



**DILLARD**  

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**UNIVERSITY**



2022 - 2023

# Annual Report









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*“We rely on the teachings and leadership of those who set us on this path to becoming a communiversity.”*





# Letter from the President

Since Dillard University's founding as Straight and New Orleans University in 1869, our staff, faculty, students, board of trustees and friends have made New Orleans the home for people, especially African Americans, to become leaders who had faith, courage, strength and confidence to strive to make the world a better place. During the 2022-2023 academic year, our Dillard University community recommitted to activating on our commitment to excellence.

Our community of staff and faculty work tirelessly to build on our legacy of providing an excellent education and environment for students, and community to learn and become healthier, safer, and more innovative.

Since becoming the 8th president of Dillard University on July 01, 2022, I have grown to value the word "communiversity," which was coined by Nick Harris, director of community and church relations, in 2006 following Hurricane Katrina. According to Harris, "Dillard was among the first in the Gentilly area to have power restored. To support families who were slowly returning home, we began hosting meetings on campus to provide them with information and access to resources that they needed in order to rebuild their homes and the community." That outreach resulted in Dillard becoming known as a community university, which later evolved into the word "communiversity."

Eighteen years later, Dillard University is steadfast in our commitment to live our mission of cultivating leaders who live ethically, think and communicate precisely and act courageously to make the world a better place. Our campus community of staff and faculty continue to work tirelessly to build on our legacy of providing an excellent education, as well as an environment for students and our neighbors to learn, become healthier, safer and more innovative.

As we move forward, we rely on the teachings and leadership of those who set us on this path to becoming a communiversity. As



such, we have begun focusing our attention on the DU3: facilities that withstand the forecast, fortifying our staff and faculty, and financing the future. We appreciate those who have made contributions of their time, talent, and treasure to make our mission possible by activating on our commitment to make these improvements. We are proud of how far we've come, and excited about where we are headed.

As the spring semester came to an end, we gathered to recognize colleagues for their outstanding contributions campus wide. Their commitment and tenacity set the bar for each of us. They are:

- Our painters Alvin Breaux and Agin Saboor, who made Dent Hall, home of Dillard Athletics, more vibrant.
- Mary Clementin, “Miss Cat,” who retired this year, following 26 years of dedicated service under five presidents, and two interims.
- Angie Wu, who manages our fixed asset accounting.
- Chief Angela Honora, who, in addition to keeping the campus safe, often prepares homemade and grilled dishes for our students.
- Geralyn Love, who for the past sixteen years has managed our communications and marketing department, ensuring continuity and adherence to our brand.
- Rodney Peters, who is a jack-of-all-trades in our facilities department. Mr. Peters identified a \$20 solution to what consultants quoted to be a \$10,000 repair.
- Cortheal Clark, who leads our humanities school within the College of Arts and Sciences and has orchestrated many of university's major events.

- Lovell Agwaramgbo, who leads our School of STEM and has served as leader of our Faculty Academic Senate.
- Nick Harris, who, as director of community and church relations, coined the term “communiversity,” which frames our new vision for Dillard University.
- Kathy Taylor, who has served as an executive communications professional for three presidents and two interim presidents and provided continuity throughout as the secretary to the board of trustees.

These individuals are illustrations of the great work of our internal team.

I am still in awe by the way New Orleans welcomes our students and employees and invests in Dillard. The Urban League Luncheon was my first event as president, and now we are collaborating through the Southern Communities Initiative in partnership with the Student Freedom Initiative, both established by Venture Capitalist and Philanthropist, Robert Smith.





My second event was the Essence Festival of Culture (EFOC), which led to a strong relationship with the organization, starting with my working with state government officials on the festival's economic impact on Louisiana. During my first Mardi Gras, I rode in the Mystic Krewe of Femme Fatale parade on the Coca-Cola / Coke United float with the Essence team. Finally, Dillard was honored to welcome Essence Ventures CEO, Carolina Wanga as our 2023 commencement speaker. Thanks to our relationship with Essence, more than 40 students interned or volunteered during the 2023 Essence Festival of Culture.

Additionally, as a new member of the United Way of SE Louisiana board, and as the new chair of the GNO, Inc. Higher Education Council, I am anxious to help Dillard engage more in advancing greater New Orleans.

As the new leadership team and I immersed ourselves in the history of Dillard, one thing I knew we had to prioritize was the relaunching of the historic Dillard University National Center for Black-Jewish Relations, initially founded by 4th president, Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook. The relaunched Center is committed to advancing the work of its precursor by developing new projects

that build upon the teachings, conversations, and relationships of the original. True to its mission of cultivating leaders who live ethically, think and communicate precisely, and act courageously to make the world a better place, Dillard is committed to establishing the Center as a space for dialogue, learning, and mutual understanding between Black and Jewish communities.

As you will read in this annual report, Dillard is making great strides to not only activate on our commitment to excellence and cultivating leaders, but also to become again the “communiversity” that advances healthy, safe and innovative communities.

With Gratitude, Faith and Strength,

*Rochelle Larkin Ford, Ph.D., APR  
President and Professor*

# Activating Our Commitment







# Activating Our Commitment

*Embracing excellence without excuses.*

## **An Unwavering Mission**

As Louisiana’s oldest Historically Black University, Dillard University is no stranger to the lasting impact a legacy can have on a community. Every person who has stepped onto the Rosa Freeman Keller Avenue of the Oaks—students, faculty, staff, and local New Orleanians alike—have contributed to that very legacy.

