

**Project Title: Phyllis M. Taylor Center for Social Innovation and Design Thinking**

**Introduction**

Tulane University founded the Phyllis M. Taylor Center for Social Innovation and Design Thinking in 2014 to direct the University's social innovation initiatives. Taylor dissolves boundaries and propels Tulane community members to create innovative, ethical, sustainable, and scalable solutions to pressing challenges in an engaged, empathetic, creative, and collaborative manner. Taylor includes a wide range of academic, co-curricular, and research opportunities, student-led activities, and community partnerships that has created large-scale transformational change by helping students across the university identify and create their "changemaking" path as active citizens in New Orleans and around the world. We are dedicated to nurturing a generation of socially conscious individuals who have the framework and skill set to tackle the world's most pressing challenges.

*NOTE: Tulane launched The Phyllis M. Taylor Center for Social Innovation and Design Thinking in 2015, but our programming has been running since 2009 and our minor has been running since 2012.*

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**Academics – SISE Minor**

Tulane was one of the first major universities to establish a Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship (SISE) minor, which has evolved into a cross-disciplinary initiative that catalyzes transformative change at the nexus of innovation, social entrepreneurship, and social impact. The current curriculum focuses on the field of social innovation, socially conscious business models, human-centered

design, and leadership for collective impact. Ten endowed Professors of Social Entrepreneurship support the minor with truly interdisciplinary perspectives, bridging the disciplines of biomedical engineering, English, communications, theatre and dance, ecology and evolutionary biology, education, international development, public health, law, and social work.

The professorships generate new knowledge of social innovation within their disciplines and fields of study, and share it with Taylor and a larger community through courses, guest lectures, field projects, symposia, and writing—infusing a spirit of social innovation into campus departments, and out into the local and global community through substantial community-engaged and applied research. The SE Professors form the academic core of social innovation scholarship at Tulane, and help deliver—along with other instructors, guest speakers, visiting scholars and community partnerships—the SISE undergraduate minor. These faculty members have created a unique, robust network for the exploration of social innovation within the conventional academic disciplines, as well as a transdisciplinary field.

Outside the classroom, SISE students completed nearly 4,000 hours of service-learning last year alone. This hands-on experience is evolving further with the addition of a semester-long community internship course where **students devote 70-100 hours to a socially innovative community partner, such as Grow Dat Youth Farm, a youth leadership program dedicated to sustainable farming, food justice, and unity. Students also engage with community partners in their coursework and class structure, such as the design thinking class partnership with PlayBuild NOLA, which transforms under-utilized urban spaces into exciting kid-friendly environments for play and learning.** The

feedback we receive consistently indicates that the minor transforms students' academic experience and professional aspirations, inspiring students to become agents of positive change.

**SISE Minor—By the Numbers:**

Declared SISE Minors: 102	SISE Students by School:
Graduates with SISE Minor: 19	• 56% Liberal Arts
Currently enrolled students: 185	• 29% Business
SISE Minors graduating in 2016: 42	• 7% Public Health
Total Service hours completed: 10,560	• 6% Science & Engineering
	• 2% Architecture

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**Student Programming**

Since 2009, our co-curricular programming has provided over 10,000 touch points for people interested in learning about social innovation. Tulane has offered over 250 workshops related to social innovation, supported the creation of over 40 student social ventures, and awarded students over \$200,000 to engage in experiential learning opportunities, prototype or test components of innovative ideas, and launch social ventures.

**The Changemaker Institute (CI)** is a student-run social venture accelerator that transforms students' ideas for social change into ethical, sustainable, scalable solutions and potential careers. Undergraduate and graduate student participants also gain access to start-up funding to develop, test, and launch their ideas for change. The workshop series provides participants with the skills to launch their venture, covering topics such as human-centered design, market research, project management, operational strategy, marketing, social impact assessment, pitching, budgeting and finance, and business

model. One third of early-stage social ventures incubated in the Institute still exist (far surpassing the national start up rate). **CI alumni are bringing sanitary water and waste systems to rural India, developing rapid virus diagnostic tools, and providing business development seminars for non-profit start-ups.**

The Changemaker Institute has supported 54 student social ventures since its inception in 2010. The 2016 cohort of participants includes nine professional graduate and doctoral students and fifteen undergraduate students representing more than 20 areas of study from the Schools of Architecture, Business, Continuing Studies, Law, Liberal Arts, Public Health & Tropical Medicine, Science & Engineering, and Social Work. **Ventures include transitional housing for youth aging out of foster care, a green jobs training program, a holistic community health center, photography art therapy, community garden projects, movement-inspired after school programs, and an empathy-based game for adults.**

Video Profiles on Changemaker Institute Projects

- [Sanitation and Health Rights in India](#) constructs toilet facilities in India to end outdoor defecation while also converting methane gas from human waste into energy to power generators. SHRI'S work has been recognized on the *Forbes* 30 under 30 list of social entrepreneurs in 2016, and they have won numerous awards honoring their impact, including \$100,000 from Y Combinator (2015), \$100,000 from MassChallenge (2015), \$100,000 for the Waslitz Global Citizen Award (2014), and \$80,000 through selection as an Echoing Green Global Fellow (2013).

