

Alumni scholarship supports Panamanian law student

May 08, 2014 8:45 AM Erika Herran
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After “life-changing” experiences and a master's degree in law and development, Hugo Wood plans to return to Panama to build his career as an attorney and advocate for education. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Arriving from Panama last summer to study at Tulane University, Hugo Wood says New Orleans felt like home from day one.

“People from the Big Easy have a passion for life that is contagious,” says Wood, who describes New Orleans culture as similar to that of Latin America.

Strong ties between Tulane and Panama, including a partnership with the Panamanian Universidad Catolica Santa MarÃa la Antigua, have prompted an impressive network of Panamanian alumni.

Wood is the first recipient of the Tulane Alumni Association of Panama Scholarship and will earn a master of laws degree in [law and development](#) on May 17. The new

law program works with the [Payson Center for International Development](#) to focus on interdisciplinary practices that improve quality of life in the developing world.

“I am so thankful to the Tulane Alumni Association of Panama for giving me this opportunity,” says Wood, who would not have been able to afford Tulane without the full-tuition scholarship.

No stranger to the university, Wood's grandfather, Ruben Nuñez, graduated from Tulane in 1940 with a master's degree in engineering.

“Being a part of the Green Wave family has been life-changing and has given me experiences that I will never forget,” Wood says.

Giving his family even more reason to be proud, Wood was recognized as Panama's ambassador to the 2013 One Young World Summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa, and honored as an Outstanding Young Person by Junior Chamber International.

At Tulane, he is president of the student organization Graduate Lawyers at Tulane and he teaches a “survival” Spanish course to business and law students.

Committed to making a difference, Wood plans to return to Panama to build his career as an attorney and advocate for education.

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