

Alumni nourish careers of students

April 01, 2013 9:00 AM Fran Simon

fsimon@tulane.edu

The Tulane Office of Alumni Relations has implemented a new program this spring semester offering networking opportunities for students, served up with dinners hosted by alumni. Students get outside the campus bubble for a free meal, while interacting with alumni and other students they may not know.



Students enjoy ample platters of home-cooked food at a Dinner With 12 Tulanians hosted by Tulane Alumni Association board member Arman Sadeghpour and his parents, Dr. Bahram Sadeghpour and Dr. Malektaj Yazdani. (Photo by Tyler Kaufman)

Dinner With 12 Tulanians, a new [Tulane Lifelong Learning](#) program, is natural for New Orleans because “we know how to do food right,” says Ken Tedesco, director of alumni relations, lifecycle programs. Students receive the special invitations based on recommendations from staff members in the student affairs and admission offices and by responses to invitations in *The Tulane Hullabaloo*.

“The student might be a bit homesick, might be having a tough time in school and maybe needs some nourishing,” Tedesco says. “The students receive the message that everyone is doing this for you. Alumni share what they've learned, the mistakes they've made ... it's making a difference in the students' lives.”

Meredith Beers, who graduated from Tulane in 2007 and received an MPH in 2011, is an independent consultant, grad assistant and legal assistant who opened her St. Charles Avenue home to a student group for one of the dinners this spring. Beers is still a student herself ? she is pursuing a PhD in the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

The dinner she hosted “was a great way to meet current students and to hear about all the things going on at Tulane,” Beers says.

“Right now, I'm a grad student and work three jobs, so I don't have a lot of treasure to give. But I can give of my time and talent, and inviting 12 students and several alums, faculty and staff into my home for dinner is a great way to give a little something back to an institution that has given me so much.”

Tulane alumni who are interested in hosting or joining dinners are encouraged to [sign up online](#).

Check out a slide show of a Dinner With 12 Tulanians from hosts David and Gretchen Zalkind by clicking [here](#).