

Tulane Graduate, EPA Administrator Named Keynote Commencement Speaker

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Lisa Jackson, the New Orleans native whose life journey has taken her from the Ninth Ward to the White House, will deliver the keynote address at Tulane University's Commencement 2012, which will take place at 9 a.m., May 19, in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome.

Newsweek named Jackson, who was appointed administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency by President Barack Obama, one of the "Most Important People in 2010." TIME magazine featured her on its list of the "100 Most Influential People in the World" and she was one of Essence magazine's "40 Women Who Have Influenced the World."

Jackson graduated first in her class at St. Mary's Dominican High School in New Orleans. She was also the top student in her class when she graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering from Tulane. She went on to earn a master of science degree in chemical engineering from Princeton University before joining the EPA as a staff-level scientist in 1987.

"Lisa learned about public service from her father, a New Orleans mailman. She learned about the consequences of environmental degradation from Hurricane Katrina, which destroyed her childhood home. She is using her New Orleans experiences to make a lasting difference on the world stage. That is a great message for our graduates to hear," Tulane President Scott Cowen said.

Jackson's talk will not be the only part of Tulane's commencement with a distinct New Orleans flavor. Other highlights will include a full academic procession led by gonfalon-bearing graduates; herald trumpets; performances by Dr. Michael White's Original Liberty Jazz Band and singer Wanda Rouzan; confetti cannon blasts; a traditional New Orleans second-line parade and more. For more information on Tulane's Commencement 2012, visit: <http://tulane.edu/grads/>.