Lepage Center announces inaugural Faculty Fellows

November 1, 2018



Professor of Accounting Jasmijn Bol, left, and Assistant Professor of Accounting Serena Loftus are among the eight Tulane University faculty members to receive research and career-development grants through the Lepage Center Faculty Fellows programs.

The Albert Lepage Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Tulane University's A. B. Freeman School of Business has awarded eight career-development grants as part of the newly launched Lepage Faculty Fellows program. The program supports faculty engaged in research, teaching or commercialization efforts in entrepreneurship and innovation.

The competitive grants are renewable annually for up to three years.

More than 25 applicants from the schools of science and engineering, liberal arts, law, medicine and business applied to the program, which was created to support faculty research, entrepreneurial activity and career development throughout Tulane.

“Our faculty fellows are truly a wonderful representation of entrepreneurial activity across the university,” said Rob Lalka, executive director of the Lepage Center. “We were overwhelmed by the caliber of the applicants’ research and commercialization activities.”

The Lepage Faculty Fellows are working on a variety of projects:

- **Elizabeth Townsend Gard**, the Jill. H and Avram A. Glazer Professor in Social Entrepreneurship at Tulane Law School, is building a legal program to aid family-run businesses in the quilt and craft industry aiming to protect multigenerational intellectual property, enhance public awareness of enterprises through podcasts and social media, and ensure fair financial rewards for rich cultural contributions.
- Professor of Accounting **Jasmijn Bol** and Assistant Professor of Accounting **Serena Loftus** help entrepreneurs and established businesses unlock employee effort. They have developed a modern and holistic framework focused on organizational systems that inspires employees to work hard and smart.
- Over 40 years ago, efforts at Tulane University School of Medicine’s Peptide Research Lab resulted in the Nobel Prize in Medicine for identifying peptides of the brain. This intense research effort created a hub of expertise in peptide research and two highly successful commercial peptide drugs, Lanreotide and Decapeptyl. Building on this expertise, **Joseph A. Fuselier**, research assistant professor in the School of Medicine, is pursuing a novel pharmaceutical technology with the potential to create scientific, business, and intellectual property opportunities which will greatly impact human health.
- **Noshir Pesika**, associate professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, conducts research in the field of biomimetics, which refers to closely replicating or being inspired by nature to improve or develop new technologies. He will use his award to launch a new company that will sell a novel adhesive designed to mimic the way gecko lizards attach and detach from surfaces. His hope is the company becomes known for biomimetic technologies, with the gecko-inspired adhesive being just one of the products.

- An Editorial Board member of the *Journal Business Venturing*, Assistant Professor of Management **Shuhua Sun**'s research seeks to unveil the motivational processes of entrepreneurship, antecedents of entrepreneurs' well-being, and how entrepreneurs craft their work to be more meaningful for themselves, their employees, and other key stakeholders. This award enables him to continue to field surveys and collect data to support his studies.
- Associate Professor of Cell and Molecular Biology **Shusheng Wang** will continue research, patent filing and commercialization efforts to use cutting-edge CRISPR genome editing technology to cure the leading cause of blindness in the elderly, which effects approximately 8.7 percent of the worldwide population and has a market size predicted to reach $8.9 billion by year 2022.
- A scholar who focuses on technology entrepreneurship, Assistant Professor of Management **Yuchen Zhang** will expand on two ongoing research projects: first, to explore in greater depth how information disclosures can influence crowdfunding performance on platforms like Kickstarter; second, to analyze the patenting activities of public and private firms in China.

Lepage Faculty Fellows will present their research at a half-day conference hosted by the Lepage Center in the spring, collaborate with Innovators-in-Residence to assist the student ventures in the Lepage Center incubator, and support the work of the Family Business Center, the Tulane Business Model Competition, and other Lepage Center activities.