

## **Devon Walker returns with a new role: mentor**

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Former Green Wave football player Devon Walker is back in classes at Tulane University as he pursues a master's degree in neuroscience. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Devon Walker, former Green Wave safety and football team captain, has returned to Tulane University this fall to pursue a master's degree in neuroscience and mentor student-athletes during their collegiate careers.

Throughout the entirety of his Tulane career, Walker has exemplified how one's heart, courage and determination can extend far beyond the gridiron.

After experiencing a spinal injury during the second game of his senior year — one that ended his football career and left him paralyzed from the neck down — Walker

fearlessly returned to Tulane in 2013 to complete his degree in cell and molecular biology.

“I was a guy who really never quit. My time as an athlete, including my injury, gave me the will to keep fighting. I think it takes a certain character to turn a negative situation into a positive one,” says Walker.

Walker's fighting spirit motivated him to take his valuable experiences and share them with first-year athletes. This fall, while teaching them how to balance their classes with rigorous athletic schedules, Walker explains how “I'm really trying to be that role figure that tells them what to do, what not to do and how to transition. When you first get here, you never really get into a rhythm with everything outside of Tulane, and I'm happy to be someone that guides them.”

While his daily fulfillment comes from helping others, his future goals in life are nothing short of selfless. Walker hopes to pursue a career in motivational speaking to communicate his emotional experiences with the world.

“I really want to help people who are disabled figure out their new road in life and what makes them happy.”

Walker is working with a nonprofit organization to establish a recreational center in New Orleans for people with disabilities, allowing them to engage in activities and find happiness in their own lives outside of their injuries.

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