

## Tulane students power their futures at energy forum

September 17, 2025 9:00 AM Barri Bronston  
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Students volunteered at the Future of Energy Forum, in addition to pursuing networking opportunities with industry leaders from across the energy sector. (Photo by Kenny Lass)

For some Tulane University students, the Future of Energy Forum was more than a conference — it was a gateway to the future. From the moment they arrived at the Lavin-Bernick Center for University Life students immersed themselves in the action, connecting with leaders from across the energy sector and exploring their own futures.

“This was our week,” said Nathan DeSilva, a graduate student in the Master of Management in Energy (MME) program at the A. B. Freeman School of Business. From sessions on policy and renewable energy to finance and energy innovation, DeSilva said the forum was a can’t-miss event for those hoping to land careers in the energy field.

Tucker Witmer, a student in the MME program and graduate president of the Tulane Energy Club, agreed.

“It’s been on my radar ever since I enrolled,” he said.

Volunteers, including Samantha Oblon, the undergraduate president of the Tulane Energy Club, took on various roles at the three-day forum, allowing students to meet CEOs, policymakers and innovators whose work is shaping the global energy landscape.

“Energy demand is rapidly increasing,” said Oblon, a junior studying management, accounting and energy at Freeman. “This is a great space for students to learn from professionals on how we can solve these issues.”

Throughout the conference, students attended panel discussions where industry experts shared insights on new technologies, sustainable infrastructure and emerging career paths.

Representatives from leading companies emphasized the need for the next generation of talent, sparking conversations about internships, mentorships and job opportunities.

“I used the forum as an opportunity to network, to put faces to the names that I’m familiar with,” said Juwon Ishola, who is working toward an MBA in business analytics and energy at Freeman.

The volunteers also joined other students who attended “Careers in Energy: Networking Hour,” where students were able to have one-on-one conversations with professionals about job opportunities.

“You learn how intricate the industry is as a whole from people who are currently working in the industry,” Witmer said.

Camren Monson, an MME student, chatted with professors as well as industry professionals during his volunteer shifts. “I was able to converse with them on everything from renewable energy to energy transition,” he said.

Monson said he learned about Freeman’s MME program when he attended the forum in 2024: “The forum last year is how I fell in love with this school.”

Earlier this month, a \$10 million gift from longtime Tulane supporters David and Marion Mussafer established the David and Marion Mussafer Internship Initiative, which aims to ensure every undergraduate student across all disciplines, including business, has access to paid internships, mentorships and real-world career experiences as part of their education. Like the energy forum itself, the initiative is built on Tulane’s interdisciplinary focus.



The Exchange, a dedicated showcase space at the Future of Energy Forum, gave students a chance to connect with industry professionals and discover cutting-edge energy research. (Photo by Kenny Lass)