While degree offerings and campus facilities have changed over the past 154 years, our mission as a university and pillar of the Gentilly community has not. Dillard University’s commitment to cultivate leaders who live ethically, think and communicate precisely, and act courageously to make the world a better place is unwavering.

*Dillard University is a historically Black institution that cultivates leaders who live ethically, think and communicate precisely, and act courageously to make the world a better place.*

## **Activating Our Commitment: The DU<sub>3</sub>**

Dillard University’s staff, faculty, alumni, board of trustees, and community members are making tangible progress in activating our commitment to students by advancing what we call the “DU<sub>3</sub>.”

By focusing on the DU<sub>3</sub>, President Rochelle Ford has achieved a wide span of accomplishments in her first year at Dillard, from major infrastructure improvements and increased fundraising, to establishing Dillard’s first-ever Master of Science in Nursing program to name a few accomplishments.

*The DU<sub>3</sub> encompasses three key areas of focus*

- 1** Facilities that withstand the forecast
- 2** Fortifying our staff and faculty
- 3** Financing the future



MEASURING SUCCESS: Dillard at a Glance

**22**  
programs of study

**\$12.4M**  
institutional aid

**14:1**  
student-to-faculty

*Louisiana's first HBCU, born from the union of Straight College and New Orleans University*

**72%**  
of students  
are awarded  
Pell grants

**100%**  
nursing license  
exam passage for  
2023 cohort

## Dillard: A Communitiveristy

### Building healthy, safe, and innovative communities

Dillard University's very essence is rooted in community, as highlighted in our commitment

to uplift others through a high standard of self. Our collective efforts at Dillard work toward the greater goal of making the world a better place for all. Locally, that looks like serving as a 'living-learning-serving communitiversity' to greater New Orleans-- a beacon in the Gentilly neighborhood where people can learn, take refuge, worship, and connect with one another. Dillard is actively cultivating leaders in the following key areas of focus to create healthy, safe, and innovative communities.

### Healthy Communities

Since its founding, Dillard has been dedicated to the health and wellness of all people, particularly people of color and those in historically marginalized communities. We are committed to improving the mental and physical health of our communities as demonstrated by the work being done at our NIH-endowed Center for Minority Health and Health Equity Research. Dillard also launched a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program, which will positively impact the demand for nurses and nurse educators. Additionally, the Student Success Committee at Dillard is taking steps to further improve life on campus for current and future students by starting a three-



year mental and emotional wellness strategic plan to aid students with counseling, wellness, and provide additional mental health resources. We aim to offer additional scalable certifications to help faith, civic, educational, beauty, fashion, athletic and other leaders to improve health and wellness in their respective spheres.

Through the Ray Charles Program for African American Material Culture, AARP Community Garden, and our food studies minor, Dillard is making an impact in the fight against food insecurity and food deserts. We hope to build more community gardens and serve as an economic development partner to bring healthy food options to even more people in New Orleans.

### Safe Communities

An education at Dillard can be directly correlated to increased social and economic mobility for our students. Dillard takes pride in supporting students, alumni, and greater New Orleans in developing, sustaining and growing businesses in order to attain generational wealth. Financial



