

NEWCOMB

NEWS FOR ALUMS, STUDENTS, PARTNERS, AND PARENTS | FALL 2024



The Newcomb Network

From the DIRECTOR



“Our alumnae are always cognizant of helping others because of the connections they forged at Newcomb.”

Dear Friends,

I am honored to be writing to you after completing my first year as Executive Director of Newcomb Institute. I am thrilled to report that we are growing in staff size, our work, and the support you provide to make more progress on gender equity issues.

The gifts from alums and Newcomb supporters like you strengthen our programming and impact. This past year, we awarded \$325,000 in grant funding to students, faculty, and community members to support gender equity-focused research and community engagement. Through our Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health and our Feminist Summer Internship programs, we placed close to 100 interns in local and national organizations. We continue to support community participatory action in our local community with our partners to strengthen New Orleans and Louisiana while building the capacities of our students to do this work. More than 130 students served as leaders in Newcomb student organizations this past year, gaining valuable leadership experience, building networks and friendships, and organizing programming across campus and in the community.

Here at Newcomb, we are staunch advocates for the autonomy and agency of all. In the past year, we have released significant research reports and peer review articles and given public talks around the world. Research topics have included reproductive politics and health, population dynamics and demography in Southeast Asia, gender-based violence and discrimination in Louisiana and California, the experiences of exiled Afghan women leaders, the economic costs of intimate partner violence, and the status of women in New Orleans. Most recently, we released the #MeToo 2024 Report, a national study that speaks to the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault despite increased public awareness and legislative action following the #MeToo movement. This critical work follows our 2018 study and indicates that more work is absolutely necessary to support victims.

We are always thinking about how we can do more, and we are so gratified by the Newcomb community's shared commitment. This issue of the magazine centers around the power of networking and how our alumnae are always cognizant of helping others because of the connections they forged at Newcomb. Celia Scott Weatherhead (NC '65) made history in September with the largest gift ever made to Tulane University, naming the School of Public Health the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. Women philanthropists like Celia play a crucial role in driving systemic change and preparing generations of students with the skills and knowledge they need to create a healthier world for all.

Our Newcomb Alumnae Association award recipients also demonstrate remarkable dedication to helping others. These women all have made their marks on their industries, contributed to their communities, and shown overwhelming dedication to their alma mater.

Thank you for being our biggest supporters and part of our “more.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Anita Raj'.

Anita Raj, Ph.D., M.S.

Executive Director, Newcomb Institute of Tulane University

Nancy Reeves Dreux Endowed Chair & Professor, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine

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NEWCOMB is published by Newcomb Institute
of Tulane University.

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NEWCOMB is an annual production of the Newcomb Alumnae
Association and the Newcomb Institute. To print a PDF version,
visit newcomb.tulane.edu.

NEWCOMB is printed using income from interest-bearing endowed
funds at the Newcomb Institute, including the Newcomb Alumnae
Periodical Fund, established through the kindness of Ann Hodge
Macomber (NC '47). Mailing costs are supported by proceeds from the
Mignon Faget Newcomb Jewelry Collection.

The H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College Institute
(Newcomb Institute) continues the legacy of the first
coordinated women's college in the United States. The
Newcomb Institute pioneers groundbreaking academic
research and training aimed at advancing gender
equity. Situated at the heart of Tulane University, we
collaborate with undergraduate students and faculty
from across campus, as well as with local and global
community partners and government entities to drive
meaningful impact.



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From right to left, Celia Scott Weatherhead (NC '65), Dean Thomas A. LaVeist, Catherine Edwards (NC '72), & President Michael A. Fitts at the naming of the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine

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In this special issue of NEWCOMB, we celebrate the power of the Newcomb network and the transformative connections forged between our alums, students, faculty, & staff.

On the cover from left to right: Kaye Courington (NC '80, G *82, L *87), Sabrina Johnson (NC '88), Celia Scott Weatherhead (NC '65), Alandas Dobbins (NC '89), Maggie Herman (PHTM '15), Andi Schippert Richardson (NC '99), & Dr. Anita Raj. Design by Rebecca O'Malley Gipson (PA '21).

The abbreviations below are used throughout

* - Master's Degree	PA - Tulane School of Professional Advancement	NT - Newcomb-Tulane	G - Graduate
' - Bachelor's Degree	PHTM - Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine	SE - Tulane School of Science and Engineering	M - Tulane School of Medicine
LA - Tulane School of Liberal Arts	B - The Freeman School of Business at Tulane University	L - Tulane School of Law	E - Engineering
	NC - Newcomb College	SW - Tulane School of Social Work	N - Newcomb

From the NAA PRESIDENT



A Message from the Newcomb Alumnae Association President

My Dear Fellow Alumnae,

I have been honored to serve as your President of the Newcomb Alumnae Association (NAA), and I am overwhelmed by gratitude toward all of you who supported Newcomb this year. From serving on your reunion committees to raising over \$45,000 during Give Green, your dedication to Newcomb is making an impact.

Newcomb has weathered several transitions since its founding, but you continue to

keep the name of our beloved alma mater alive by attending our programs, supporting Newcomb Institute, and increasing Newcomb's visibility. As leaders, changemakers, and conduits, your life experiences and passions are invaluable to the Newcomb Network, the living, breathing connective force that is our alma mater.

Your feedback in last year's alumnae survey has guided our work to develop meaningful programs. This year, we co-hosted a powerful webinar about women's leadership with former Wellesley president, Diana Chapman Walsh, and the Newcomb Scholars. Tulane's inaugural Black Alumni Weekend was a success, including the much-anticipated BANTU Ball featuring Queen Tahj. Our feisty, feminist spring book club featured Drew Gilpin Faust, an author highlighted at the New Orleans Book Festival. We celebrated another amazing Under the Oaks by honoring the class of 1974 and welcoming an incredible new class of alums into the association. We also kicked off our Newcomb roadshow in

Washington, D.C., at a spirited reception introducing our Newcomb Institute Executive Director, Anita Raj, to alums, parents, and Newcomb supporters. Our exciting virtual, third annual Newcomb Networking Night was on October 30th.

Please check the email newsletter for future events, including our upcoming book clubs and more receptions with Dr. Raj around the country.

I hope to celebrate in person with you during one of our many Wave Weekend Newcomb events, scheduled for November 7-10. We are now presenting our annual awards, including the first Live Oak Award, that weekend. Toast the award winners with us at our 2024 NAA Awards Champagne Reception on Friday, November 8th!

To further strengthen connections between students and alumnae of all ages, careers, and backgrounds, we are asking that alums please connect with the NAA and Newcomb Institute on LinkedIn. In Dr. Raj's short tenure, our Newcomb Network

on LinkedIn has already quadrupled to more than 1,000 followers!

Above all, I am thankful for the passion, time, and dedication of our 2024 NAA Board of Directors and Newcomb staff. I am particularly grateful for the strength and flexibility of our Executive Board, President-Elect Maggie Herman (PHTM '15), Immediate-Past President Helene Sheena (NC '87), VP of Alumnae Lauren Lee Pettiette Schewel (NC '09), VP of Students Julia Broussard (LA '10), Treasurer Ashley Smith (LA '10), and Secretary Emily Greenfield (NC '98). Moreover, I could not do this work without the mentorship of Anita Raj and the patience and encouragement of Elyse Harrison, Newcomb Senior Program Manager for Alumnae Relations.

Please know that whatever your involvement in the NAA has been so far, we need you to help shape the next generation of Newcomb!

**With gratitude,
Andi Schippert Richardson
(NC '99)**

*President,
Newcomb Alumnae Association*

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Lauren Wethers (LA '15, LA *16)

Heather Yanak (NC '97)



Elyse Harrison
Senior Program Manager
for Newcomb Alumnae Relations



Lindsey Purcell
Director of Development,
Individual Giving



Photo courtesy of Cheryl Gerber, features from left to right; Mary Jo Schaffer, MD (NC '74), Madi R. Bell (LA '26), Carolyn Kennedy (NC '74), and Alana Miller (NC '74)

A Guide to Engaging with Newcomb: Opportunities for Alumnae

By Elyse Harrison & Lindsey Purcell

As a proud alum of Newcomb College of Tulane University, you are part of a vibrant network dedicated to advancing its critical goals. Here's how you can stay connected and contribute to the ongoing success of Newcomb Institute and its community.

