

Osher scholarships put students on track toward degree

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For Danielle Fontenot, the obstacles to a higher education degree seemed endless. A full-time job. A child with special needs. The demands of single parenthood.



Danielle Fontenot is pursuing a degree in the Tulane School of Continuing Studies, made possible through the Osher Reentry Scholars Program. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

But support from the Bernard Osher Foundation gave the Tulane [School of Continuing Studies](#) student the one thing she needed to overcome those obstacles and secure her family's future: a scholarship.

“Not attending college is something that I not only regret, but now a degree is needed in order to receive the salary that will help me secure my child's educational future,” says Fontenot.

Fontenot is one of 12 Tulane recipients of scholarship from the [Osher Reentry Scholars Program](#), which supports hundreds of students across the country as they balance personal commitments with their desire to complete a college education.

For the past two years, Tulane has received a \$50,000 grant from the San Francisco-based foundation to provide scholarships to students like Fontenot who have been out of school at least five years. Recipients must meet specific criteria, including pursuing their first bachelor's degree, being in financial need and exhibiting academic promise.

“These scholarships are a profound affirmation for our students who often overcome significant obstacles in order to return to school,” says Rick Marksbury, dean of the school.

The benefits of an undergraduate education can last a lifetime. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, college graduates earn about 50 percent more than their peers with a high school diploma.

More assistance may be available to Tulane students in the coming years. The university is pursuing an endowment to continue the reentry program in perpetuity. Scholarships are currently available for part- and full-time students. Awards are renewable each semester and the deadline for this fall is Aug. 15. Contact [Celeste Uzee](#) for more information.

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