- [Network Voluntours](#) is a New Orleans-based nonprofit that promotes diverse economic development in New Orleans by connecting visitors and locals with local community organizations to create unique and mutually beneficial experiences. To date, they have organized 13,742 volunteers who have contributed 68,000 volunteer hours to the City of New Orleans, leading to an economic impact of \$1,642,167.25
- [Trash to Treasure](#) (Password = taylor) is a program that works to reduce move-out waste while creating revenue for local charities in New Orleans. T2T aims to create a waste-free move in and move out process by collecting, sorting, selling, and donating usable dorm items while increasing environmental awareness on Tulane campus.
- [Fund 17](#) is a nonprofit micro finance institution working to end income inequality in all 17 wards of New Orleans through microfinance. Fund 17 is a startup venture run completely by students. The full time staff is supplemented by Taylor Student Fellows, and together they hold community workshops and create partnerships with local entrepreneurs.

Since 2009, the **NewDay Speaker Series** has brought 27 leaders in social innovation, social entrepreneurship, and design thinking to campus to share their own experiences, challenges, insights, thoughts, and recommendations to students and the community. The speaker series provides Tulane and the New Orleans community an opportunity to meet and engage with some of the most remarkable

people creating positive social impact today. In addition to public lectures and curated receptions, speakers share their experiences directly with 75-100 students in SISE classes.

In addition to inspiring thousands of students on campus, some speakers inspire large-scale transformational change, such as Deborah Bial, MacArthur genius and the Founder of Posse Foundation, the most comprehensive and renowned college access and youth development program in the US. During her visit, Mrs. Bial shared the requirements for New Orleans to be the next Posse City, and former Tulane President Cowen committed to help meet these needs. Since then, hundreds of New Orleans high school graduates have received full-tuition scholarships to universities across the US, and Tulane became the first university to welcome Posse Scholars from within its home city.

**IGNITE Pre-orientation Program** – many applicants are drawn to Tulane for the renowned public service programming, and Taylor provides a pre-orientation program catering specifically to those students interested in social innovation. IGNITE introduced 60 incoming students to the city of New Orleans through the lens of social change. This four-day pre-orientation experience encourages students to catalyze their leadership potential, learn from local community leaders, and build skills to create positive social change as a college student and choose their own changemaker path. IGNITE provides students with an introduction to some of the social issues they will see in New Orleans during their college experience, and a series of new mindsets, skills, tools, and resources. This year, student dove into service projects in urban agriculture and rebuilding with Our School at Blair Grocery and Youth

Rebuilding New Orleans, supported student social ventures Trash to Treasure, learned about the reality of mass incarceration and exoneration, and completed an arts activism workshop.

We are now in midst of planning the **Changemaker Living Learning Community**, a new on campus housing option for first and second-year students passionate about creating social change.

In 2016, Taylor hosted the **Ashoka U Exchange, the premier conference on social innovation in the world**, with over 750 university faculty, staff, students, and administration from 150 universities in over 25 countries. The Exchange featured over 100 presentations on topics ranging from reimagining K-12 education, fostering inclusive changemaker communities, reimagining the classroom experience, building community partnerships, creating student pathways for innovation, measuring the impact of changemaking, and pedagogy to cultivate changemakers, social entrepreneurs, and social entrepreneurs in and through higher education. This year, we increased the number of site visits 400% to meet participant interest, made possible through our strong community partner relationships. We also provided our Tulane and New Orleans community partners with 16 complimentary tickets and 10 scholarships.

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## **Student Fellowships**

Our yearlong **Taylor Student Fellowship** leadership development program mentors and trains students in social innovation, social entrepreneurship, and design thinking. Student Fellows work for the

entire academic school year as paraprofessionals to help create and implement program development and execution, increase campus and community awareness of the Center, and improve and expand the Center's services and programs. Each year, Taylor recruits a diverse team of responsible, open-minded, and motivated students who want to support students and enhance engagement on campus and in the community. During the fellowship, students explore critical social challenges, gain new skills in the field, receive personal professional development opportunities, and gain insight and work experience in the field.

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## **Awards**

Over the past five years, Taylor has awarded \$234,179 to 121 students through three award programs, providing students crucial support to engage in transformational learning opportunities that are catalytic in their development as changemakers. Please see the supplemental materials section for an array of award funded projects, ranging from nutrition education to social work to digital storytelling.