Newcomb Alumnae Association (NAA)

Established in 1910 as the Alumnae Association of Newcomb College, Newcomb Alumnae Association (NAA) is the cornerstone of alumnae engagement. Now affiliated with the Newcomb Institute, the NAA provides valuable programs and services for Newcomb College graduates and all undergraduate Tulane alumnae. With over 30,000 members nationwide, the NAA strengthens personal, collegiate, and professional connections among its members.

NAA Board of Directors

Nominations for the NAA Board of Directors open each fall. Board members serve two-year terms and convene quarterly to plan and oversee programs that support intellectual growth, career development, and fellowship among Newcomb alumnae. If you're passionate about these areas and want to make a lasting impact, consider joining the Board.

Newcomb Alumnae Association Awards

The NAA annually honors four distinguished alumnae who have exemplified the values and achievements of Newcomb since their graduation. These awards celebrate the exceptional contributions of our alumnae and highlight their continued commitment to the Newcomb legacy. To learn more about these awards and past recipients, visit our website.

Newcomb Networking Night

The NAA hosts Newcomb Networking Night each fall, a remote networking event designed to connect current Tulane students with accomplished alumnae. This event fosters meaningful intergenerational connections through themed breakout sessions focused on career interests and geographical topics. Alumnae can participate as room hosts, speakers, or attendees, enriching the experience. This year's Newcomb Networking Night was held on October 30, 2024.

Form a Newcomb Alumnae Book Club

Regional book clubs organized by the NAA bring alumnae together for evenings of engaging discussion. These gatherings are an excellent way to reconnect with fellow alumnae and dive into thought-provoking literature. To join a book club near you or to volunteer as a host, please get in touch with newcombalumnae@tulane.edu.

Join your Reunion Committee

Celebrate your Newcomb connection by joining your Reunion Committee! Every five years, alumnae are invited back to campus to reconnect and reminisce. As a committee member, you'll help represent Newcomb to your classmates and make your reunion even more memorable.

Supporting and Following Newcomb Institute

Your generosity plays a crucial role in the Newcomb Institute's mission. Donations help support gender equity education and research, providing vital opportunities for students through grants, internships, and research initiatives. Contributing empowers the Institute to continue its impactful work in New Orleans and beyond.

We invite you to stay connected, participate in these enriching opportunities, and contribute to the Newcomb Institute's mission. Your involvement and support help advance our shared vision of a more equitable and empowered future. Look for Newcomb Institute on Instagram, Facebook, X, and LinkedIn to keep up to date with our activities and updates.



Tulane University Names School in Honor of Celia Scott Weatherhead's Record-Breaking Support

By Mike Strecker

Tulane University announced that it is naming its School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine in honor of alumna Celia Scott Weatherhead (NC '65) in recognition of her landmark total lifetime giving of more than \$160 million in support of the university. Weatherhead's commitment – the largest in Tulane's history – continues her legacy of providing funding to attract world-leading faculty researchers to Tulane and ensuring that top students from all backgrounds can attend the university.

Weatherhead's support includes a new gift that will transform the university's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine with the goal of establishing it as the premier school of its kind in the United States and one of the top such schools in the world.

"Today, we make history with one of the greatest milestones ever announced at Tulane," said President Michael A. Fitts. "Improving the health of all members of our society – regardless of their economic background – has long been a driving passion of Celia's. Now her extraordinary and inspirational generosity will continue to drive excellence in education, research and innovation while securing the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine as a leading institution focused on saving lives both locally and around the globe."

Celia Weatherhead's and her late husband Albert's support for Tulane has spanned decades, focusing primarily on increasing access to Tulane and establishing the Weatherhead Presidential Chairs. Through these presidential chairs, the university recruits renowned faculty in emerging fields who engage in cross-disciplinary teaching and research on a global scale. In addition, the Weatherheads established the Weatherhead Scholars Program, which provides scholarships for academically talented students who are committed to public service.

"Celia is an inspiration in her unwavering dedication to make the world a better place through research and education," Board of Tulane Chair David Mussafer said. "With her support, Tulane will continue to identify the causes, make the links and discover the strategies necessary to improve human health today and far into the future. Her gift is lifechanging and lifesaving."

"I am thrilled to support the university's goals and long-term strategy for educating public health professionals, empowering groundbreaking research and building a healthier world, starting with the city of New Orleans, but aiming for global results," Celia Scott Weatherhead said.

Celia Weatherhead's latest contribution will provide seed funding to support the development of research hubs in areas such as cancer control, climate change and health, health equity, health policy, infectious disease epidemiology, public health workforce development, and applications of artificial intelligence to the study of population health. Her giving will also further strengthen the faculty and enhance student support, especially in the form of scholarships.

In addition, her gift will advance Tulane's plan to expand the downtown campus, where the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine is located. Tulane's downtown expansion is key to reimagining New Orleans as a hub of biotechnology and innovation.

"President Fitts' plans to use research and discovery as economic drivers for the New Orleans region, and Dean Thomas LaVeist's passionate resolve to confront and ameliorate health inequities holds the greatest promise to bring about positive change," Weatherhead said. "I am thrilled to support the university's goals and long-term strategy for educating public health professionals, empowering groundbreaking research and building a healthier world, starting with the city of New Orleans, but aiming for global results."

LaVeist, Dean of the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, hailed the historic and generational impact of the gift.

"Her gift is a true game changer," said LaVeist, who is also a Weatherhead Presidential Chair in Health Equity. "It will further propel research into the most devastating diseases and the most concerning and complex issues of our times. It will provide generations of students with the skills and knowledge they need to help heal our world. We are overwhelmed with gratitude and energized for the future."

"From scholarships and fellowships to expanded research opportunities addressing next-generation public health concerns, Celia Weatherhead continues to enhance the prestige, strengthen the capabilities and deepen the real-world impact of our university," said Robin Forman, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost at Tulane. "The future of our university is brighter than ever with the establishment of the Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine."

In addition to her philanthropy, Weatherhead is deeply involved at Tulane. She currently serves on the Public Health Dean's Advisory Council, the school's top advisory board and is an emeritus member of the Board of Tulane, the university's main governing body. In 2023, she was awarded the Dermot McGlinchey Lifetime Achievement Award, which honors alumni who have demonstrated service, involvement and commitment to Tulane and their hometown communities.

The newly named school will be the first at the university named for a graduate of Tulane University's Newcomb College where Weatherhead earned a bachelor's degree in theatre in 1965. The Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine will join the A. B. Freeman School of Business as the only named entities among Tulane's 10 schools and college.

The Newcomb Network



Photo courtesy of Sabrina Johnson

Reflecting on Leadership, Equity in the Biotechnology Industry With Daré Bioscience CEO Sabrina Johnson

By Lillian Foster (LA '27)

After graduating from Tulane University in 1988, Sabrina Martucci Johnson (E '88) climbed the ranks in biomedical engineering organizations. Today, she is the founder and CEO of Daré Bioscience, one of the few publicly traded biotechnology companies working solely in women's health.

A pioneer in the biotechnology industry, Johnson founded Daré Bioscience in 2015 and has served as President, CEO, and a member of the Board of Directors since its inception.

"I started Daré Bioscience because I felt a lack of commitment to bringing new pharmaceutical products forward for women," Johnson said. "Women represent more than 50% of the population and of the people needing pharmaceutical products."

Part of Johnson's inspiration for founding Daré Bioscience stemmed from her desire to see more female representation in STEM, a passion that began during her time at Tulane.

"Not seeing that leadership was a reminder that we create the change we want to see. If you want it to be different then you've got to step up into those roles, or it's just going to be the same," Johnson said.

When stepping into her first major leadership position as chief financial officer at Cypress Bioscience, Johnson grappled with her concept of leadership.

"It's easy to emulate other leaders that you've seen, or the picture in your head of what a leader is. But in the end, people tend to respond more to authenticity and vulnerability," Johnson said. "It's okay to not know everything, it's okay to be upset about stuff, and it's okay to need help. Whatever you're experiencing, just be authentic about it."

From acting as a chief financial officer at three acclaimed biomedical organizations to founding Daré Bioscience, Johnson has held a variety of leadership roles for over 25 years.

