

Don and Lora Peters establish “Graduated With Honors” Wall for student-athletes

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Tulane Athletics displays the “Graduated With Honors” Wall, which highlights the academic achievements of graduating Tulane student-athletes. It was made possible by a gift from Don (A&S ’81) and Lora Peters. (Photo by Parker Waters)

Tulane University student-athletes are known for their excellence on the field and in the classroom, and now the best of the best are receiving recognition on a wall in the James W. Wilson Intercollegiate Athletics Center. The “Graduated With Honors Wall” was made possible by the generosity of Tulane alumnus Donald Peters and his

wife, Lora.

"The most important job of the Athletics Department is to ensure that students get a first-class education. An additional goal is to lead its conference with the highest graduation rate and team GPAs," said Donald Peters. "Given Tulane's demanding academics and the other commitments of its athletes, those students who graduate *cum laude* and above deserve special recognition."

Supporting the Green Wave is a point of pride for Don (A&S '81) and Lora Peters; the dedicated pair has contributed more than \$3 million to the Green Wave Club and Tulane Athletics.

Ben Weiner Director of Athletics Troy Dannen said, "Tulane student-athletes are a remarkable breed. They demonstrate the same exceptional work ethic and drive to achieve whether they are on the field or in the classroom, and it's wonderful to be able to recognize that in a meaningful way."

"Student-athletes who receive Latin honors, which are awarded to graduates at the top of their class, are listed on the wall, and they are also given a trophy," said Charvi Greer, senior associate athletic director for academics.

The Graduated With Honors Wall is located just outside the Robert "Bob" Cudd III Academic Service Center, which houses advisors who work with student-athletes. There, student-athletes get the tools to be successful in both athletics and academics, such as tutoring, mentoring, life skills and career development.

"It takes a special person to be a successful student-athlete at Tulane, and we have so many," said Greer. "Tulane is a high academic-achieving institution with the same expectations for athletics as any Division I institution. Tulane student-athletes spend long hours challenging their minds and their bodies."

The names of the first honorees were inscribed on the wall following their May 2018 graduations. Lisa Mordell (SSE '18), varsity volleyball player and vice president of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, graduated *magna cum laude* in three years with degrees in neuroscience and economics. She is currently getting her master's in neuroscience at Tulane and finished her fourth year of athletic eligibility.

"I'm so appreciative of Mr. and Mrs. Peters. It really means a lot to me to have my name on the wall," said Mordell. "It's a very special honor. When my teammates see

my name on that wall, they'll be inspired to work hard so they can get their name on that wall as well.

"A big part of the reason that I initially chose to come to Tulane is because it has top 40 academics and Division I athletics," she added. "When you come to Tulane there's an expectation for excellence both in academics and athletics. I don't think I could have had a better academic experience than I had at Tulane."

The inaugural names from the Class of 2018 include:

Sarah Ray / Volleyball
Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Public Health

Madeline Mertz / Beach Volleyball
Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Management

Lisa Mordell / Volleyball
Magna Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience

Sofia Kurtz / Tennis
Cum Laude
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

Jennifer Lamori / Cross Country / Track & Field
Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Public Health

Lauren Bartels / Cross Country / Track & Field
Summa Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Engineering

Emma Newton / Cross Country / Track & Field
Summa Cum Laude
Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience and Bachelor of Arts in Economics