and cared for, including being the best person that you can be in every situation, whether on or off the field."

The installation will be updated every year with the names of the current scholars.

Tulane Trailblazers, which was launched by President Michael Fitts in 2019, celebrates individuals who have made Tulane University a more inclusive and diverse academic community. [Read more about the Trailblazers initiative here.](#)