

## **Faculty-student Collaboration Is Win-win**

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Students participating in the Tulane Research Experience for Undergraduates in Applied Microeconomics and Program Evaluation are gaining hands-on research experience while working alongside faculty.



From left, Seth Benzell, Eastin Rossell, Mallorie Smith and Jessica Hayes take a break from their summer research projects in applied microeconomics. (Photo by Alicia Duplessis Jasmin)

Offered for the first time this summer, the [research program](#) allows undergraduates studying at local universities the chance to spend 10 weeks during the summer conducting research. Jonathan Pritchett, an associate professor of [economics](#) and program co-director, says that the experience is a winner for both the students and the faculty researchers involved.

“The students are learning research skills and are given the opportunity to write and present their research papers at national conferences,” says Pritchett, who notes that the students are also compensated. “Having these talented students work on our projects also advances our research and helps us contribute to the field.”

Directing the program along with Pritchett is Keith Finlay, assistant professor of economics.

Organized into small groups, students are working on projects ranging from the effects of juvenile crime statutes on youth to the 1830s slave market in New Orleans. Pritchett's team of students spent the summer collecting data on slave sales from the New Orleans Notarial Archives.

“The New Orleans Notarial Archives is the only one of its kind in the United States and is an incredible source of information,” says Pritchett. “Louisiana's civil law called for the sale of slaves to be treated as real estate as opposed to personal property and this required all sales to be notarized.”

The sales records obtained by the students will be analyzed for information relating to the economics of slavery in the city, he says.

The [program](#), which was funded by a \$374,000 award from the National Science Foundation and supported through financial contributions from the Tulane Office of the Provost and the [Murphy Institute](#) at Tulane, welcomed 15 students from Tulane University, the University of Southern California and Xavier University of Louisiana.