**The NewDay Challenge: *35 students have been awarded over \$150,000 in seed funding to support social ventures.*** The NewDay Challenge awards up to \$20,000 to students dedicated to finding innovative, sustainable solutions to social challenges. Applicants can be any student-created, student-led organization, program, or venture that benefits the New Orleans community. The seed funding enables student innovators to turn their social impact ideas into reality. We fund student ventures that create

social value, plan to generate revenue (sustainability), and address a social challenge.

**Victor C. Alvarez Spark Innovation Award: 22 students have won \$30,000 to test or prototype socially innovative ideas.** The Spark Award is open to all students that are pursuing a social

venture idea. Students are eligible for up to \$2,500 per academic year to move their ideas forward.

Students must be able to articulate how the funding will help them reach their next growth milestone.

**Changemaker Catalyst Fund: 64 students have won \$54,179 to engage in experiential learning opportunities.** The Changemaker Catalyst Fund is open to all students interested in pursuing

careers related to social innovation, social entrepreneurship, design thinking, and changemaking.

Students are eligible for up to \$1,500 over the course of their studies to support learning in relevant

fields, which can include conference registration, travel and accommodation, project supplies, internship support, or other program fees.

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## **Design Thinking**

Design Thinking (DT) is a human-centered approach to generate social innovations. We draw from the designer's toolkits and mindsets to deliver new, creative, collaborative solutions. Our goal is to teach design thinking mindsets and methods to infuse changemaking work. We start with skill-building lessons and then guide them through a real-world applied challenge using the campus and city of New Orleans as a living laboratory. We identify specific problems in the community and develop potential

solutions through close collaboration in teams in studio, fieldwork, and individual assignments. Students have tackled challenges related to urban placemaking, inclusivity, nutrition, race, and safety. Through engagement in this process, we build core competencies: creative and visual thinking skills, empathy, and the ability to work collaboratively.

Taylor's design thinking efforts extend beyond our students. This year, we held a series of eight two-hour free "public crash courses" in human-centered design open to anyone in the campus and community, which reached 160 people ranging from artists to administrators, biomedical engineers to political scientists, medical residents to life coaches, native New Orleans social entrepreneurs to Finnish post-doctoral scholars. Twice a year, we also offer a 48 hour weekend "design thinking for social impact boot camp", addressing real-life challenges with community partners. Academic advising, service learning, alumni relations and other staff have received specific design thinking skills training to cultivate a campus ecosystem to promote creative changemaking.

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## **Conclusion**

The Phyllis M. Taylor Center for Social Innovation and Design Thinking is nurturing a generation of socially conscious individuals who have the framework and skill set to tackle the world's most pressing challenges.

**Supplementary Materials**

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## **Tulane University and Grow Dat Youth Farm Service-Learning Semester Structure**

### **Background on service-learning at Tulane**

Tulane operates on a 15-week semester. The service-learning requirement for all Tulane undergraduates seeking a bachelor's degree involves completing two-tiers of service learning. To satisfy the first tier, students are required to complete a minimum of 20 hours. Courses across Tulane are offered for students to sign up for and concurrently complete their service learning.

In the Introduction to Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship course (SISE 2010), students agree to complete 20 hours of service-learning while taking the course. The course meets every Tuesday and Thursday during the semester for 75 minutes. In order to pass and receive full credit for the academic portion of the class, students must complete all of the service-learning requirements.

### **Background on Grow Dat Youth Farm's program calendar**

Grow Dat Youth Farm's mission is to nurture a diverse group of young leaders through the meaningful work of growing food. Grow Dat hires young people from high schools and high school equivalent programs in New Orleans to complete a 5-month leadership training program on the farm. This Youth Leadership Program begins in late January and concludes in mid-June. To conduct the leadership training, Grow Dat utilizes previous graduates of the leadership program as Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders. To advance the capacities and skills of Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders, Grow Dat holds an Advanced Leadership Program each fall beginning in September spanning through October.

### **Structure of the service-learning partnership at Grow Dat**

In delivering the Advanced Leadership Program in the fall, Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders benefit from working with real people to improve their facilitation skills and become better equipped to deliver the curriculum that Grow Dat utilizes in its core Youth Leadership Program in the spring. Tulane students act as participants in field work and workshop, which helps Grow Dat Youth Leaders hone these skills. During the semester, Tulane students complete 20 hours of service on Saturdays in September and October. Typically, Tulane students are on the farm five Saturdays for four hours per day, where they engage in various activities.

