

Freeman earns recognition for EDI achievements

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Treasure Joiner (PHTM '24), Joseph Benefiel (SSE '25), Janae Burney (PHTM '25) and Aryanna Baytop (BSM/MACCT '26), members of the organization Students Against Food Insecurity, received the Winds of Change Award at the 2024 Tulane EDI Awards Ceremony.

Two members of the A. B. Freeman School of Business community were recently honored by Tulane University for exceptional achievements in advancing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion awareness, knowledge, skills and action.

The recognition came at the 2024 Tulane EDI Awards Ceremony, a program of Tulane's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion that highlights champions of EDI from across the university. The event took place on Jan. 19 at the New Orleans Lakefront Airport.

Freeman student Aryanna Baytop (BSM/MACCT '26) was part of a group that received the Winds of Change Award, which recognizes Tulane student organizations

that demonstrate exceptional and unique EDI service and leadership. Baytrop and fellow students Treasure Joiner (PHTM '24), Joseph Benefiel (SSE '25), Janae Burney (PHTM '25) are the founders of [Students Against Food Insecurity](#), a new student organization that works to increase awareness of food insecurity among Tulane students and food deserts in the New Orleans community. The organization also operates a community food pantry.

In addition, Myke Yest, associate dean of undergraduate education and senior professor of practice, received The Navigator - Faculty EDI Mentorship Award, which honors faculty members who demonstrate exemplary culturally responsive mentoring to students, trainees, residents, fellows, other faculty or staff. Yest was recognized for his ongoing commitment to inclusive mentorship at the Freeman School as well as for his role as co-director of the Altman Program in International Studies and Business.

Under the leadership of Associate Dean for EDI Erick Valentine, the Freeman School has put a focus on raising awareness of EDI and ensuring that every member of the Freeman community receives the support they need.

"One of our central messages is that EDI is about more than just increasing diversity," said Valentine. "It's about creating an organizational culture that enables us to attract and retain the very best students, faculty and staff. Awards like this highlight and support that message, so I'm thrilled to see Aryanna and Myke receive this well-deserved recognition."

Since its launch in 2022, the Freeman School's Office of EDI has organized workshops for faculty and staff, worked with Tulane's central EDI office on the university's climate survey, established EDI advisory councils for both faculty and staff, hosted events for Black business alumni, and launched a fund to support innovative student training.

"It's wonderful to see the impactful work our students and faculty are doing recognized across the university," add Roz Butler, the Freeman School's director of EDI. "Over the last year, we've made great strides in raising awareness of EDI and giving faculty, staff and students the resources and training they need to help advance equity and make Freeman a place where everyone feels welcomed and supported, and Aryanna and Myke are our partners in that effort."