## 2023 Enrollment & Graduation

Spring 2023 Enrollment

**1,127** students

Fall 2023 Enrollment

**1,123** students

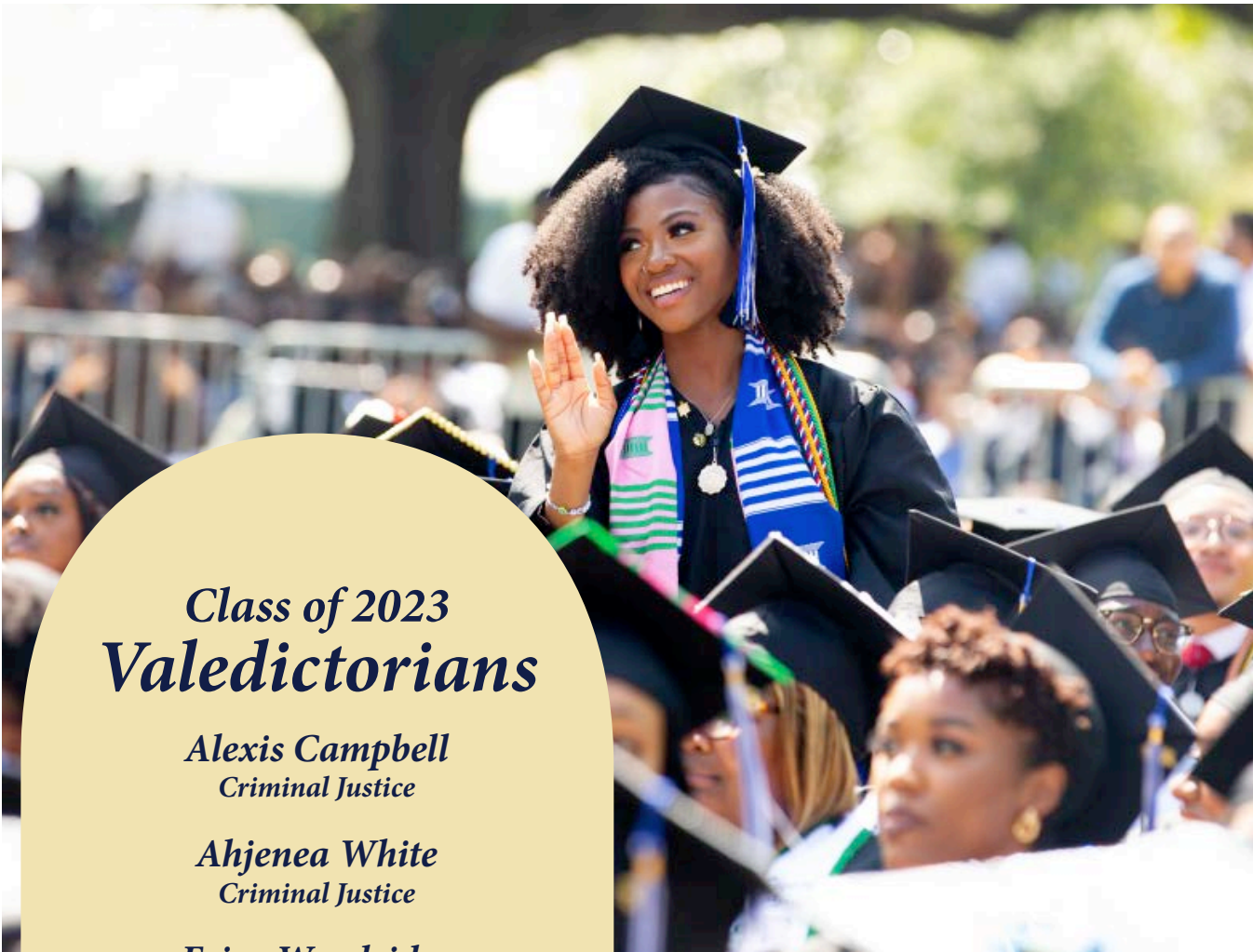
**+4%**  
increase from  
last year

In May 2023, Dillard University awarded degrees to 209 students on the iconic Rosa Freeman Keller Avenue of the Oaks. Approximately 36% of graduates graduated with honors.

literacy is a key component of Dillard’s student financial services and specialized programs, equipping students of all socioeconomic backgrounds with the tools and knowledge needed to succeed. Dillard has also incubated numerous businesses as a founding partner of Greater New Orleans (GNO), Inc.’s Ventures Program.

In order for a community to be safe, it must first be equitable. Through Dillard’s criminal justice, urban studies, and social work programs, we are cultivating leaders who will understand what it takes to make communities more equitable. Dillard’s Center for Racial Justice strives to bring systematic change to public safety, education, advocacy, and juvenile justice. Through this program, we promote partnerships with law enforcement as well as graduate and professional schools. To help ensure students and community members can participate in elections, the Center for Student Engagement and Leadership led a campus-wide initiative to





*Class of 2023*  
**Valedictorians**

*Alexis Campbell*  
*Criminal Justice*

*Ahjenea White*  
*Criminal Justice*

*Erica Woodridge*  
*Criminal Justice*

*Valesha Rhodes*  
*Psychology*

*Jerika Edwards*  
*Urban Studies & Public Policy*

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*Class of 2023*  
**Salutatorians**

*Carolyn Hernandez*  
*Criminal Justice*

*Olivia Johnson*  
*Theater Performance*

earn Dillard University’s designation as a Voter Friendly Campus. This designation will help break down barriers and empower students with information and resources needed to exercise their democratic rights.

**Innovative Communities**

Through cutting-edge research opportunities and rigorous coursework, Dillard University faculty and students are stewards of sustainability and innovation. Dillard is a leader in educating Black women in physics, and offers certificates such as nuclear physics and radiation, and urban water management (the only program of its kind in Louisiana). We are also involved in the H2TheFuture program with



GNO Inc., in which Dillard students and faculty research the economic impact of various events and programs. This data allows us to understand the impacts of technology and innovation on a community.

Dillard University's curriculum and extracurriculars pay special attention to broadband, cyber and digital communications to ensure students are learning the latest in

information technology. Dillard's computer science program is growing partnerships with companies like Google, Apple, and Cisco in order to provide students with hands-on opportunities. Additionally, Dillard owns a cell tower, enabling Gentilly and other pockets of New Orleans to have access to reliable WiFi, furthering digital equity.





73%

## Career Outcomes Rate

Percentage of students who received a job offer, were accepted into grad school, or were securing post-grad internships/fellowships prior to graduation.

### CAREER OUTCOMES RATE BREAK DOWN

42%

*of students received a job offer prior to graduation*

31%

*of students were accepted into graduate school*

### Bleu Devils Head for Bright Futures

While the Dillard graduates of 2023 close one chapter here on campus, their next chapter is just beginning. We're excited for the class of 2023 as they embark on their next adventures, and we are honored to know that their time at Dillard provided them with the experience, teachings, and opportunities to prepare them for all that is to come.

Dillard 2023 graduates who received employment offers prior to graduation collectively accepted jobs from more than 76 different employers, including Apple, Ochsner Health, the Louisiana Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, to name a few. The students accepted into graduate schools prior to graduation will continue their studies spanning 29 different schools across the country—from Alabama A&M, to Brown University, to UCLA Law School.