Before the first Saturday of service, Tulane students attend an orientation on the farm. Here, they meet the Grow Dat alumni who are training to become Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders. Tulane students are split up into Crews and assigned a Crew Leader and Assistant Crew Leader, who they work with each day of service on the farm. On these Saturdays, Tulane students are led by their Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders in different tasks. The mornings begin with a fun energizer, where Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders practice facilitating games and activities linked to a particular skill or area for growth. For example, some of these games encourage people to understand the importance of eye contact and communication, while some are more about getting people to open up or get energized. The remainder of the morning typically involves farming and related tasks such as weeding, removing debris from the soil, planting, harvesting, and other agricultural activities, where Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders practice motivating their team and providing instruction and quality control in the fields. The remainder of the day is spent focused on building a particular skill related to the core leadership curriculum. Some activities include:

- Goal setting sessions where Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders work with Tulane students to set goals for themselves across the course and service learning,
- "Real Talk," a specific model of communication that Grow Dat utilizes to deliver feedback to youth based on their performance at work,
- Lessons on social issues, food justice, health, nutrition, or other related areas of the curriculum,
- A food access simulation, where Tulane students split into families with specific incomes and dietary needs. Grow Dat youth run small shops, markets, and public transport to simulate what it is like for different families to try to access fresh, healthy food in the community.

### **Structure of service learning partnership in the classroom**

To reinforce the mission of Grow Dat and offer students a live case study to learn from, two staff members lead five of the classes over the course of the semester at Tulane. These classes focus on linking the social innovation curriculum to the VISIONS framework focused on diversity, inclusion, multiculturalism, and understanding systems of oppression. The Grow Dat staff works with Tulane faculty to create lesson plans, identify readings, and specify learning outcomes for the course.

The participation of Grow Dat staff in the classroom is vital to understanding these areas of the curriculum, while also offering students an opportunity to dig deeper on issues related to Grow Dat's impact in the community, what it is like to run and operate a non-profit, and other contextual factors

linked to social innovation in New Orleans. Grow Dat staff are paid as guest speakers and co-instructors in the course.

During the semester, students submit three written reflections based on their experiences. Prompts for the reflections connect to the in-class content related to social innovation and social entrepreneurship and ask students to reflect on what they are seeing and learning during their time on the farm. In addition to written reflections, the professors leading the course allow for discussion during class time.



*"The most surprising thing about this experience has been how much I've grown to love the work we do and enjoy the time we spend on the farm...this service-learning was **so much more than a mandatory component of our class – the work we did was meaningful and invaluable to the organization of Grow Dat as a whole** and to us as students learning about the mechanisms and operations laid down in order to achieve its social mission."*

**Changemaker Institute Alumni Updates**



**Anoop Jain, SHRI (Formerly Humanure Power; CI '13)**

Sanitation and Health Rights in India (SHRI) will start construction on their third toilet facility, ensuring access to toilets and safe drinking water for 1,000 "Untouchables," to be run by a local women's collective. Team members in the US were selected for the Y Combinator, and Anoop Jain was just named Forbes' 30 under 30 Social Entrepreneurs.



**Jason Ryans & Ashwin Sivakumar, MicroPAD (CI '15)**

MicroPAD Solutions was a finalist in the Rice University and John Hopkins University Business Model Competitions in Spring 2015, and the team won funding through the Novel Tech Challenge at Tulane. Co-founders are continuing product development of a micro-fluidics-based multi-virus rapid diagnostic tool.



**Haley Burns, Fund 17 (CI '13)**

This year, Fund 17 matched six entrepreneurs with student fellows to transform their "hustles" into sustainable livelihoods. Students spend 3-6 months developing custom action plans, including social media, budgets and accounting, and building credit. Fund 17 is currently a PitchNOLA Finalist. Haley Burns has recently been featured on the "So, What Do You Do?" podcast, WWLTV local news, and Peter Ricchiuti's "Out to Lunch" on WWNO.



**Anne Bevis, Margot Habets, & Tracy Godbe, Trash to Treasure (CI '14)**

In its first year, Trash to Treasure collected 25,000 pounds of gently used, unwanted residence hall items and diverted that potential waste from landfills. Their first Back-to-School Sale grossed \$12,500, making a sizeable profit in its first year of operation. The program has since grown, and will run its third collection and sale in 2016. All profits are donated to local non-profit organizations or awarded as seed funding to fellow student ventures.



**Building Change Together, Roots of Renewal (CI '13)**

Lilith Winkler-Schor, Program Director for Roots of Renewal

"It's like y'all came up out of nowhere—I think about how crazy it is every night that you found me," Andre\* said as we sat on the cement steps in front of our construction site. Despite how it may have seemed, our venture, Roots of Renewal, hardly came out of nowhere. In fact, it took over two years to turn our idea into a reality. Just like Andre, though, every night I think about how crazy it is that we are finally here, that we bought a house, that we hired our team, and that together, we are learning how to rebuild a home from its bare bones. As I sat there, telling Andre that we were there for him no matter what challenges are facing him, I could not help but think of all the people that had told me the very same thing in the last two years.