"I'm definitely a different leader today than I was 20 years ago," Johnson said. "In early leadership roles, sometimes our definition of leadership is power and control. As I've matured in my career, I started to realize that a leader is a person who involves people in decision-making and creates an environment where there's diversity of thought and expression."

In 2022, three biotechnology trailblazers, Angie You, Julia Owens and Sheila Gujrathi, formed the Biotech Sisterhood, a community-focused networking group for women in the pharma industry, which Johnson is active in.

"We need a place where we can get together, support each other, and help ensure that we're helping to bring up the next generation of female CEOs and STEM leaders," Johnson said.

The Biotech Sisterhood has held three retreats along with smaller, local activities, and now hosts a Slack channel of over 200 women CEOs, serving as a platform for strengthening the network of women leaders in biotechnology.

"We have to continue to blaze the path and make it easier for the next group of diverse leaders so that every subsequent group has it easier than the one before," Johnson said.

Johnson, who has served on Tulane's School of Science and Engineering Board of Advisors since 2008 and joined the Newcomb Institute Director's Advisory Board this year, encourages recent graduates to reach out for guidance in navigating the challenges of the biomedical engineering industry.

"Your connections are so important, and when you graduate from Tulane, that's one of the most valuable gifts that you have," Johnson said. "Those of us that are hearing from alums love it because it allows us to stay connected and feel like we can give back in a way that can be impactful."

Johnson's daughter, Isabella Johnson, graduated from Tulane in 2020 with a bachelor's and a master's degree in biomedical engineering. In addition to her roles as a research and teaching assistant, Isabella Johnson earned a spot in the Newcomb Scholars program, a rigorous feminist research program.

"Engineers don't often have a lot of opportunities to utilize their communication skills. The thing that I saw for Isabella, being a Newcomb Scholar, [was that she was] in a safe community where she was in those communication roles," Johnson said. "That's an incredible gift to give young women, and it is difficult to come by."

Looking forward, Johnson hopes to use Daré Bioscience as a model for other biotechnology companies, expanding gender equity and woman-occupied leadership roles within the industry.

"I would love to see us being a premier women's health company, not just because I want us to continue in a leadership role, but also as the example of what others can and should be," Johnson said.

The Newcomb Network



Photo courtesy of Alandas Dobbins

Innovation and Insight: Alandas Dobbins Inspires at Newcomb Institute

By Emily Kreller (LA '26)

Alandas Dobbins (NC '89) visited Newcomb Institute as the featured Alberto-Culver Lecture speaker this May. This program was established by Carol Lavin Bernick (NC'74) to bring many distinguished, nationally recognized professional women to campus to meet with students and discuss crucial topics about women in business. Fittingly, the lecture series collaborates with the Women in Business student organization to research and invite guest speakers.

Dobbins is the CEO and founder of Oteka Technologies, a prominent Memphis-based infrastructure, smart city, and technology solutions company. With a background in communications and a passion for innovation, she has been a driving force behind Oteka's rise as a leader in the tech industry. Dobbins has extensive entrepreneurial experience; she co-built a successful company with her late father, George Dobbins Jr., and built a government agency called MORE, Memphis Office of Resource and Enterprise, from the ground up. She has 30 years of experience in this industry and a strong love for business growth in start-ups and young companies.

Dobbins' lecture had a big impact on staff and students. Her experience in the tech industry resonated with Newcomb Institute's technology interns and staff.

"Living in the digital age, technology is in practically every sector of business," Aaliyah Randall (SE '23), Technology and Facilities Coordinator at Newcomb Institute, said. "Since the start of the pandemic, most companies have switched over to a hybrid or work-from-home structure. This kind of transition relies heavily on technology. Computers, WiFi networks, and cloud storage are some of the technologies that allow businesses to perform basic operations. Technology itself is a business. Tech and business are now so intertwined, that being up to date on technological advances is key to the scale at which a business can be successful."

Dobbins had a somewhat unique approach to the lecture; rather than simply offering career advice, she explained how intrapersonal skills and growth are equally important. "Alandas emphasized that the true key to being successful in your career is first being in touch with the person that you truly are to be able to determine who it is that you want to be. Her wisdom came from a human perspective instead of a business-minded perspective," said Randall.

Dobbins also discussed business practices, especially in relation to equity and diversity. Her leadership style, characterized by a commitment to diversity and empowerment, has fostered a company culture that values collaboration and creativity. As a Black woman, Dobbins also spoke about achieving success in spaces that have historically marginalized people like her. She advised attendees with marginalized identities to "be who you are," even in male and/or White-dominated spaces.

Favour Olushola (SE '26) attended the discussion and commented that she found connecting with Dobbins helpful in many ways. **"As a tech intern, she helped me understand the importance of not being scared to tackle new challenges, being resourceful, and taking advantage of the networks available to me."**

Dobbins' visit demonstrates the power of connection between Newcomb staff, students, and alums. Randall has kept in contact with Dobbins since the visit and said, "From this talk, I gained not one, but two successful Black mentors in tech... Meeting with Alandas and the friend she introduced me, Meka Egwuekwe, to has given me much perspective on what I can expect and explore working in tech."



From Newcomb to Leadership: Kaye Courington's Journey

By Mary Sparacello

A Newcomb education has proven transformative for countless alums. And after graduation, the Newcomb network can prove equally life-changing for graduates. Coming to Newcomb fed Kaye Courington's (NC '80, G *82, L *87) academic ambitions and opened her eyes to a way of viewing the world that placed women at the center. "I had never heard of any class like 'Women in Literature' or 'Women in Society,'" recalls Courington.

Equally important, says Courington, was how the top-tier women faculty and administration of Newcomb modeled the possibilities of achievement for undergraduates like herself. "You can't be what you don't see, and you were seeing women in leadership positions. It gave a subtle sense that anything is possible without anyone overtly saying that."

After completing her bachelor's at Newcomb, Courington would continue on at Tulane, receiving a Master of Education and later a Juris Doctor degree. Though women lawyers were relatively rare when she was first starting out, Courington's educational experience of being surrounded by brilliant, accomplished women — and moreover ones who were taken seriously — was a source of strength as she navigated the at times perilous "old boys' network" of parts of the legal profession. Today, Courington leads the largest women-majority-owned law firm in Louisiana.

She believes that relationship building can be a "superpower" for women and regards the Newcomb network as offering the perfect opportunity to spark and nurture connections. Sharing a vibrant educational background that highlights women, Newcomb alumnae, no matter their graduation year, location or career path, often find themselves with resonant experiences. Often, too, they are eager to help one another.

As Hina Shaikh (NC '94, L *98) was working toward her undergraduate double major in history and anthropology at Newcomb, she was considering going on to law school and hoping to find an internship that would provide some exposure to the field. Courington, who was practicing in the area of asbestos/toxic torts litigation with a small firm at the time, was actively seeking interns from Newcomb.

Shaikh, who now who currently works at the U.S. Department of Commerce in federal financial assistance law, recalls, "In hindsight, this single connection led to so many great things, including Kaye giving me practical career and law school advice (and later life advice) and an enduring friendship."

The internship with Courington exposed Shaikh to many aspects of the legal environment such as legal research, document reviews, document filing within the court and daily operations. She immediately applied to Tulane Law School, deferring for a year, traveling and working with Courington's firm. During her second and third years of Tulane Law, she lived in an apartment over Courington's garage, helping out as Courington managed balancing a growing family with her career.

"Without a doubt, the Newcomb network proved to be a gift, well beyond the ability to offer me career preparation," says Shaikh. "Unwittingly, it gave Kaye and me an unbreakable friendship."

"The network can be an invaluable source of useful advice and insights — and advantages accrue for students and alums!" Shaikh continues. "The connections come about by virtue of a shared experience at Newcomb and can influence life and career experiences/pursuits."

As Shaikh was finishing her own internship, she put Jennifer Stowe (NC '95) in touch with Courington. Stowe was poised to graduate and, like many graduates, was uncertain what the future held. Stowe served as a paralegal before attending graduate school in Arizona. She returned to New Orleans and continued working with Courington, rising from paralegal to administrator and developing a lifelong friendship along the way.

"Kaye encouraged a life/work balance by providing flexibility in schedules and work-from-home opportunities well before that became a common thing during Covid," says Stowe. "Whether an employee was undergoing chemo for breast cancer, having a baby, or going through a terrible divorce, Kaye always demonstrated an understanding and generosity that you don't see in a lot of workplaces."