# Academics & Student Life







# Academics & Student Life

*Dillard University is proud to offer students more accredited degrees and opportunities than ever before.*

Dillard University offers students from across the globe a wide range of studies, spanning 22 majors and two certificate programs. With a student body of more than 1,100 students and an impressive 14:1 student-to-faculty ratio, Dillard is able to offer students a high-quality yet individualized education, and has the nationwide recognition and accolades to prove it.



***Dillard  
is ranked***

**#14**

***Among the 104 Historically Black  
Colleges and Universities in 2023***

Source: U.S. News & World Report

**#3**

***Producer of Physics Bachelor's Degrees  
Awarded to African Americans***

Source: American Institute of Physics

**#5**

***New York Times Overall  
Mobility Index***

Source: The New York Times

**#14**

***Best Colleges and Universities  
by Academic Stewardship***

Source: Academic Influence





## ***Accreditation: Dillard University officially approved to offer graduate education in 2023***

As the first-ever college or university in Louisiana to offer an accredited baccalaureate degree in nursing, Dillard University has been educating and empowering leaders in healthcare since the program began in 1942. Fast forward to 2023, Dillard's College of Nursing continues to make history.

In December of 2022 under Dr. Ford's tenure, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) announced that Dillard University is approved to offer graduate education in fall 2023, moving Dillard to a Level III degree offering institution. The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) in the College of Nursing will be the first master's degree offered at Dillard in its 153-year history. Dillard's nursing

program has the largest number of majors with a substantial 15% of the student population enrolled in the College of Nursing.

With this exciting new offering comes an influx of opportunities for nursing students at Dillard to catapult their careers, advance their economic mobility, and further the mission to cultivate safer and healthier communities.

## *Thoughtful Partnerships Lead to Bright Opportunities*

Dillard University is committed to partnering with educational institutions across the globe, from Guam to Arkansas to Japan, in order to offer students and faculty once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to experience different cultures, share critical knowledge, and become well-rounded leaders. Below are just a few of the highlights as to how the Bleu Devils are seizing the partnership opportunities Dillard has to offer.



### **DU Physicists Head to Japan**

Dillard University and the Shibaura Institute of Technology (SIT) extended a collaborative relationship involving international research, an exchange of faculty/staff and students, and the development of an engineering English program for Japanese students.

*“In light of the vision of our president, Dr. Ford, to have DU as an international hub of technology, this [partnership] will signify the exchange of technology and innovation between the U.S. and Japan. It will establish an environment for students’ critical thinking and training to flourish.”*

— Dr. Abdalla Darwish,  
Presidential Professor and  
Professor of Physics at Dillard

### **Making Waves in Music**

Dillard students interested in the music industry—whether performing, music business, or publishing—have many opportunities to receive hands-on experience.

The nationally renowned Dillard University Ensemble traveled to Hendricks Chapel at Syracuse University to perform in the “Return to Community: A Sunday Gospel Jazz Service,” the grand finale of Syracuse Jazz Fest 2023.

Dillard University partnered with Warner Chappell Music (the global music publishing company of Warner Music Group) to put on the WCM and Dillard University Sync Summit: a three-day summit offering students hands-on experience and insight into music publishing and licensing. The Sync Summit, the first of its kind, took place on campus with music industry executives.





### National Student Exchange Program Launches

Over the past year, Dillard University invested in a membership with the National Student Exchange, a program that offers students the opportunity to study away for a semester at one of the other 170+ university members in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, Canada, and the Virgin Islands. This exciting partnership will support Dillard's mission to cultivate leaders who will make a global impact.

Dual-Degree Partnership Offers Dillard Students Engineering Degrees: A brand-new relationship with Washington University's McElvey School of Engineering will now allow Dillard students to take advantage of WashU's Dual Degree Program in St. Louis and obtain engineering degrees. As a 3-2 program, the Dual Degree enables DU students to obtain their BA or BS from Dillard, along with a BSE from WashU. Program graduates are fondly referred to as "liberally educated engineers."

*"I believe this opportunity will help further prepare our students for high-demand professions like education, cyber management, health and wellness management, and emergency management. This Tulane-Dillard program should inspire others in the higher education community to collaborate to provide access to advanced degrees and help enrich the diversity of their students thus creating a more vibrant learning community."*

— Dr. Rochelle L. Ford, APR.,  
Dillard University President

### Tulane and Dillard Partner for Accelerated Master's Program

As of July 2023, Dillard University partnered with the Tulane School of Professional Advancement (Tulane SoPA) in order to offer students a fast-tracked path toward earning graduate degrees. Through the new agreement, DU undergraduates can apply to Tulane SoPA's graduate programs and cross-register in two courses while paying the tuition rate of their home institution.

### Guaranteed Post-Grad Placement at Arkansas Colleges of Health Education

In spring 2023, Dillard University embarked on an agreement with Arkansas Colleges of Health Education that offers Dillard students opportunities to receive early assurance their junior year. This partnership will grant students early entry into ACHE programs including Doctorate of Osteopathic Medicine, Doctorate of Physical Therapy, Doctorate of Occupational Therapy, and Master of Science in Biomedicine.



### University of TN College of Nursing Welcomes Dillard Nursing Graduates

Dillard University and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center College of Nursing's new Partnership Enrollment Program now offers DU students guaranteed full admission to the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) or Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science (PhD) programs upon completing their bachelor's or master's degree in nursing at Dillard.