Roots of Renewal is more than a work training program for formerly incarcerated young adults. It is a program that aims to provide young men with economic opportunity, skills training, a support network through mentors and peers, as well as wrap-around social services, by building a team of young men who, together, renovate a blighted home in the Central City neighborhood over three months. In many ways, our program holds many of the values of the Taylor Center, which has acted as our own support system, allowing us, as Changemakers, to create the change we want to see in our city alongside our peers who aim to do the same. Just as I have seen our guys laugh and work together, I think about how we would not be where we are if not for the support of the Changemaker Institute and other Tulane ventures—Fund 17, FailUp, Trash to Treasure. Our ventures have all grown up together while we have learned how to be crusaders of change, masters of failure, leaders of perseverance, and helping hands for when, as young people faced with a big world, we do not know what to do. More than once we have had to burst into Fund 17's office (which is conveniently connected to ours) asking what payroll

company they use, or slipping them a name for a potential entrepreneur. Without FailUp's pitch competition, Roots of Renewal would not have won the \$1,000 we needed to get our nonprofit status and thus be able to raise over \$150,000. Trash to Treasure donated \$2,000 after their wildly successful sale this year which covered one of our participants' paychecks for October. Behind these ventures are amazing individuals: Haley Burns, Ethan Levy, Anne Bevis and her team. These individuals serve as the perfect example of what Tulanians should strive to be—people that want to share ideas, provide support and offer inspiration. The social innovators at Tulane know that changing the world and changing ourselves is not a zero sum game. Whether it is simply sharing one another's Facebook posts, telling someone about a good grant opportunity, or sharing with our friends and family about the great work that these other ventures are doing, our ventures are about succeeding together, because we cannot do this work alone.

Andre and I just sat for a moment. I looked at the hardworking and intelligent young man sitting next to me. I told him that he did not have to do this all alone anymore, and even if it felt hard for him to believe, that his fight was our fight. I saw something shift in him, as if the breath he let out was a little bit lighter, a little more hopeful. I cannot imagine what he would think if he were to see the army of people standing behind us, supporting us, as we stand behind him, supporting him. Perhaps then he would see that we are all far from alone.

## Award Recipients

### **NewDay Challenge Award** winners include:

- Alissa Bilfield was awarded \$10,000 for her work with The Cookbook Project (CBP), which empowers youth to be the catalysts for healthier communities through food and cooking education. CPB's extensive hands-on food/health curriculum trains teachers, volunteers and community leaders to become Food Literacy Educators who serve as agents of change in their communities. The Cookbook Project is now a Tulane service-learning partner working with the SISE 2010 class.
- Jocelyn Horner, a Changemaker Institute alum, was awarded \$5,000 to support her startup: Girls Digital Storytelling Camp. Girls Digital Storytelling Camp creates a youth-led, small-scale, intensive digital storytelling program designed to train New Orleans teens to become storytelling facilitators. Approximately a dozen middle and high school students participate in a 6-week summer camp program to explore the methods, philosophy, and art of digital storytelling, and work towards projects that will continue community traditions, history, and solutions to problems. The Girls Digital Storytelling Camp is gearing up for its third summer of programming.

### **Victor C. Alvarez Spark Innovation Award** winners include:

- Lalo Narea was awarded \$1,500 to create and pilot the first Social Work support service at the New Orleans Public Library (his data showed that at any given time, over 40% of patrons at the downtown library identified as homeless). Narea is currently working three mornings a week at the library as a social worker to provide education and housing services to the homeless population.

*"On an individual level the Alvarez Spark award gave me the ability to pilot a program providing services to homeless patrons at the New Orleans Public Library (NOPL) for the first time in history, thereby making them feel more welcomed at the main branch while also connecting them to various services around the city. Perhaps more importantly on a community level, this award granted me my first professional experience in New Orleans with unifying multiple organizations in the shared effort to holistically support homeless library patrons. Bringing NOPL, Tulane University, and the YMCA together to cultivate a sense of community empowerment could not have happened without the Taylor Center's Alvarez Spark Award." -Lalo Narea, Founder, PLACE (Public Library Assistance and Community Empowerment)*

- Ethan Levy used his \$1,000 award to create FailUp, an online platform that offers a space for young entrepreneurs to fail forward and generate better ideas. Today, his venture is known

campus wide, hosting their own competitions, and awarding seed money to students on their platform. This year, Levy was a speaker at New Orleans Entrepreneur Week.

- Rachel Budd and Jessica Tran, Changemaker Institute alumni, were awarded \$2,500 to test their venture ImpACT, offering free ACT test preparation to underserved students in New Orleans.
- Rebecca Solomon was awarded \$1,000 to launch Acrodemics, a movement-based enrichment program with personalized, small-group instruction. Solomon is also a CI graduate and is currently running Acrodemics in a local school and looking to expand programming this year.

**Changemaker Catalyst Fund Award** winners have used funding to:

- Attend conferences such as the AshokaU Exchange, the Harvard Illuminate Conference, Lend for America Summit, SOCAP15 Conference, and Starting Bloc, a dynamic 5 day institute that propels change leaders from high-potential to high-impact.
- Fund unpaid internships, such as an internship with Immigration and Refugee Services in New Orleans and Fund 17 (a microfinance organization created by a Changemaker Institute alum).
- Explore their roles as changemakers abroad, attending a social entrepreneurship program in Ecuador through Emzingo, interning in the UK at Giving What We Can, working with social entrepreneurs in Guatemala, and attending a service-learning program in St. Martin.

