

SoPA faculty honored for teaching and service

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Tulane School of Professional Advancement faculty members connected during a virtual convocation in March. (Photo provided by SoPA)

The Tulane University School of Professional Advancement (SoPA) hosted its annual Faculty Convocation on Friday, March 26, during which recipients from both 2020 and 2021 were recognized for their outstanding accomplishments in the classroom.

“This convocation is about recognizing the contributions you make to our students and to our school,” said SoPA Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Ilianna Kwaske to the faculty. “In the midst of so many uncertainties, challenges, and changes, you all have persevered in your commitment to our students.”

The 2020 event, typically held in March at Tulane's 1834 Club, was canceled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this year's virtual convocation, both faculty and students tuned in to show support for the recipients.

"This is one of the few great things about hosting virtual events," said Tulane SoPA Dean Suri Duitch before conducting a live interview with 2021 SoPA graduate and Tulane 34 Award Recipient Derick Houston. "Zoom makes it easy to bring in student participation because we don't have to get them to come to the 1834 Club on a Friday night."

Robin Forman, Tulane's senior vice president for academic affairs, also shared remarks.

"It is incredibly inspirational to hear the individual stories of those being honored and the impact they have had on their students and their colleagues," said Forman. "In many ways, this is not just a celebration of the honorees, but also of the mission of the School of Professional Advancement."

During the SoPA faculty Convocation, three different kinds of awards were presented: Emily H. Vokes Faculty Service Award, the John Percy Dyer Award, and the Distinguished Faculty Award.

The Emily H. Vokes Faculty Service Award recognizes lifetime service to the School of Professional Advancement in many avenues, including teaching, advising, administration, advocacy, and leadership. Kay McLennan, senior professor of practice in the SoPA Business & Leadership Studies program, received the 2020 Emily Vokes Faculty Service Award, and Michael Kuczynski, professor of English in the School of Liberal Arts who has taught in SoPA's Master of Liberal Arts program, received the 2021 award.

Two instructors per year receive the John Percy Dyer Award, SoPA's highest teaching award, named after the founding dean of University College, which is now known as the School of Professional Advancement.

2021 John Percy Dyer Award

Derek Boese, Emergency & Securities Studies

Cynthia Traina Donnes, General Legal Studies

2020 John Percy Dyer Award

Beau Boudreaux, Humanities & Social Sciences

Lauren Dunaway, Kinesiology

Selected through student nominations and committee review, the Distinguished Teaching Faculty award recipients included:

Distinguished Faculty 2021

Flint Brent, Business and Leadership Studies

John Carr, Digital Design

Sarah Centorino, Public Relations

Leonte Cordova, Emergency & Securities Studies

Marie Erickson, General Legal Studies

Jamie Tanner, Kinesiology

Frowsa' Booker-Drew, Public Administration

Dave Davis, Humanities & Social Sciences

Jason Lorino, Information Technology

Richard Mihans, Teacher Preparation & Certification

The 2020 Distinguished Teaching Faculty award recipients included:

Distinguished Faculty 2020

Justin Schaffer, Business & Leadership Studies

Becky Rouse, Emergency & Securities Studies

James Nader, General Legal Studies

Darren White, Information Technology

Samantha Barnes, Digital Design

Mike Kuczynski, Humanities & Social Sciences

Shannon Blady, Teacher Preparation and Certification

Suzanne Yuseph, Psychology

Tomas Mulleady, Kinesiology

Read more about the recipients [here](#).