# *Dillard University College of Arts & Sciences*

With 65% of Dillard's students enrolled in the College of Arts & Sciences, it is the largest academic unit, and the heart of Dillard. It encompasses the School of Humanities, School of Social Sciences, School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), and the School of Health and Wellness. Dillard prides itself on the high-quality, liberal arts education that we're able to offer all students enrolled in the College of Arts & Sciences inside the classroom, research labs, art studios, and out in the world.

## *College of Arts & Sciences Fast Facts*

**1st**

*HBCU Theatre Program in America*

**#62**

*Best Social Mobility among National Liberal Arts Colleges*

US News and World Report Best Colleges

**#9**

*Best Biology Bachelor's Program*

Study.com

**#13**

*Best Film Bachelor's Program*

Study.com

**#45**

*Most Beautiful College Campus*

Cosmopolitan Magazine





## H I G H L I G H T R E E L



“Best University Theater Production” Dillard Theatre’s fall production of “Yellowman,” a drama exploring the intersection of racial and gender stereotypes, garnered attention and high praise from the New Orleans premiere entertainment award event, The Big Easy Awards. Dillard tied for first place for the Best University Theater Production in the 2023 Big Easy Awards—a fantastic accolade to cap Dillard Theatre’s 88th season. The Big Easy Awards celebrate top talent in music and performing arts, presenting more than 45 awards to local talent for accomplishments in music and theater.

**Battle of the Brains:** Eight bright computer science and business students traveled to Austin, Texas to represent Dillard University in the 2023 Annual HBCU Battle of the Brains, an academic national championship in which 35 teams from HBCUs around the country compete. Dillard placed in the top seven teams, sending them to the finals. The HBCU Battle of the Brains is not only an incredible academic experience, but a showcase of top talent in the field. In fact, one computer science major from Dillard was offered a coveted undergraduate internship from Dell at the event.



**DU Rocket Team Launches with NASA:** The Rocket Team at Dillard participated in the 2022-2023 Liftoff Division for NASA’s Rocket University and College event for the third year in a row. Not only is it an impressive feat to be accepted to participate in the event, but Dillard was the first HBCU and university in Louisiana to participate.

At the event, students learned about rocketry science and payload designs through NASA online tutorials and met with rocket experts and NASA Marshall Space Flight Center scientists and researchers. Throughout the project, students built the modeled rocket design they submitted, presented and defended the design, physically launched it with their mentors, and received their Level-1 rocket certification. The DU Rocket Team was also selected to participate in the Nationwide Eclipse Ballooning Project in 2023 and 2024.

## *Bleu Devils Athletics*

### **Dillard Blue Devils fight for—and achieve—victory**

Dillard University’s athletic mission is to develop passionate scholar-athletes who pursue purpose and progress to make the world a better place. From practice to championships, the five core values of the NAIA Champions of Character Program are at the forefront of everything our student athletes and coaching staff do: Respect, Integrity, Responsibility, Servant Leadership, and Sportsmanship. And we’ve got the championships, community impact, and department GPA to show for it.



### **Bringing Home the Gold**

The Bleu Devils had a fantastic year, winning five championships spanning four sports and two athletic conferences.

- D The Dillard women’s volleyball team ended the 2022 season on a high after retaining their undefeated 20-game win streak. The Bleu Devils took home the title of Gulf Coast Athletic Conference (GCAC) Regular Season Champions in 2022, and earned the coveted runner-up ranking in the 2023 Preseason Volleyball All-GCAC Team and Preseason Team Rankings, as voted on by GCAC volleyball coaches.
- D Dillard’s women’s cross country team was named the 2023 GCAC Champions, and both the women’s and men’s outdoor track and field teams were named 2023 GCAC Champions as well.

As of spring 2023,  
*student athletes at Dillard*

have a combined  
**3.07 GPA**

**&** have contributed more than  
**2,025 hours**  
of community service.



- The Dillard baseball team made its debut, making history by playing the first-ever baseball game since the opening of Dillard University. What's even more impressive, in its first season, the baseball team won the 2023 GCAC Championship.



### **Dillard Athletes Make Community Impact**

The Bleu Devils' impact extends beyond the fields and courts, and into classrooms and the New Orleans community.

So everyone—near and far—can participate in Dillard athletics, Dillard University established a partnership with the Urban Edge Network in 2022 in order to livestream athletic events, cultural, and academic programs. The programs are now available on an exclusive HBCU League Pass Plus channel, which is available to download, free of cost. Since launching the partnership, we've been able to stream three conference championships (including the baseball team's victorious championship game, which garnered an astounding 140,000 viewers).

# Cutting-Edge Research & Publications







# Cutting-Edge Research & Publications

*From fighting food insecurity to advancing racial justice, Dillard's faculty and student research is helping make the world a better place.*

## ***Dillard Research Centers***

### **Ray Charles Program in African American Material Culture**

The Dillard University Ray Charles Program in African American Material Culture was founded to research, document, disseminate, preserve, and celebrate African American culture and foodways in the South. In spring 2023, the highly esteemed Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded the Ray Charles Program a \$700,000 grant titled "Higher Learning Through Humanities in Food Studies." The multi-year grant will help strengthen Dillard's research, food studies, community programming and fellowships.