Stowe would later go on to attain her Master of Social Work degree and become a clinical therapist. Throughout, she had the unflagging support of Courington. "She has encouraged my career and life choices and been one of my biggest cheerleaders as well as one of my greatest inspirations while I have negotiated the ups and downs of life," reflects Stowe.

Building up the Newcomb network by supporting fellow alumnae is second nature to Courington.

"If you are fortunate enough to have a solid career and you can reach out to the people on the ladder a few rungs younger than you and you can help pull them up, why wouldn't you do that? It is so satisfying; it helps everybody, and it makes the world a better place," says Courington.



***#MeToo** 2024 Report Reveals Rates of Sexual Harassment and Assault Still High After **#MeToo** Movement*

By Toria Smith

In a follow-up study to the #MeToo 2018 report, Newcomb Institute found prevalent high rates of sexual harassment and assault, despite heightened awareness and prevention efforts from the #MeToo movement. The Me Too movement was founded by Tarana Burke in 2006 to support survivors of sexual violence, particularly young women of color from low-wealth communities, and to help them find pathways to healing. In October 2017, the movement went global when the #MeToo hashtag went viral, and survivors across the world came forward about their own experiences with sexual assault. Furthermore, many of these incidents are happening in public spaces across the United States. The results of the #MeToo 2024 report — based on a national survey — underscore the persistent challenge of combating sexual misconduct beyond the workplace. “I’m sorry to say that we see no change in prevalence since what we saw six years ago in 2018. We still see that four in five women have experienced sexual assault or harassment in their lifetime and that 37% have experienced this in the workplace,” said Dr. Anita Raj, lead researcher and executive director of Newcomb Institute.

For the survey, sexual harassment included unwelcomed behavior ranging from “cat-calling” to stalking and unwanted touching in a sexual way. It also assessed sexual assault, which the researchers defined as a forced or coerced sex act.

The #MeToo 2024 report surveyed more than 3,300 U.S. adults over the age of 18 this year and found that most women (82%) and nearly half of all men (42%) have experienced sexual harassment or assault in their lifetime. Roughly 1 in 4 U.S. adults (26%), or more than 68 million people, experienced sexual harassment or assault in the past year alone, with significantly higher rates for women (32%) compared to men (15%).

These abuses often occur as sexual harassment in public spaces, with 73% of women and 24% of men reporting harassment in locations like streets, parks, beaches, gyms, stores, buses or subways. The perpetrators of verbal, cyber, and

physically aggressive sexual harassment are usually strangers. Meanwhile, sexual assault usually occurs in private spaces (like residences and cars) and is most frequently perpetrated by partners, family members, and acquaintances.

“In recent times we tend to hear more about sexual harassment in the workplace, but the vast majority of people still have had experience of sexual harassment in public spaces. I know I have and we tend to ignore it or push past it sometimes, depending on whatever situation we were in at the time,” Dr. Raj said.

For many, these incidents begin at a young age, with more than half of women (56%) and 18% of men first experiencing sexual harassment or assault before age 18.

“The important thing to know about this is not just how pervasive it is, but how early in life it starts. About one in five women say that their first experience with sexual harassment, most commonly on the streets, is happening before they’re even 13 and usually goes unreported,” Dr. Raj said.

The #MeToo report also revealed high lifetime prevalence rates of sexual harassment and assault among nonbinary, gender nonconforming and transgender individuals. The survey results indicated that 79% of nonbinary and gender nonconforming people and 87% of transgender people have experienced sexual harassment or assault in their lifetime.

The report results emphasized that there is a higher risk for mental health and substance use concerns among those who have experienced these types of sexual abuses.

“Because of the social and health impacts on victims, there is a clear need for urgent action to combat sexual harassment and assault and to create a safer environment for all — at work, at school, at home and in public spaces,” said Dr. Raj. “We don’t have to keep accepting this because this does affect our education, our employment and our mental health.”

Dr. Raj believes greater awareness and legal protections are necessary to lessen the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault and increase support for victims.

“Since the start of the #MeToo movement, we have seen important bipartisan legislation from the federal and state governments in the United States to ensure that we have better awareness and accountability for sexual harassment in the workplace. But what we haven’t done is expand those efforts to ensure that we have those protections in our public spaces and in our schools. And that’s something we can change. But the first step is to realize we have a problem,” Dr. Raj said.



Above are findings from the #MeToo 2024 report. The report shows that sexual harassment and assault rates remain alarmingly high, especially for women under 18 years old. Despite progress, there's been no significant reduction since 2018.

Celebrating Firsts and Exc



Each year, the Newcomb Alumnae Association (NAA) honors Newcomb and Tulane graduates who have made exceptional achievements in their industries, contributed to their communities, and shown overwhelming dedication to their alma mater.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the NAA awards and also celebrates two exciting firsts. For the first time, awards are being presented during the homecoming celebration, and the Live Oak Award, an award honoring an alum whose teaching, advocacy, or organizing efforts have increased educational opportunities within their community, is being presented for the first time. The Live Oak award recipients work should enhance equity and equality, have been recognized and respected by others, and inspire future generations from all backgrounds and abilities.

In 2024, the NAA Awards Committee has selected the following alumnae to be recognized at this year's homecoming celebration:

Newcomb Alumnae Association Outstanding Alumna Flora Fenner McConnell Hammond, MD, (NC '86, M*90)

Dr. Flora Hammond has provided extensive advocacy, service, and leadership in improving the lives of people affected by disability with tireless passion, compassion, creativity, and collegiality. Dr. Hammond's service is firmly grounded in the example set by her parents, C. Fenner McConnell, MD (Tulane '55, M '59) and Shirley McConnell, who taught her that in work, life, and play, we should care for others and always do our best. Her commitment to the community started to take root during her time at Newcomb College and Tulane University School of Medicine.

Dr. Hammond's years of research and leadership have profoundly impacted rehabilitation science and practice. Her research has expanded our knowledge about how people change over the years after brain injury, dispelling the myth that one's function remains the same over time after brain injury. Dr. Hammond is leading an initiative to change the view of brain injury as an incident with limited short-term treatment to a chronic condition that must be proactively managed throughout one's life. She and her colleagues have developed a new model of care

for chronic brain injury, including improving the accuracy and quality of patient-family discussions after head trauma. She has also led presentations highlighting the irreversible consequences of inaccurate outcome predictions.

Dr. Hammond is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) at Indiana University School of Medicine and Chief of Medical Affairs at the Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana.



Newcomb Alumnae Association Community Service Award Hon. Robin M. Giarrusso (NC '74, L *77)

Robin M. Giarrusso served as a judge of the Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans from 1988 to 2023, and she served as the Court's Chief Judge from 1998 to 2000. Judge Giarrusso was appointed by the Louisiana Supreme Court to the State's Judiciary Commission and served as Chair of the Commission during the last year of her appointment.

Judge Giarrusso is incredibly active in the community. She is a vice president of the National Council of Jewish Women, a board member of the Jewish Endowment Foundation, a member of the Downtown Rotary Club, a past president of Congregation Temple Sinai, the previous membership vice-president of the New Orleans Bar Association Inn of Court, a board member of the Tulane Alumni Association, and

a former assistant bar examiner. She has also served on the board of the Anti-Defamation League, Jewish Children's Regional Service, the Pro-Bono Project, as Vice President of the Newcomb College Alumnae Association Board, and as the class agent for the Newcomb College Class of 1974. She was a frequent lecturer at continuing legal education seminars on topics such as ethics, professionalism, civil procedure, and women in the judiciary. Judge Giarrusso received the First Annual Michaelle Pitard Wynne Professionalism Award from the Association for Women Attorneys and the National Urban League Award for Distinguished Public Service. Judge Giarrusso received the Pro Bono Project Distinguished Jurist Award in 2015 and the Arceneaux Professionalism Award from the New

Orleans Bar Association in 2023.

Judge Giarrusso has lectured on and is interested in advocacy for people with physical disabilities. She is a former board member of Resources for Independent Living, Easter Seals, and the Education and Support Program for Children's Hospital. In 2023, Giarrusso received the South-Central region of the Anti-Defamation League's A.I. Botnick Torch of Liberty Award alongside President Mike Fitts. She is a Board member at Touro Infirmary.

