

Finding a path to social justice

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When Jill and Avie Glazer endowed a professorship in social entrepreneurship last year, they imagined their gift would support a scholar whose research and teaching distinguish Tulane University as a place that challenges the status quo. Aaron Schneider, the inaugural Jill H. and Avram A. Glazer Professor of Social Entrepreneurship, fits the bill perfectly.



From Brazil to sub-Saharan Africa, Schneider has traveled the world studying how democracy works. An assistant professor of political science who also teaches at the Stone Center for Latin American Studies, Schneider investigates state building and taxation as a means of understanding and comparing how people, goods, capital

and ideas develop in the modern state.

If that sounds a little heady, Schneider points to a map of the world taped to a wall in his office. It is flipped, with South America consuming the spot where North America typically sits. Schneider brings this map to students on the first day of class to show how a different perspective can teach us new things about power, relationships and choice.

That social-justice message is one he hopes to develop as the holder of the Glazer professorship. By learning to turn the world upside down, students can pursue ideas that are as innovative as they are rooted in community contexts, history, justice and understanding.

Schneider is featured in this video produced by Ryan Rivet, the second in a five-part series on the new [social entrepreneurship](#) professors.

"This endowed professorship allows me to bring students and community members into shared projects that define and discover what social entrepreneurship is," says Schneider. "The social justice angle is a core concept in how we ought to operate in communities and engage with partners."

Schneider is part of a team of Tulane faculty, students and staff pioneering efforts to stimulate entrepreneurship and socially-minded enterprises in Louisiana and the Gulf South. As one of five newly appointed social entrepreneurship professors, Schneider's teaching, research and community partnership ideas hold the promise of elevating Tulane's national reputation for civic engagement and public service.

To get started, Schneider and his colleagues will be developing a coordinate major in social entrepreneurship along with a new set of courses and university-community collaborations. The point, he says, is to foster a supportive environment in which students can find their path, make a contribution and learn the tools to turn ideas into solutions.

"We don't want to hold them back but challenge them to be innovative and creative on their own," he says.

Jill H. Glazer graduated from Newcomb College in 1985 and currently serves as a member of the Board of Tulane. Avie A. Glazer is a member of the President's

Council and both Jill and Avie serve on Tulane University's Parents Council. They are the parents of two Tulane students.

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