The Ray Charles Program also received a three-year CIC Legacies of American Slavery grant, funding program development and a two-day symposium titled "Rising from the Depths of Slavery: Legacies of Cultural Expression," which







took place in fall 2022. The symposium drew local and national scholars to learn and discuss the role that cultural creativity plays in understanding history and society.

Students in the Ray Charles Program made vast accomplishments, including six students' acceptance as Dillard University Slow Food Sponsored Delegates to attend Terra Madre Del Gusto, an international food festival in Turin, Italy.

### **The Center for Racial Justice**

Dillard's Center for Racial Justice exists to change the way people of color and their communities are policed through education, community, civic engagement training, and more.

The Center for Racial Justice hosts a speaker series during which highly respected and

renowned experts come to Dillard to share experiences, ideas, and prompt discussion. One such guest was Andrew Young Jr., the former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations during President Jimmy Carter's administration. In fall 2022, The Center for Racial Justice hosted an interview and book signing with Dave Dennis Sr. and Dave Dennis Jr. who discussed their book, "The Movement Made Us: A Father, A Son, and A Legacy of a Freedom Ride," which chronicles first-hand experiences from the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s to the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Center for Racial Justice also hosted former United States Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen to engage Dillard University students in thoughtful discussion about the U.S. justice system, criminal justice reform, civil rights and policing, and more.

*“This is exactly the kind of leadership that Dr. King would want a university, particularly a historically Black institution, to take. He would be so proud of what Dillard is doing,”*

— Clarence Jones, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s lawyer and draft speechwriter, regarding the center’s relaunch in an interview with WWL-TV.



#### **National Center for Black-Jewish Relations**

In January 2023, Dr. Ford announced plans to relaunch the National Center for Black-Jewish Relations at Dillard with the mission to reduce hostilities between the African-American and Jewish communities. In light of this milestone, Reverend Herbert A. Brisbon, III, the chaplain at Dillard University, traveled with four Dillard students to the Holy Land in Israel to further explore their own faiths, experience interfaith dialogues, and strengthen Black-Jewish relations.

On campus, Dillard partnered with Spill the Honey Foundation to screen “Shared Legacies,” a documentary about the alliance, friendship, and shared hardships between the African-American and Jewish communities during the Civil Rights Movement. The event entailed a panel discussion with national leaders surrounding the film and modern day Black-Jewish relations.





In 2023,

**100%**  
of Dillard students who applied  
to law school were accepted,  
earning more than

**\$1.3 million**  
in scholarships combined.

### Dillard Pre-Law Program

The legal profession is one of the least diverse professions in the U.S., and Dillard University is actively committed to changing that fact. As the only HBCU and Louisiana university with a full-time pre-law center, Dillard offers all students interested in law a pre-law co-curricular program to learn more about the profession, prepare for the LSAT, and work with mentors through Dillard's Legal Education Advancing Diversity (L.E.A.D.) program.

### Minority Health and Health Equity Research Center

In line with Dillard's mission to cultivate healthy, safe and innovative communities for all, we are dedicated to improving the health of underserved populations. At Dillard's Minority Health and Health Equity Research Center, we conduct research on the health and healthcare inequalities among races and people, inform the public of

the findings, and host events to address health disparities across communities.

The Minority Health and Health Equity Research Center launched a lecture series designed so that members of the community can learn from history-making public health professionals, such as Dr. Joycelyn Elders, the first Black Surgeon General of the United States, who served as our first guest lecturer.

During Black History Month, the center, along with the Office of the Chaplain, collaborated with the National AIDS Memorial and the Southern AIDS Coalition to host a traveling exhibition by the Change the Pattern organization, which honored Black lives lost to HIV/AIDS. Dillard students,

faculty and staff, and Gentilly community members came together for The Reading of Names, during which attendees read names of people who have died of HIV/AIDS provided by the National AIDS Memorial in remembrance.





The center is in the process of creating a Mental Health Wellness and Lactation Lounge to offer Dillard students greater mental health and

breastfeeding access. The lounge will offer new mothers a safe place to return to work and school while breastfeeding.

## *Published Faculty & Students*

*“The Case of the Lost Laviakian Princess”*

**by Professor Carolyn Nur Wistrand**

Dillard English professor and award-winning playwright, Carolyn Nur Wistrand, was one of 19 female playwrights representing the U.S. at the Women’s International Playwrights Conference in Canada. The Flying Hills School of the Arts, a middle school in California, produced the play in summer 2022.

*“Black Creole Chronicles”*

**by Dr. Mona Lisa Saloy**

Dr. Mona Lisa Saloy, a Conrad N. Hilton-endowed professor of English and Louisiana Poet Laureate, published a new collection of verse, “Black Creole Chronicles.” The book was selected as one of the best southern books of 2023 by Southern Review of Books.

*“A Unicorn Called Reparations”*

**by John Barnes**

Dillard associate professor of visual arts, John Barnes, was selected to create a public art sculpture for the New Orleans East intersection of Crowder and Lake Forest Boulevards. His vision for the sculpture involves a large-cast bronze unicorn to “articulate a perception of community change fashioned around the idea of reparations for descendants of slavery.”