Judge Giarrusso is a graduate of Newcomb College and Tulane University Law School. Before her election, she served on the City Attorney's Office staff, where she specialized in contract and public bid matters. She is the proud mother of her son and the proud grandmother of her two granddaughters.

ellence: 2024 NAA Awards

Newcomb Alumnae Association Young Alumna Award **Rachael Richard (LA '19)**

Rachael Richard got her bachelor's from Tulane before returning to her home state of New Jersey to teach high school history. She later went to Columbia University Teachers College for her master's because of her commitment to representing the histories and cultures of underrepresented communities in the social studies classroom. Through project-based learning and engagement with graphic novels as alternative texts, Rachael's non-traditional approach to the classroom encourages the empowerment of student choice and civic engagement.

Rachael's most recent endeavor has involved developing an Indigenous History of North America elective at Bayonne High

School. The elective was developed through representative scholarship and a partnership with the Lakota Nation on the Pine Ridge Reservation. In the fall of 2023, her scholars held discussions with reservation representatives over Zoom to determine the community's needs. Then, they held a toiletries drive collecting and shipping out more than 300+ high-need toiletries items for the reservation. In the spring of 2024, Rachael helped her students organize a Krispy Kreme Fundraiser to support updating the heating units on the reservation, raising over \$800. In 2024, Rachael was awarded the Cohen-Jordan Award for Outstanding Social Studies Teaching by the Middle States Council for Social Studies and is an active presenter on topics like

graphic novels and challenging the deficit mindset in Indigenous history for the New Jersey Council for Social Studies annual conference.

Outside of the classroom, Rachael works as a field instructor for the urban wilderness company Team Wilderness, which empowers Hudson County youth through outdoor experiences. Rachael has helped bring her love of hiking and nature into the classroom, taking her scholars on hikes to learn about George Washington's winter encampments, Lenni-Lenape migration, and land stewardship. For the 2024-2025 school year, Rachael is also a Teach Asian American Stories Fellow, and she will continue to develop curriculum and professional workshops to aid New Jersey teachers.



Newcomb Alumnae Association Live Oak Award **Mildred (Millibeth) Currie (NC '89)**

Millibeth Currie is a passionate and dedicated educator who has made significant contributions to the field of STEM education through extensive collaboration with various stakeholders. Recognizing the importance of making learning relevant and engaging for students, she has developed and fostered numerous partnerships with industry professionals, academic institutions, and community organizations to enhance STEM teaching and learning.

One of Millibeth's notable collaborations involved bringing a speaker to her classroom to discuss fragile X syndrome, a genetic disorder, which helped her students understand the real-world implications of genetics. Her work with the MIT Women's Initiative Program brought female engineering students to Charleston County School District (CCSD) schools to conduct hands-on STEM challenges, inspiring young students to pursue STEM careers. Millibeth has also partnered with the CCSD Career

and Technology Education (CTE) program and Work-based Learning Partnerships Coordinator Chad Vail to expand STEM opportunities. Through these collaborations, she has created programs like Women in Charge (WIC), which has formed outreach initiatives with local and national STEM leaders, including NASA engineer Tia Ferguson (E '89) and landscape architects, providing students with practical, real-world STEM experiences. A great example is how Women in Charge students learn from surgeons, Dr. Kate White and Dr. Galin Jackson Spicer (N '91), to suture wounds (on bananas) while working with surgeons. She finds ways to remove the fear and mystery from STEM fields so students are more likely to pursue them.

Her partnerships extend to higher education as well, with partnerships with professors from Florida State University and the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) to conduct research and present STEM modules to her students. Millibeth's students have

also benefited from collaborations with companies and labs like the Charleston Digital Corridor and Michelin. Her dedication to STEM education is further exemplified by her work with the National Labs in New Mexico, which led to the integration of cybersecurity into her STEM curriculum, and her coordination of the Greenwood Genetics Lab mobile visits to her school. She has provided her students invaluable opportunities to engage with STEM professionals and explore potential career paths through these initiatives.

Millibeth's efforts earned her the Digital Innovation and Learning Award Community Counts from Ed Surge and Digital Promise. This award celebrates her dedication to involving the entire community, including students, parents, and local stakeholders in the educational process. Most recently, she was named the 2024 South Carolina STEM Educator of the Year.



Thanks

everyone who took the time to submit a nomination. Please note that nominations are valid for three years from the date of submission. We eagerly anticipate celebrating the outstanding achievements of these remarkable alumnae in November, and we look forward to reading more inspiring award nominations in the coming year.

Student Awards

Newcomb Institute Honors Graduating Student Leaders, Interns, Newcomb Scholars, and Class of 1974

By Lillian Foster (LA '27) & Julie Henriquez Aldana, Ph.D.

On May 16, Newcomb Institute hosted its annual Under the Oaks celebration, an awards ceremony honoring the achievements of outstanding Newcomb Institute student leaders, interns, and the 2024 Class of Newcomb Scholars. Dating back to commencement ceremonies for Newcomb College, Under the Oaks also features a special 50th reunion for Newcomb College graduates, this year recognizing the class of 1974.

In addition to the award recipients, all Newcomb Institute outstanding students were recognized, including students who received grants, served as interns, and those selected for Oak Wreath, a group of graduating seniors who have distinguished themselves through an engaged pursuit of learning, leadership in student activities, and service to their communities. Alyssa Bockman, Susan Worley, and Ifeoma Osakwe were three of the over 140 students recognized at Under the Oaks.



Newcomb Student Leader Spotlight

Alyssa Bockman received the Under the Oaks award. Alyssa held numerous leadership roles in engineering student organizations, serving as president of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE), and Theta Tau's Nu Epsilon chapter. Through SWE and K-12 STEM outreach, she

mentored local middle and high schoolers in robotics, and fostered young girls' interest in science and engineering. She dedicated herself to the toddler mobility trainer project, designing and producing innovative wheelchairs that enable children with disabilities to move independently and interact with other children as equals. She was also recognized as a Newcomb grant recipient, Newcomb Intern, Newcomb Student Leader, and Oak Wreath recipient.

"It's huge to get to the end of four years and feel like you put in extra effort in places that people acknowledged it," Alyssa said. She will be going on to work in Caterpillar Inc.'s Parallel Co-op Program, a talent development program for students where Alyssa has previously held internships.



Newcomb Scholar Spotlight

Newcomb Scholar Susan Worley appreciated the recognition she received as a Scholar and for her work as a research assistant and feminist leadership summer intern. She was also selected as a member of Oak Wreath. "It felt like the culmination of a lot of hard work. It feels wonderful when you're recognized for everything you've put into something," Worley, who double majored in sociology and social policy and practice, along with a minor in political science, was also honored with the Class of 1909 Prize for

Outstanding Senior. Speaking of her time as a Newcomb Scholar, Susan said, "There are some incredible minds in the Newcomb Scholars program who all see things differently, and because it's an interdisciplinary cohort, you get perspectives on your work that come from different backgrounds in academia."

"While the Newcomb Scholars is an academic program, you get to build such great friendships with everyone," Worley said. "It's really great to be recognized for the award, but this award could've gone to all of these incredible students because I definitely couldn't have done it without them."



Newcomb Student Intern Spotlight

Ifeoma Osakwe, a rising senior majoring in cell and molecular biology, was awarded the Dorothy Young Memorial Award during the 2024 Under the Oaks ceremony. The Dorothy Young Memorial Award is presented to a junior student who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, scholarship, and service during their time at Tulane. Over the summer, Osakwe conducted research and completed a program at Memorial Sloan Kettering's Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, an endeavor funded by the Newcomb Institute.

"Under the Oaks is a really

important tradition to continue because it's a good way to recognize students for all of the hard work that they've done over their four years at Tulane, and it introduces them to the existing alumni network," Osakwe said. "It was really impactful for me to see how the leaders at Newcomb Institute feel about Newcomb's initiatives and the future of the Newcomb Institute from a student perspective."

Newcomb Institute strives to strengthen the Newcomb network across generations and maintain the legacy of Newcomb College through events like Under the Oaks.