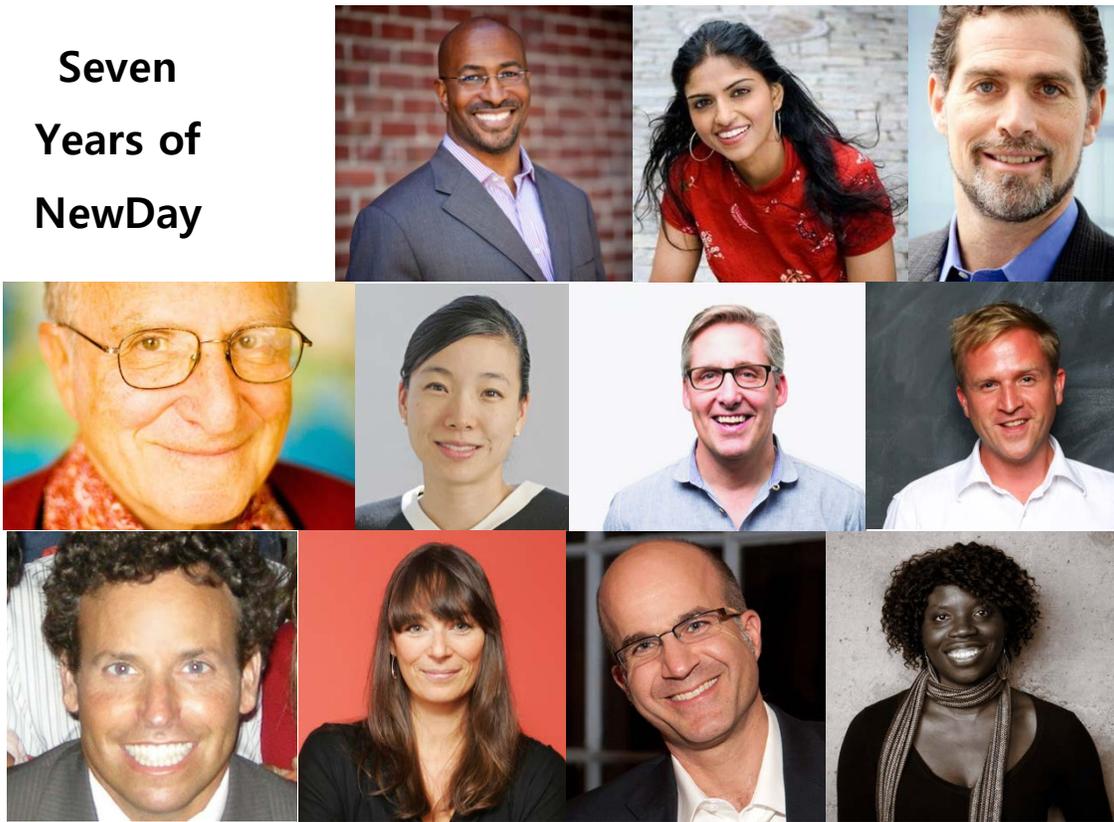
*"I couldn't wait to use what I had learned outside the classroom, so I was extremely excited then to be accepted as a Fellow at Fund 17. With the help of the Changemaker Catalyst Award I was able to travel, with other members of my cohort of Fellows, to Washington DC to attend the annual Lend for America Summit. The Summit allowed student leaders in the microfinance branch of social innovation to gather at Georgetown University in order to connect and hear from top names in the field. I especially enjoyed hearing about Kiva's recent work in the US after having heard founder Matt Flannery speak at Tulane earlier this year about their international effort. Networking with organizations from around the country was very valuable as well, as was hearing how other organizations operate compared to how we do things at Fund 17. The strength of the numerous community ties that Fund 17 has cultivated, for instance, stood out as a unique asset of our organization in comparison to some of the others present." -Haley Burns, Founder, Fund 17*