*“Edible Plants: The Magic Wand for Inhibition of Oxidation of Organic Compounds, Remediators of TNT and Adsorbents for Heavy Metals”*

**by Jailen Doyle, Kendall Wise, Dr. Lovell Agwaramgbo, Protiti Khan, Christopher O. Alisa**

Research work by students, Jailen Doyle and Kendall Wise, and Dillard School of STEM professor and chair, Dr. Agwaramgbo was accepted for publication in the Journal of Environmental Science and Engineering.

*“Black Dudes with Gator Shoes” | “7th Ward Daily Fare: or Black Creole Talk” | “Resurrection Sunday, Tree Top Visits”*

**by Dr. Mona Lisa Saloy**

Three of Dr. Mona Lisa Saloy’s poems were published in Obsidian: Literature & Arts in the African Diaspora’s issue titled “Heirloom: Preserving HBCU Futures.” Dr. Saloy’s poems were also included in “Black Fire This Time,” an anthology featuring more than 100 poets and writers surrounding the theme of “Black is Beautiful, Black is Powerful, Black is Home.”

# Facilities that Withstand the Forecast





DU<sub>3</sub>



# Facilities that Withstand the Forecast

*Establishing Dillard University as the lighthouse of the Gentilly community*



As we activate our commitment to cultivate leaders, continue Dillard’s legacy of excellence, and establish Dillard as a communiversity, we are focusing on three main areas, also known as the DU3. One of the three focus areas is ensuring Dillard’s facilities can withstand the forecast from extreme heat, hailstorms, or hurricanes. Dillard is investing in its facilities to not only maintain its legacy as one of America’s most beautiful campuses, but also to serve as a lighthouse and refuge to students, faculty, staff, and the greater New Orleans community.

## **From Outages to Opportunities**

Due to equipment failure on campus in February 2023, a power outage affected a portion of Dillard’s buildings, including Williams Hall, Straight Hall, and Camphor-Hartzell Hall. Thanks to the quick thinking of Dr. Ford and the Dillard facilities repair team, we not only rectified a serious

power outage on campus, but also made way for impactful improvements that will help prevent outages and strengthen our infrastructure in the future. To help prevent equipment failure moving forward, Dillard administration advocated for and successfully secured permission to allocate six million dollars in Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding (HEERF) toward roof repairs and HVAC improvements (also enhancing the air quality on campus).

Dr. Ford also launched an Emergency Sustainability Fund, which will allow the Dillard administration to redesign a more powerful, energy-efficient system that will reduce outages, safeguard critical industry training programs, promote environmentally safe learning, and advance technology on campus. Since launching the Emergency Sustainability Fund, we have raised more than \$700,000 to help fortify Dillard’s electrical and technological infrastructure.



# Campus Renovations, Restorations & New Builds

## Dr. Ford Finds Herself at Home

In line with her vision of establishing Dillard University as a living-learning-serving communiversity, Dr. Ford officially moved into the President's Residence on campus in her first year of tenure. Dr. Ford is the first Dillard president to live in the 1936 home since the house was severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. She sees living on campus as an opportunity to connect with students on a deeper and more intentional level by walking across campus together, chatting, and even inviting students over for book readings.

## Preserving History While Improving Safety

The National Trust for Historic Preservation awarded Dillard an HBCU Cultural Heritage Stewardship Initiative Grant totaling an impressive \$155,000. Dillard is one of 40 sites to receive a total of \$3.8 million in grant funding to advance preservation efforts for historic sites such as HBCUs, buildings, and trails that represent African-American cultural heritage. The funds will be used to create a Dillard University Campus Wide Preservation Plan, allowing us to perform a survey of the campus grounds and structures, and assessing how best to preserve them as the university grows. The plan will also take into consideration the impact of time, climate change, and severe weather on the campus.

Dillard University was also awarded a \$750,000 grant from the National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund's Historically Black Colleges and Universities grant program to repair and

renovate the historic Howard House. The Howard House is a beloved 87-year-old building on campus that once housed Dillard's Homemaking Educational Program during World War II, and now hosts ITT offices. The restoration grant is one of the first awarded by the U.S. Department of Interior, which protects cultural heritage under the National Historic Preservation Act.

With its worn wooden pews and large, arched windows overlooking the centuries-old oak trees, the iconic Lawless Chapel is a central facility on campus used for religious, academic and community functions. In order to conduct urgent repairs to the chapel, Dillard University secured \$255,000 from the United Methodist Church Black College Fund. This funding will allow us to repair the roof and prevent further water damage, ensuring our students and community can gather, worship, and join in fellowship safely.



# Faculty & Staff Fortification





DU<sub>3</sub>



# Faculty & Staff Fortification

*Supporting and empowering Dillard's employees to reach new heights*

Dillard University's faculty and staff have made great strides over the past year, from promotions and recognitions to establishing Dillard's new Staff Council. The second focus area within the DU3 initiative to bring Dillard University into the next era is fortifying Dillard's staff and faculty. This consists of providing employees with the resources they need to succeed, amplifying their voices and ideas, and offering them the encouragement and recognition they deserve.

Within Dr. Ford's first two weeks of presidency, she and her team launched an online feedback forum for faculty and staff to openly share their visions for "The Jewel of Gentilly." The ideas and suggestions provided leadership with insight and inspiration on how to further Dillard's mission. To incentivize faculty to apply for grants that provide greater academic opportunities for students, Dillard also enacted a grant-writing incentive that offers staff \$100 each time they write and submit a grant idea.







