

Students

July 29, 2013 9:00 AM Fran Simon

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We've heard from two young Tulane University alumni who tell us that their time working with the Tulane Debate Society has led to their career path becoming schoolteachers.



Christian Truman, who earned a B.A. from Tulane in 2012, launched a middle-school debate program at his school in Hazlehurst, Miss., where he was placed as a Teach For America Corps member. "The [Tulane University Debate Society](#) is the primary reason I joined [Teach For America](#)," he says.

Maggie Downes, who received her B.A. in May 2013, wrote to share her excitement looking forward to her first day of school as a teacher with Teach For America in Donaldsonville, La.:

"... Four years ago, I didn't really care about school at all. To be completely honest, I'm not sure I cared about much of anything. I was a straight A student entering a prestigious university on a presidential scholarship, and I had never even thought about why I was there. I was simply going through the motions.

"What happened? The Tulane Debate Society happened. From the second I began coaching at Sophie B. Wright Charter School, now three and a half years ago, I came alive in a way I didn't know was possible. Suddenly, I had purpose. Suddenly, I was

part of something bigger than myself. Those kids ? my Sophie B. Wright debate warriors ? opened my eyes, my mind, my heart. Those kids pulled me out of the shadows, sent me reeling toward the terrifying yet beautiful unknown. Those kids, they made me, meâ?|

“Now, it is time for me to pay it forward. Come August, I will be Miss Downes, Donaldsonville Primary's newest lower elementary teacher. And mark my words, I will work to give my students everything. And just to clarify, 'everything' most definitely includes debate.”

Fran Simon is managing editor of New Wave.