### **Social Entrepreneurship Professor Highlights**

- **Dr. Lars Gilbertson** received a National Science Foundation grant to establish and direct the Tulane Innovation-Corps Site for a Resurgent New Orleans. The site expects to expand economic development and reinforce the region's burgeoning life sciences industry, and strengthen Tulane's commitment to STEM education, women and underrepresented minorities, global health initiatives, and service to persons with disabilities.
- **Barbara Hayley**, MFA, is Professor and Dance Coordinator for Tulane's Department of Theatre and Dance. In the spring, her SISE class worked with Playworks Louisiana, an organization that values and promotes safe and meaningful 'play' for children at school.
- **Dr. Jordan Karubian** co-taught a SISE study abroad course where Tulane undergraduates used design thinking to develop promotional materials supporting sustainable ecotourism in Ecuador.
- **Dr. Vicki Mayer** utilized resources to launch the NOLA Digital Consortium, which unites humanities projects from regional universities, archives, and nonprofits. Within that group, Dr. Mayer directs MediaNOLA and works closely with New Orleans Historical, two projects aimed at enabling students to engage in community-based research, archival preservation, and outreach.
- **Dr. Rebecca Mark** received the prestigious Tulane Weiss Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. Dr. Mark identifies an existing problem between what Tulane has to offer, such as academics, research, or access to technology, and how we can honor and support local traditional "root" cultures without impacting and changing that culture.
- **Dr. Laura Murphy** has provided hundreds of people with basic design thinking skills for social impact in classrooms, laboratories, non-profits, gardens, and k-12 schools. For a recent project with Tulane's A Studio in the Woods environmental art collaborative, Dr. Murphy navigated the problem of global climate change, hosting a series of transformative conversations with undergraduates, faculty, local citizens, and threatened residents of southern Louisiana wetlands to inspire action.
- Law professor **Dr. Elizabeth Townsend-Gard** launched the Law/Culture/Innovation (LCI) academic lean start up, an interdisciplinary legal and cultural support space for various stage projects. LCI bridges silos by connecting individuals inside and outside of the university who would otherwise be unaware of each other. This year, LCI completed numerous projects (including Parasite Skate Park, Trademark Workshop, Pulse of NOLA Entrepreneurship Panel, and Innovators' Almanac Articles), provided mentorship to the CI, and assisted other interested students and faculty members.
- **Dr. Carol Whelan** directs the Tulane Teacher Preparation and Certification Program, one of a few teacher education programs that is fully adopting the philosophy and practices of social innovation, social emotional learning, and design thinking. It is collaborating with over a dozen partners from different departments on campus and local schools, museums, and educational programs.

**NewDay Speaker Series**

**Seven  
Years of  
NewDay**



Left to right, top to bottom:

- Van Jones, Rebuild the Dream
- Saru Jayaraman, ROC-United
- Jordan Kassalow, VisionSpring
- Paul Polak, Windhorse International
- Jane Wei-Skillern, Berkeley Haas School of Business
- Brett Jenks, Rare
- Matt Flannery, Kiva
- Scott Sherman; Transformative Action Institute
- Deborah Bial, Posse Foundation
- Phil Auerswald, Innovations Journal
- Liz Ogbu, Designer

## Student Reflections

### Taylor Student Fellows:

*"I love studying politics, learning about the world, and have enjoyed my experiences at nonprofit human rights organizations. However, I have grown frustrated by the insincerity of many political systems. The unfortunate truth in our world is that those that conquer the majority all too easily ignore the voice of the disenfranchised. I have seen it in St. Louis, New Orleans, and Cape Town. Through social entrepreneurship, I've realized that I can improve lives by empowering people economically such that they can gain freedom and opportunity in their own day-to-day lives. It's been proven that growing economies directly empowers the recipients of that growth, allowing those recipients greater power to participate in the societies in which they live. I know that I can effectively give back through social business and design in a way that is both real and sustainable. Social entrepreneurship allows me to fight for the issues that I am truly passionate about in a way that is meaningful to me, while also creating real impact for the people I serve."*

- Sofie Kodner, Communication and Marketing Taylor Student Fellow, International Relations Major, International Development Minor

*"As our generation has grown up, we've seen a cynical world filled with cumbersome politics and bureaucracy that is still somehow beautiful, with people striving for connection and clinging to hope. In several of my Taylor programmed classes, I've begun taking serious steps towards developing a hybrid venture that uses funds from corporate and government level disaster mitigation consulting to fund improved warning and information dissemination systems in vulnerable third world countries. As a Taylor Fellow, I've helped to develop an interactive student driven way to bring awareness to a wide range of campus problems that puts those same students in the driver seat towards a solution. We soon will have workshops that work towards translating the multitude of complaints into solutions, bringing parties from all backgrounds to the table to work with unfamiliar partners in innovative ways. I believe this will be a truly valuable step towards empowering the student body, collectively and individually. Through these programs, I've awakened to the notion that I can make a difference. Through all of the programs, courses and challenges that Taylor and the campus on the whole offers, we can all pitch in and we can all make a difference. Through this education, we can learn to expand the scale of our impact to tremendous heights."*

- Derek Bednarski, Programs and Events Student Fellow, Philosophy and International Development Major, Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship Minor