The women's movement of the 20th century encouraged Newcomb College students to pursue fields traditionally dominated by men. Graduates of Newcomb College have received Pulitzer Prizes, Academy and Emmy Award nominations, high-level positions in government, higher education, and the arts, and inductions into the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

"It was very cool to see where the women that have graduated from Newcomb College have gone. Newcomb Institute works so hard to make sure that we promote women in leadership on campus, so seeing that extend post-grad was really cool," Bockman remarked. "A lot of graduates and I are not thrilled with the world that we're entering. I have no idea what the next five years are going to hold for me or the world in general, but having a send-off like Under the Oaks not only acknowledges that position but also demonstrates that we are capable of handling it and ideally fixing it," Bockman said.

To learn more about Under the Oaks and the history of the Newcomb Institute, visit newcomb.tulane.edu/undertheoaks.

Student Events

Funding the Future of Public Policy: Newcomb Institute Provides Grants for Students To Attend PLEN Conferences

The Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN) is a national organization that hosts a series of seminars in Washington, D.C., to prepare women and marginalized gender groups for careers in public policy. Grace Harsche, a senior at Tulane University, a Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health intern and a Newcomb Scholar, attended the five-day PLEN Public Policy seminar in January and said, **“PLEN did a really good job of showing that there’s room for everyone in this field and that it’s actually better if we all work together and lift each other up. I enjoyed connecting with women from across the country, and it was wonderful to know that I would likely be seeing them again.”**



Photo of Grace Harsche (LA '24). Harsche recieved a Fulbright grant to study in Amsterdam this year.



Photo of Newcomb Scholars at the Brooklyn Museum of Art during their trip to Athena Film Festival, March 2024.

Newcomb Institute Takes Newcomb Scholars to 14th Annual Athena Film Festival at Barnard College

By Lillian Foster (LA '27)

From 2017 to now, Newcomb Institute has given Newcomb Scholars the opportunity to attend the Athena Film Festival at Barnard College. This year, 18 Newcomb Scholars flew to New York City to embark on a weekend of feminist-centered learning and exploration.

The Athena Film Festival is an annual event that uses film to showcase the narratives of strong female leaders and foster vital dialogues about what it means to be a woman today.

“Newcomb Scholars is a program that’s focused on feminist interdisciplinary leadership and research, so it’s a natural fit for these students to engage in this space about telling women’s leadership stories,” said Dr. Aidan Smith, Director of the Newcomb Scholars Program.

Newcomb College, founded in 1886, was the first coordinate college for women in the United States. Barnard College followed suit in 1889, establishing a women’s college at Columbia University.

“Both institutions have long been focused on stories about women’s leadership and providing spaces for feminist engagement,” said Smith.

Upon arrival, Newcomb Institute Advisory Council member Rachelle Parker hosted an opening reception to welcome the Newcomb Scholars to New York City. Parker, who graduated from Newcomb College in 1969, said that her college peers made a lasting impact on her future.

“While I was [at Newcomb College], I made incredibly wonderful friends that are now still

some of my very best friends in the world,” Parker said.

Carlotta Harold, a Newcomb Scholar and sophomore at Tulane University, had never attended a film festival before getting the opportunity to go to the Athena Film Festival with the Newcomb Scholars.

“I haven’t spent a lot of time with films that way before, and I’ve never thought about who’s getting pushed into the [film] industry and who’s getting pushed out of it. Especially because these films feature women’s stories about leadership, female directors, and a lot of BIPOC creators as well,” Harold said.

Harold felt like the trip gave her the chance to get to know her fellow Newcomb Scholars in a

new way.

“Another really amazing part of it was bonding cross-cohort with other Scholars. I really got to be friends with people in the cohorts both above and below me,” Harold said.

Newcomb Scholar and sophomore Ella Jeffries said that film gives artists a medium to display the significance of their work in a way everyone can appreciate.

“In so many different disciplines it can be hard to convey what you’re doing and the importance of it, but I feel like film is a really accessible medium. That was part of what drew me to [the Athena Film Festival],” Jeffries said.

“It’s always a good reminder for students here that there’s a world beyond [Tulane’s] campus that is interested and invested in these kinds of issues,” Smith said.

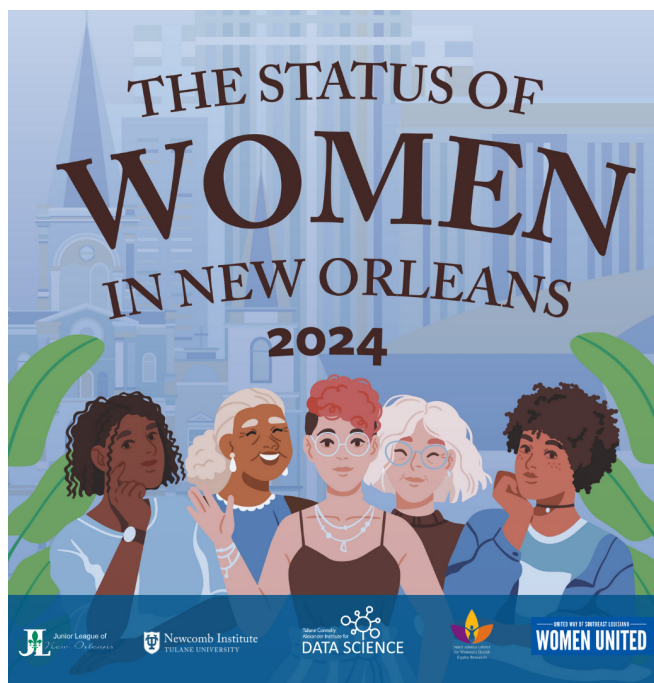
Research at Newcomb



Dr. Raj visits with the White House Gender Policy Council to discuss research on gender-based violence in Fall 2023.



Newcomb Institute led a first-time statewide survey on intimate partner violence and health in Louisiana, releasing results in Fall 2023 and finding risk at epidemic proportions with serious mental health impacts.



The Status of Women in New Orleans 2024 report highlighted both progress and ongoing challenges, particularly for women of color and low-income families.



*Dr. Raj and Louisiana Senator Gary Carter (L*02) discuss evidence and policy that can help reduce gun violence among young people at a forum at Louisiana State University Law School in Winter 2024.*



*Students, faculty, and community members attended a lunch discussion with Dr. DeShawn Taylor, author of *Undue Burden: A Black Woman Physician on Being Christian and Pro-Choice in the Reproductive Justice Movement*.*



Megan Roche (LA'25), interning at Planned Parenthood North Central States as part of the Feminist Summer Internship program, visits the Minnesota State Capitol with her colleagues.



Newcomb Institute has been working with Afghan women leaders in exile and released a report in Winter 2023 on their experiences as refugees and advocates for women's equality since the fall of the Islamic Republic in 2021.



Newcomb Institute launched a global webinar series with the International Center for Research on Women in Summer 2024 focused on reproductive justice.



Newcomb Institute's Director of Research, Dr. Clare Daniel, was invited to present on the panel, "Lessons from Abortion Researchers on Public Engagement in Restrictive Environments," at the Scholars Strategy Network National Leadership Convening in Washington, D.C. Dr. Daniel and panelists, Dr. Tamika Odum, Rep. Anna Eskamani, and Dr. Tracy Weitz, discussed the transformative potential of research on abortion within restrictive states, exploring how empirical findings can inform advocacy efforts, shape public discourse, and catalyze systemic change.



Hailey Tobman (PHTM '25, LA '25) participated in Newcomb Institute's Feminist Summer Internship program as United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) North America Representational Office summer intern. She worked with the UNFPA team to host a networking event for young people and interns around D.C. interested in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). The event featured professionals from PAI, UNFPA, USAID and the Congressional Pro-Choice Caucus, all discussing what a future career in SRHR work looks like and how to get into the field.

Research at Newcomb



At our annual event, Conceiving Equity, the Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health Interns presented posters about their internships, networked with faculty and community members, and attended a talk by Honduran activist, Yasmín López.

Yasmín López Spoke as the 12th Annual Roe v. Wade Lecturer at Conceiving Equity 2024

By Lillian Foster (LA '27)

On January 24, 2024, the Newcomb Institute, the Stone Center for Latin American Studies, the Mary Amelia Center for Women's Health Equity Research, and other sponsors held Conceiving Equity 2024, along with the 12th annual Roe v. Wade lecture in the Diboll Gallery at Tulane University.

Newcomb Institute's Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health interns exhibited posters while Tulane's reproductive rights, health, and justice student organizations, such as Big Easy EC, Students United for Reproductive Justice, and Law Students for Reproductive Justice (If/When/How), hosted a variety of advocacy activities.

