

First-of-its-kind scholarship memorializes social work faculty member

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A trailblazer for African Americans in social work, the late Jeannette Jennings created a legacy of breaking barriers and advocating for the disenfranchised. Now, a new scholarship spearheaded by Roger and Carol Nooe will honor Jennings' legacy and help the Tulane University [School of Social Work](#) further achieve its goal of diversity.



Through the efforts of Roger and Carol Nooe, a gift from the Delta Foundation has endowed a scholarship in social work. (Photo by Joseph Halm)

The endowed scholarship was established by a generous gift from the Delta Foundation through the efforts of the Nooes. Recipients will be selected based on need, with preference given to students from underrepresented groups at Tulane.

"The Delta Foundation has always been about creating opportunity for people who were denied," says Roger Nooe, who received a master of social work degree in 1966 and a doctorate in social work in 1972 from Tulane. The Nooes sit on the foundation's board.

The Dr. Jeannette Jennings Memorial Scholarship has been in the works for the Nooes since Jennings' death in 2007. "We wanted the gift to be ongoing, that's the beauty of an endowed scholarship," Nooe says.

Roger Nooe met Jennings at Tulane in the late 1960s while she was working on her master's degree in social work. Jennings received an MSW from Tulane in 1969. He later recruited Jennings to join the faculty at the University of Tennesseeâ€”Knoxville, where he worked for 30 years. Jennings was an associate professor in the Tulane School of Social Work from 1998 until her death.

“She always stood out as someone who was very strong and very thoughtful,” Nooe says.

In 1970, Jennings became the first black faculty member at the University of Mississippi and was also the first black, female social worker at the Mississippi Department of Public Welfare.

At Tulane, Jennings' research involved poverty and gerontology. A beloved mentor, she taught social work students the history of the profession and demonstrated how to do meaningful work in the community, says Marva Lewis, associate professor at the School of Social Work.

“The scholarship will support students who, like Jennings, have an interest in helping the larger society achieve social justice,” says Lewis.

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