**IGNITE Pre-Orientation Program**

*"The experiences with the New Orleans community I had last summer through the IGNITE program have thus far most greatly impacted my experience here at Tulane. Though I was born in New Orleans, my family relocated to Baton Rouge after Hurricane Katrina. My experience moving back to the city – both new and exciting yet old and familiar– was kick-started with an in-depth look at the people and places here: their culture, community, challenges and victories. We met with Jackie Sumell, a local activist fighting for injustice within the prison system, who explained to us the effect that racism has on unjust incarceration and shared with us her life's work using art to fight for the freedom of the wrongly accused. We met with an ex-convict who had been wrongly accused and Sumell challenged us to take a stand for justice, just as she has. We visited Café Reconcile and saw the power that socially innovative businesses have to change the lives of the dispossessed. We saw the rich culture of the Mardi Gras Indians in the Lower Ninth Ward and the complex implication of the Musicians' Village. Through meeting musicians and artists, ex-convicts and activists, innovators and entrepreneurs, I came to understand both the beauty and the tragedy that co-exist here in a way that I never did as a child. Through hearing the stories of these members of the community – vastly different from each other, yet sharing a home – I became passionate about the both the city and its people and the challenges they face. Furthermore, the week helped me understand the changes the city has undergone in the past 10 years, particularly in regards to entrepreneurial and innovative movements. I came to realize just how important it is to become involved in the community and to work for change where I can and to continue to connect with the people of New Orleans, just as we did during the week of Ignite."*

-Allison Woolverton, IGNITE participant who is now applying to be a student leader for the IGNITE program. Allison is a SISE minor, and a Changemaker Institute participant, developing her social venture "Music for the Mind," an after school program aimed at empowering 6th grade students to learn both music and innovation skills by building and playing self-made instruments.

**“Personal Story – How Taylor & Design Thinking Shaped my Changemaking Pathway”**

By Maille Faughnan – Doctoral student at the Payson Graduate Program in Global Development, Adjunct Lecturer & Design Thinking Outreach Team member at the Taylor Center

Through my affiliation with Taylor, I have gotten amazing opportunities. I first joined the Design Thinking class in spring of 2013 as an unofficial teaching assistant. I was a doctoral student in International Development at the university, preparing to take my exams. I didn't know exactly where I wanted to focus. My advisor was teaching the DT class and thought I would resonate with the class's community project that semester, working with a neighborhood development corporation working to activate a temporary urban space through community involvement (it turned into a marketplace to showcase local vendors). But what really resonated was the DT methodology – the creative, open-ended, user-focused and systems-thinking approach to problem-solving.

I continued my involvement as an official course TA for the next two semesters, exploring diverse challenges like civil rights and black arts storytelling with a local performance organization, and working with an on-campus group to start a student-supported agriculture program. Various members of our network wanted to learn more about design thinking, so I began to lead workshops with campus and community audiences. Unexpectedly, I found a proactive, optimistic way of working that corresponded with my values as a changemaker: unleashing people's creative and collaborative potential; empowering people with tools to support their agency in tackling problems; and developing contextually and culturally meaningful solutions to social challenges. I loved seeing how others received DT and thought about integrating it into their own work.

I was then asked to teach the undergraduate design thinking class for the SISE minor program. I jumped at the opportunity. There weren't many chances to teach in my home department, and I knew how incredible it would be to lead my own class. My DT network grew. I became a lead facilitator for the Fast 48 design thinking bootcamp. I led workshops at Propeller, a local social entrepreneurship incubator, and with a network of civil society leaders through the Center for Public Service's Experiential Learning and Leadership Institute. I got involved with local partners like TrueSchool Studio, a social venture driving grassroots education innovation with practices like design thinking. I got to work for organizations like ThinkImpact and Stanford, developing design thinking-infused curriculum for social innovators through immersive study abroad programs and mobile applications. I joined an evaluation project looking at how DT was being brought into the reproductive health field to generate innovative, fresh ideas, and got to do fieldwork in Zambia to see the project firsthand. I was appointed to a formal,

part-time position in the Taylor Center as a DT instructor and a member of the outreach team. I, along with other Taylor students, administrators and faculty, have communicated design thinking to on-campus partners like the Advising Center, had ongoing, deep collaborations with partners like PlayBuild to co-create solutions for the organization and their constituents.

Meanwhile, I found a partner and research problem for my dissertation. Through my advisor's connections, I was introduced to a community development organization in western Kenya interested in bringing design thinking into their work. I spent two months onsite as a design thinking trainer and coach. I began exploring the question of how the staff was receiving design thinking, what they were able to do with it, and how it could help them and the organization meet the challenges of rural, community development work. I developed my dissertation proposal around this question and case study. And I got an invaluable experience sharing and applying design thinking in cross-cultural settings and integrating it in a real, established development organization.

As I prepare to return to Kenya to collect data with my partner, I'm reflecting on how the Taylor Center, and my unanticipated journey with design thinking, has given me these opportunities. It provided me with extra resources to support my graduate studies, and connections to incredible, inspiring and diverse networks. It helped me become the kind of changemaker I wanted to be -- the "new scholar" who explores the diffusion of cutting-edge practices, engages with real partners and problems, and shares knowledge and ideas with fellow changemakers from students to professionals, from New Orleans to Kenya.