

Three faculty members named Duren Professors for 2018-19

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From left: Christopher Oliver, Adam McKeown and Laurie Earls have been named Duren Professors at Tulane University for 2018-19. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

[Newcomb-Tulane College](#) has appointed Laurie Earls, Adam McKeown and Christopher Oliver as Duren Professors for 2018-19. The trio was selected on the basis of their commitment to undergraduate teaching and their innovative proposals.

The [Duren Professorship Program](#) is designed to encourage team-teaching and the development of multidisciplinary courses by liberal arts, science and engineering faculty members. Duren Professors receive a \$5,000 stipend, plus up to \$5,000 in additional funding to support unique programming or to secure partial release from departmental teaching responsibilities.

The Duren Professorship Program was established and endowed with a generous gift from the late William L. Duren, a Tulane graduate and professor emeritus.

A cell and molecular biology professor, Earls will use her funds to present seminars featuring professors in bioinformatics programs from other universities, visit faculty at national institutions to learn their processes of establishing a bioinformatics major and create a consortium to develop a unified bioinformatics curriculum.

“My Duren award is allowing me to work with professors in cell and molecular biology, computer science and mathematics to generate a novel curriculum that will appeal to students who wish to explore the genomics frontier,” Earls said. “This is an opportunity not available at many universities.”

A professor of English, McKeown will work in conjunction with The Historic New Orleans Collection and Tulane’s Center for Public Service to create an online exhibition called “Discovering Colonial America: Louisiana.”

“The Duren Professor is an expression of Tulane's commitment to our commitment to teaching,” McKeown said. “So much emphasis is placed on faculty research, and with good reason, but the Duren Professorship encourages faculty to include our talented undergraduates in the creation and dissemination of new knowledge.”

Oliver is a professor of sociology and environmental studies who plans to use the Duren funds in support of a course-based project he’s themed, Visualizing Injustice, an expanded version of the fall 2018 section of his senior seminar in environmental studies.

“My revised course will involve making use of visual approaches to environmental studies as part of a larger effort to help with capacity building and public advocacy through engaged partnerships with local community groups directly impacted by issues of socio-environmental injustices,” Oliver said.