

Tulane University's Dr. Greg Stewart selected for Jimmy Collins Award

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Tulane University's Dr. Greg Stewart has been selected to receive a Jimmy Collins Award from the Greater New Orleans Sports Awards Committee, sponsored by the Allstate Sugar Bowl, for his COVID-19 protocols for college and high school sports teams during the pandemic. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Tulane University's Dr. Greg Stewart has been selected to receive a Jimmy Collins Award from the Greater New Orleans Sports Awards Committee, sponsored by the Allstate Sugar Bowl, for his COVID-19 protocols for college and high school sports teams during the pandemic. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Tulane University's Dr. Greg Stewart, [the W. Kennon McWilliams Professor of Sports Medicine in Orthopaedics](#), a crucial authority in keeping sports on track throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, has been selected to receive a Jimmy Collins Award from the Greater New Orleans Sports Awards Committee, sponsored by the Allstate Sugar Bowl.

While there are many different categories of awards presented by the Greater New Orleans Sports Awards Committee, in some years, the Committee finds that people are deserving of recognition who do not necessarily fit into one specific category. For that reason, the Committee presents the Jimmy Collins Awards to outstanding individuals and organizations.

Collins was a longtime New Orleans sportswriter credited with creating the Greater New Orleans Sports Awards and forming the awards committee in 1958.

The year 2020 will be remembered worldwide for COVID-19, especially for the events that were lost and/or canceled due to the global pandemic. However, against the odds, many events did occur in 2020, including the Tulane football season, LHSA sports events and the annual New Orleans Bowl and Allstate Sugar Bowl.

These events were essential to the region both for financial and emotional reasons. Stewart served as a key behind-the-scenes figure who ensured that these games could proceed as planned. His expertise in developing safe and effective protocols allowed a major part of the New Orleans sports scene to continue and were the reason the Sports Award Committee chose him for Jimmy Collins Award.

Stewart has long been a national leader in the field of sports medicine. However, in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic gripping the world, his role became even more crucial for local sports groups. Stewart, who quickly established protocols for Tulane to continue to host games, was also selected to serve as the chairman for the American Athletic Conference's COVID-19 Medical Advisory Group.

With Stewart's protocols in place, Tulane was one of just 15 Football Bowl Subdivision teams to play 12 or more games in 2020 (no games were canceled, and team activities were never paused during the season).

"It was incredibly challenging," Stewart said. "It changed every day. We worked with the information we had and did what made the most sense at the time. But every day, new information became available, so we used that information to adjust and improve on a daily basis."

As he also serves as the event doctor for the Allstate Sugar Bowl on an annual basis, the Bowl's CEO Jeff Hundley quickly enlisted Stewart to develop the COVID-19 game-plan for the Sugar Bowl – a pivotal year as it was also a College Football Playoff Semifinal game.

“We have a tremendous asset right here locally with Dr. Stewart,” Hundley said. “He is one of the best in the world as far as sports medicine, and this year, with him overseeing the Sugar Bowl's COVID-19 plan, we gained instant credibility with the College Football Playoff and participating teams as his reputation ensured top-of-the-line standards for safety during the week of the game. Most importantly, the Sugar Bowl did not have any COVID-19-related issues for the week of the game.”

“It was incredibly rewarding every time we successfully held an event,” Stewart said. “I always tell people that in my job, you don't want to see me, you don't want to know I'm there. If nobody is aware of my presence, then I've done a heckuva job. With the worldwide challenges of COVID-19, I guess it was harder for me to stay completely behind the scenes. But it is an honor to be recognized for the work our entire team did under very difficult circumstances.”

Stewart is the co-director and co-founder of the [Center for Sport](#). He currently spends most of his time working with former professional athletes. As medical director of the [Professional Athlete Care Team](#) at Tulane University, he leads the NFL Benefits Neurological Care Program, NFL Player Care Foundation Healthy Body and Mind Screening Program and the Trust (powered by the NFLPA) Brain and Body program. His newest project is leading the [Tulane University Center for Brain Health](#), specializing in the care of military veterans of any discharge status.

He has served as Tulane's Team Physician since 1987 and was inducted into the Tulane Athletics Hall of Fame in 2019. He is also the director of the Tulane Athletics Sports Medicine Program and the sports concussion management program. In addition, Stewart has been nationally recognized as an expert in the non-operative treatment of musculoskeletal disorders in adults. He also specializes in disability prevention, rehabilitative medicine, sports medicine and has a particular interest in sports concussions.

“It's exciting to be recognized by the New Orleans Sports Awards Committee,” Stewart said. “I came to this city in 1986, and it turned out that New Orleans is the right place for me. This is where I'm supposed to be.”

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- Dr. Greg Stewart