Dr. Clare Daniel, Senior Professor of Practice and Director of Research at Newcomb

Institute, has helped to coordinate Conceiving Equity for the past seven years.

"It's a great networking opportunity for students who are already plugged into this work and students who want to be," Daniel said.

After the presentations, Yasmín López delivered a talk, "Territory and Body - Women Leading the Fight for Reproductive Rights in Latin America," as the 12th annual Roe v. Wade lecturer. Dr. Daniel said, "The lecture is always a great way to learn something new about reproductive rights, health, and justice, in this case, on a global scale."

López, a Maya Ch'ortí, Honduran leader, is part of a larger feminist movement in Latin America that fights for women's reproductive rights and women

who face persecution, poverty, lack of resources, and displacement. She is also a part of the political commission of La Via Campesina, where she coordinates women-led movements that defend the rights of rural, indigenous, and Garífuna women, girls, and youth.

Edith Romero Velasquez, a master's student at Tulane and a native Honduran, suggested López as the 12th annual Roe v. Wade lecturer after having several conversations with López. "She's talked to me about how the offices of the organization she works at have been attacked, ransacked, and [received] death threats," Velasquez said.

Velasquez also emphasized that López was "really excited about exchanging ideas with other people who are working

in the reproductive justice movement."

This event was sponsored by Newcomb Institute's Donna and Richard Esteves Fund for Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health; The Center of Excellence in Maternal and Child Health, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine; The Mary Amelia Center for Women's Health Equity Research and the Jane Wilson Smith Lecture Series, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine; The Center for Reproductive Health Policies and Programs, Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine; Gender and Sexuality Studies Program, Tulane School of Liberal Arts; Stone Center for Latin American Studies.



*Dr. Clare Daniel, Director of Research,
Senior Professor of Practice*



*Bernadette Floresca (PA *21), Head of Archives
Management and Strategies*



Dr. K.S. James, Senior Visiting Scholar

Newcomb Institute Promotes Staff, Faculty, & Welcomes New Researcher

By Heide Winston & Emily Kreller (LA '26)

Newcomb Institute has had tremendous growth in the last year. In addition to growing our social media presence and creating a thriving internship program, we surpassed our goal of 300 donations during Give Green, and unlocked the challenge gift from the Newcomb Alumnae Association. There's no doubt that Newcomb Institute is flourishing. Internally, our Newcomb team has grown as well. We've welcomed several visiting professors, promoted key team members, and recruited new directors and staff, all of whom bring fresh perspectives and energy to our mission.

In 2024, Newcomb Institute named **Dr. Clare Daniel** as Senior Professor of Practice and Director of Research.

"I see Newcomb Institute at the forefront of gender equity research on a local, national, and global level. She has been a powerhouse here at Newcomb for years, and her deep knowledge of gender equity issues and community engagement will be crucial to advancing our action-oriented research agenda," said Executive Director Anita Raj.

In her previous role, Daniel directed all of Newcomb's programming and experiential learning opportunities related to reproductive justice and sexual health. In 2020, she

was awarded the Coalition Builder Award from the National Women's Studies Association's Women's Center Network for her work convening the New Orleans Maternal and Child Health Coalition, which aims to improve racial disparities in birth outcomes in Louisiana. In 2023, she, along with Professors Kate Baldwin and Karissa Haugeberg, was awarded a Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar grant to convene scholars and community members for a series of events over two years examining the role of the humanities and arts in reproductive justice advocacy on a global scale.

Clare Daniel received her doctorate in American Studies from the University of New Mexico and has been a part of the Tulane community since 2014. Her research areas include reproductive politics across media, political culture, and advocacy; sexual and reproductive health equity; and feminist pedagogies and epistemologies.

Bernadette Floresca has been promoted to Head of Archives Management and Strategies at Newcomb Institute in a notable stride towards advancing archival stewardship and promoting inclusive practices.

Floresca holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a specialization in

sculpture and a Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and is a certified archivist recognized by the Academy of Certified Archivists. They obtained a graduate certificate in archives and special collections. Floresca also has a Master of Liberal Arts degree from Tulane University's School of Professional Advancement, with a focus on gender, sexuality, and art. Their recent accreditation as a National Heritage Responder through the American Institute for Conservation attests to their dedication to safeguarding cultural heritage in times of crisis.

In their new role, Floresca will oversee the storage, description, organization, and digital preservation of archival materials to ensure their accessibility and longevity for future generations. They will streamline access to Newcomb Archives' rich holdings while supervising a team of archivists, student workers, interns, and volunteers to implement efficient processing workflows.

"Newcomb Institute is poised to advance its mission of preserving and promoting diverse cultural heritage while actively confronting systemic inequities within the archival field," said Floresca.

Acclaimed Indian social scientist **Dr. K.S. James** joined Newcomb

Institute as Senior Visiting Scholar over the spring semester. His work as a demographer studying population changes in South Asia has led to distinct contributions in the areas of maternal and child health, aging, and gender equity.

Prior to joining Tulane, Dr. James was the Director and Senior Professor at the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai, India from 2018 to 2023.

James has published widely in leading journals such as *Science*, *Lancet Global Health*, *Social Science and Medicine*, *Population Studies*, *Studies in Family Planning*, *BMC Public Health*, *Journal of Biosocial Science*, *Journal of Aging and Health*, *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, and *Economic and Political Weekly*. He received his doctorate in demography in 1997 from Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, India, completed his post-doctoral fellowship at the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies in 2000.

"Having a social scientist of James's caliber at Newcomb Institute will not only advance our research but also the Institute's mission of training the next generation of gender equity scholars and leaders," said Dr. Raj.

Arts at Newcomb

Franny Choi's Workshop and Reading Spark Inspiration at Newcomb Institute's Florie Gale Arons Poetry Program

By Emily Kreller (LA '26)

Newcomb Institute was delighted to host Franny Choi as the featured poet of the 2023 Florie Gale Arons Poetry Program. The program was established by the daughters of Florie Gale Arons (NC '50), Andrea Arons Huseman, Gina Arons, and Lisa Aldridge, in 1999 in honor of their mother's 70th birthday. Since then, Newcomb Institute has brought a distinguished woman poet to Tulane every year to expose students and the local community to inspirational poetry in an intimate setting.

Franny Choi has published three poetry collections, including *The World Keeps Ending*, and *The World Goes On* (2022) and *Soft Science* (2019). Choi's writing has appeared in publications like the *New York Times* and has received several awards, including the Lily/Rosenberg Fellowship and Princeton University's Holmes National Poetry Prize. They are faculty in Literature at Bennington College and the founder of Brew & Forge.

Choi's residency included a guided creative writing workshop and a public reading from *The World Keeps Ending*, and *The World Goes On* followed by a Q&A.

The poetry workshop was an interactive, intimate, and fun setting of 13 participants. It was designed to bring "together poets from all ages in the New Orleans community—we have high school students from NOCCA and Willow, undergraduates from Tulane, MFA students from UNO, and



From left to right: Student Sawyer Liner (SSE '24 & SLA'24), Franny Choi, Lisa Aldridge, & Andrea Arons Huseman

poets from the community all learning together in the same space," said Laura Wolford, Associate Director at Newcomb Institute.

The reading was open to the public and was "incredibly well attended to the point where people were pulling in chairs from all the common spaces to come... it was students, people from the community," Julie Qiu, a Newcomb staff member who helped coordinate the program, said.

Franny Choi's visit focused on their newest book, which tackles relevant and significant topics, like "Asian representation, queer representation, and... the relationship between technology and modern society," says Qiu.

Student Sawyer Liner (SSE '24 & SLA'24) attended the reading and felt that Choi's work is pertinent today, stating, "They're engaging with this modern moment as something rife with apocalypses... Their willingness to pursue the project of finding a way to deal with that immediately struck me as an immense project. A lot of times, it is pitched as 'Everything will be fine' or 'The world is ending anyway, so why not do whatever we want?' Franny Choi is able to engage with these perspectives and come to a new understanding of how we need to hope in the modern moment that I think was so much more profound than anything I've heard on the topic before."

