

Tulane senior recognized for civic engagement and education advocacy

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Tulane senior Morgan Bennett was named a Newman Civic Fellow by Campus Compact, a national nonprofit that honors student leaders who are dedicated to creating positive social change on their campuses and in their communities. (Photo by Kenny Lass)

Tulane University senior Morgan Bennett remembers the joy she felt joining one of her parents in a voting booth and pressing the button for a particular candidate or issue. Her parents worked in government, and they wanted their only child, even as a preschooler, to learn the importance of civic engagement.

That early exposure to civic life sparked an interest that has only deepened over time, and Tulane has been the beneficiary.

Recently, Bennett was named a Newman Civic Fellow by Campus Compact, a national nonprofit that honors student leaders who are dedicated to creating positive social change on their campuses and in their communities. She was nominated by Tulane President Michael A. Fitts, who praised her for her “focus on cultivating connections that benefit both Tulane and the broader community.”

As part of the year-long program, Bennett will lead civic engagement workshops, collaborate with other student leaders nationwide and receive mentorship from a local civic leader.

“Civics has always been a part of my life,” said Bennett, a School of Liberal Arts student majoring in political science and social policy practice, as well as minoring in education with the School of Professional Advancement.

“My first introduction to politics was when I was around 4. My aunt ran for office, and I got to work on the campaign. But stepping into a voting booth and pushing that button was mind-blowing,” she said.

Bennett took her passion for civics to Tulane, where over the past four years she has immersed herself in leadership. She is a committee chair for Tulane Undergraduate Assembly, a lead fellow for the Civic Engagement Coalition of the Center for Public Service and a dean’s ambassador for Newcomb-Tulane College. As a research lead with the Center for Engaged Learning & Teaching, she has analyzed education policy, produced a podcast on reform and is completing an honors thesis on how U.S. history curricula shape civic identity.

Before becoming one of Tulane’s student leaders, Bennett was like many first-year students — hopeful and eager to find her place. With the help of Tulane’s Success Coaching program, she adjusted to her new home.

“My success coach really pushed me to try new things,” Bennett said. “She helped me find my footing and my community.”

Since then, she’s led initiatives to boost student organization funding, mentored peers through Career Launch and volunteered across New Orleans, registering voters, tutoring young readers and student teaching at a nearby elementary school.

She even created her own nonprofit, which makes no-sew blankets to distribute to shelters.

Now preparing for graduation, Bennett is applying to graduate programs in Boston and Washington, D.C., and wants to pursue a career in education policy. “I want to make sure every student has a fair chance to succeed.”