

Aspiring physician and teacher hopes to make a difference in the community

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Before applying to medical school, Wilfred Wright plans to work for Teach for America in New Orleans. (Photo by Kacie Fayard)

When Wilfred Wright was accepted into the College Track program as a student at L. B. Landry College and Career Preparatory High School in New Orleans, he knew it could open doors.

The national college prep program for promising students from underserved communities provides a pathway toward college graduation, and as far as Wright was concerned, this was his ticket to a life he never imagined possible.

In the spring of his junior year, he joined other College Track Scholars on a tour of colleges throughout the southeast, and from the moment he set foot on Tulane's uptown campus, his decision was clear.

"Tulane was my first choice," said Wright, a first-generation college student who will graduate Saturday, May 18, with a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology. "It was close to home, but it also emphasized its involvement in the community. I wanted to get involved in that way."

Wright, an aspiring physician, has done just that, and his resume attests to his commitment to both Tulane and his beloved hometown. A sampling of his many leadership roles includes serving as president of the Black Student Union, as a service-learning assistant leader with the Center for Public Service and as an ambassador with the Office for Gender and Sexual Diversity.

As president of the Black Student Union, Wright has highlighted the importance of creating an open, inclusive space for current and prospective Black students on campus. During Black History Month, he helped create programming that connected Black students with the greater New Orleans Black community. For one of the events, they brought in caterers, vendors and speakers, and featured New Orleans bounce musician Big Freedia.

His focus on advancing equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives at Tulane hasn't gone unnoticed. Earlier this year, he was recognized with The Shooting Star — Student EDI Leadership Award at the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Awards Ceremony. The award recognizes a student, resident, fellow or trainee leader who is a "demonstrated champion of equity, diversity and inclusion leadership through fostering an inclusive and equitable campus community."

Eventually, Wright plans to apply to medical school to become an obstetrician/gynecologist. He said he is motivated to enter that field because of the high maternal mortality rate among marginalized women. Until then, he plans to take a gap year, or two, to work for Teach for America in New Orleans.

"I'm passionate about making a difference in the New Orleans school system," he said. "I want to ensure that my students know they are worthy. I want to be a light to these students when they enter the classroom. I want them to know that they are capable of doing anything as long as they put their mind to it."

"I made a lot of connections, and I've made a lot of great memories. It's an experience I needed and definitely would have missed if I had not come to Tulane."
Tulane senior Wilfred Wright