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the program, the 2024-2025 Arons poet will be Ada Limón, the current U.S. Poet Laureate. "Poetry is a vibrant part of how we make meaning of our lives and our place in the world—and having the opportunity to meet with contemporary poets who have a national profile is a real honor. If you are a creative writing student, these events are a great way to learn more about how you approach your writing. And [if you're not a creative writing student] I hope that you might be able to take a moment to step outside of your everyday work, pause for a moment, listen to something beautiful and moving, and have a moment of reflection that takes you out of yourself for a little bit," says Wolford.



In honor of Women's History Month and International Women's Day, the Newcomb Archives & Nadine Robbert Vorhoff (NC '41) Collection curated "Claydees:" an exhibit featuring the ceramic creations of women artists at Tulane University. The opening reception was in the Newcomb Archives Reading Room on March 8th.

I Have Some Questions for You: An Evening Discussion With Rebecca Makkai

By Lillian Foster (LA '27)



From left to right: Tucker Ward, Zachary Lazar, Rebecca Makkai, Martha Wells (NC '63), & Dana Zale Gerard (NC '85) at the beginning of the evening.

Each year since 1985, the Zale-Kimmerling Writer-in-Residence Program has brought a distinguished woman writer to campus as a program of Newcomb Institute. Rebecca Makkai was chosen as the 2023-2024 Zale-Kimmerling Writer-in-Residence.

Throughout her time at Tulane, Makkai contributed to creative writing classes on campus, actively engaged with students, and took part in a Tulane University Women's Association book club meeting. Makkai also conducted a manuscript review meeting with Tulane student Amy Stambaugh (LA '23, LA *24), offering a critical evaluation of a book that Stambaugh is working on.

Makkai's *The Great Believers* was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, in addition to

receiving the ALA Carnegie Medal and the LA Times Book Prize, among other honors.

I Have Some Questions For You, released in 2023, is a feminist boarding school mystery that centers around a film professor and podcaster, Bodie Kane, who grapples with a complicated past that she struggles to forget. When Kane is invited to teach a two-week course at The Granby School in New Hampshire, where she had previously attended boarding school, her life takes an unexpected turn. Many pieces of the story revolve around the conviction of the man who allegedly murdered Thalia Keith. Before he was convicted, Omar was an athletic trainer at The Granby School. While Omar initially admitted to the murder, skeptics questioned the

legitimacy of the conviction

While on campus, Makkai spoke about her research before writing the novel regarding wrongful convictions, specifically in New Hampshire.

"One of the U.S. states that does not require recording of custodial interrogation [is New Hampshire], meaning that they could interrogate someone for 42 hours [while they are] falling asleep [and] saying whatever. At the end of it, you get a signed confession. And they haven't recorded any of that," Makkai said. "So the judge, the jury, [and] the public never see what went on [they only see] the confession. So, as you can imagine, there are a lot of false confessions."

Makkai explained that being a writer may entail writing pieces that

don't necessarily align with your own identity. There are important questions to ask yourself, Makkai notes, before writing pieces that deal with an unfamiliar identity.

"Am I stealing a platform or voice, or I might be amplifying other voices?" Makkai said.

Zachary Lazar, an English professor at Tulane and a fellow distinguished writer, commented on the oddity of the true-crime genre.

"It's always been striking to me how...a staple of our entertainment is murder," Lazar said.

"I really think it's just evolutionary," Makkai said.

Makkai said that the appeal of the true crime genre extends beyond mere entertainment, often prompting readers to contemplate how the story's elements can be applied to real-life situations.

"What do I need to learn from this? Should I fix it? What do I need to learn from others' survival?" Makkai said. "I think especially when women are consuming stories of true crime victims. There's a lot of like, 'I could find myself in a similar situation.'"

Tucker Ward, a freshman at Tulane University and an avid reader, introduced Makkai at her lecture.

"At its heart, the book is not a true crime story. To me, it's the story of a woman, and it's the story of how women are expected to live in the world," Ward said.

The 2024-2025 Zale Kimmerling writer-in-residence will be Tayari Jones, who will be on campus in February 2025.



On April 23, 2024, Newcomb Institute celebrated the groundbreaking achievements of the Original Pinettes Brass Band, New Orleans' only all-female brass band, founded in 1991. For over 30 years, the Pinettes have shattered barriers for women in the brass band scene. The evening featured student documentary work from TIL 504, highlighting the band's journey, including their triumphs and challenges. Attendees enjoyed an engaging conversation between the Pinettes and students, exploring what it truly means to "blow up the brass ceiling." The program was co-sponsored by Newcomb Institute, Tulane's Department of Music, and the Gender and Sexuality Studies Program.



Photo courtesy of Cheryl Gerber



Wendy Delery Hills (NC '75, L *78), Andi Schippert Richardson (NC '99), & Regan (Alford) Forrester (NC '71, SW *72) at Newcomb Alumnae Association's 130th Anniversary Celebration in 2023.



Alison Midollo (B '16), Amelia Conrad (LA '13), Raven Ancar (LA '22), & Jessie Smith (PHTM *10) at a panel discussion during Women Making Waves, an annual women's leadership conference

A Year in Review

By Andi Schippert Richardson (NC '99)

We closed out a joyous 2023, honoring our alums and keeping the name “Newcomb” alive during the Newcomb Alumnae Association's 130th Anniversary Celebration. The Champagne Reception during Wave Weekend was the crowning event of the year.

This year, the Newcomb Alumnae Association board is asking ourselves how we can strengthen the Newcomb Network with everything we do. In the spring, Anita Raj was Tulane University Women's Association (TUWA) 2024 Jane and Herbert Longnecker Speaker, and she has opened the door to further Newcomb collaboration with that historic organization.

The Newcomb Institute and NAA were eager to get involved this February in Tulane's inaugural Black Alumni Weekend. The excitement-filled weekend was a celebration of art and culture and focused on Black alumni and their contributions to the university. Newcomb Institute co-hosted a panel discussion. Thanks to VP of Alumnae Lauren Lee Pettiete Schewel (NC '09) and the NAA EDI Committee, the weekend also included the much-anticipated Queen Tahj performance with the Golden Eagle Mardi Gras Indian Tribe.

Each year, alums have opportunities in the fall and spring to connect at NAA Book Clubs across the country and by Zoom. In the spring, we read *Necessary Trouble: Growing Up at Midcentury* by Drew Gilpin Faust, who was featured at the New Orleans Book Festival sponsored by Tulane. During the fall book clubs, we will celebrate the Zale-Kimmerling Writer-in-Residence, which includes events in the spring such as readings and Q&As by Tayari Jones.

We are incredibly proud of our collaboration with the Newcomb Institute and the Newcomb Director's Advisory Council for a successful Give Green campaign. We exceeded all our challenges, raising \$45,248, receiving 315 gifts to finish first in our category, and securing an additional \$8,000 to support our programming. Most importantly, this was a very powerful day of keeping Newcomb in the spotlight.

We hosted our first delightful “Evening with Dr. Raj” in Washington, D.C., and will be holding more receptions soon. These events are an opportunity to introduce Executive Director Anita Raj to alums and Newcomb supporters around the country.



Black Alumni Weekend at Tulane with Queen Tahj (PA '20) performance & the Golden Eagle Mardi Gras Indian Tribe



Newcomb Alumnae Association Challenge during Give Green

NEWCOMB Donor Honor Roll

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Karen Conley-Greene	Green	Juanita Marie Weisbach Madole	Mary Luciene Fountain	Alison Jean Zehr
Katherine Sue Scherer Conner	Constance Lee Stewart Green	Linda Dianne Arnette Martin	Schroeder	Jane Frances Armstrong
Mary Lou Soulé Conroy	Peggy Strauss Greenbaum	Paula Vaughan Mazursky	Clair Cook Schwartz	Zimmerman
Laura Louise Curry Cornell	Dorothy May Collins Griffin	Kathleen Ross Melville	Sally Crockett Mysing Seaman,	
Louise Carroll Collins Dabezies	Roberta Atkinson Guillory	Janice Bernardi Meyer	PhD	

This information is accurate to the best of our knowledge as of August 1, 2024.



Newcomb Institute

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We're still finalizing all of the details for our seventh annual Give Green: a day for the audacious. But one thing is certain we hope to make this the best and biggest one yet. Check back at givegreen.tulane.edu in the coming months for more information about the day!

Want to be the first to know what we're up to at Newcomb Institute? Connect with us on social media! Following us on social media is the best way to keep up with what our faculty, staff, students, and alums are up to.