## *Dillard Faculty Tenures & Promotions*

*Recognizing years of service and accomplishments*

### *Dr. Katrina Kellum*

#### **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, NURSING**

Dillard University was thrilled to promote Dr. Katrina Kellum from assistant professor to associate professor with tenure. Dr. Kellum joined the Dillard faculty in 2016 and holds a Doctor of Nursing Practice, Bachelor's of Science in Nursing, is an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, and is certified by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners. She has served as faculty in at least 10 different courses at Dillard University, has served as sophomore and junior coordinator for the nursing department, and currently serves in a leadership role as senate member and chair of the retention committee. She is a co-advisor for the Student Nursing Association.

### *Dr. Nazar Mustapha*

#### **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL ECONOMICS**

Although officially appointed to the Dillard University faculty as an assistant professor in 2017, Dr. Nazar Mustapha has served Dillard's students since 2007 previously as an instructor. We're elated to promote Dr. Mustapha to associate professor with tenure in recognition of his great work. Dr. Mustapha holds PhDs in financial economics and mathematics and physics, as well as a Master of Science in statistics. He is regularly published in internationally recognized journals, and presents at topical conferences nationally and internationally. Dr. Mustapha has received several exemplary teaching awards from Dillard University as well as its pre-alumni council.

## *Amplifying the Voices of Dillard*

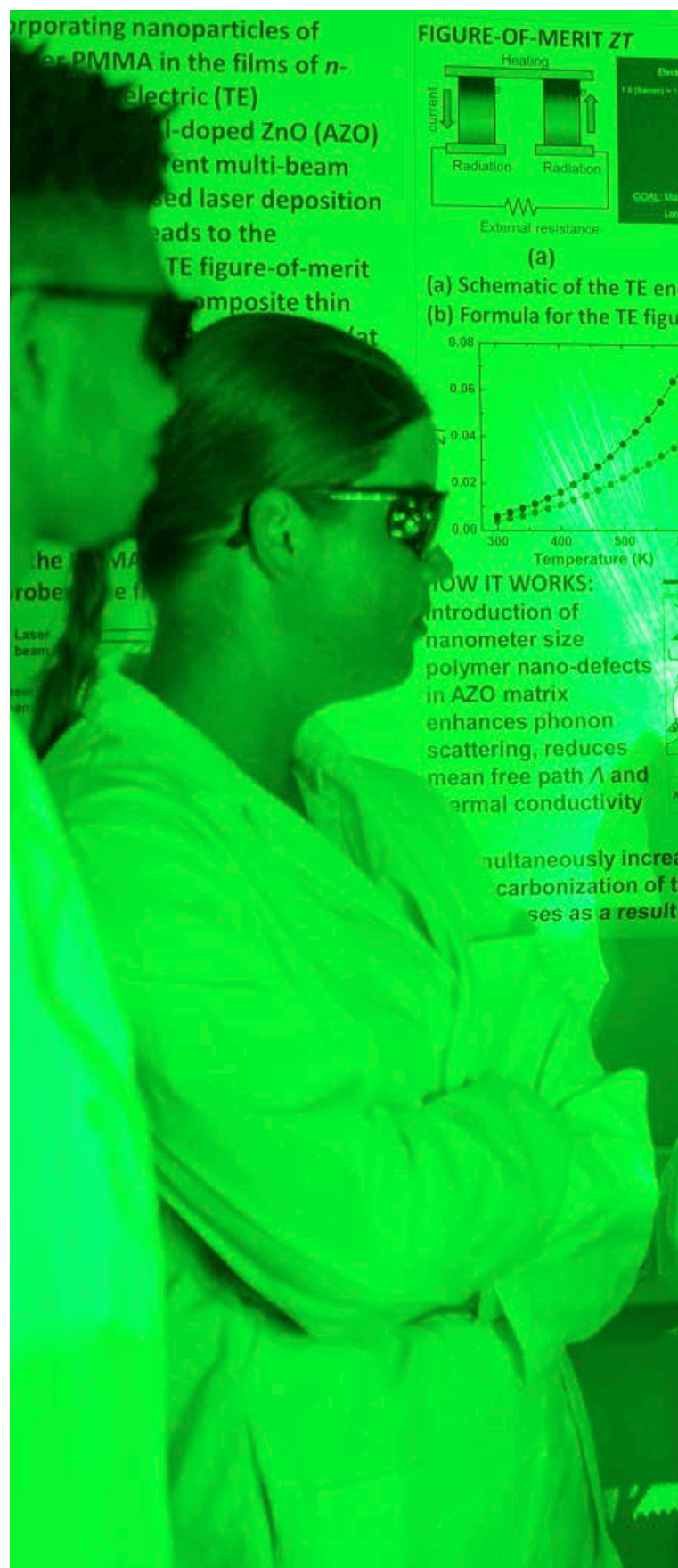
In fall 2022, Dillard University assembled its new Staff Council to provide all 181 faculty and staff members a safe place to ideate, express concerns, and collaborate. The Staff Council helps identify staff members' areas of interests, make recommendations for improvement, develop and execute strategic plans, and help bolster communication between staff, faculty, students and administrators. They also embarked on a series of initiatives from building morale amongst employees to training and safety.

The council's first morale-building event was a collaboration with the New Orleans Pelicans basketball team, whereby they hosted an engagement table on campus to share information about the Pelicans' College Tickets Program, offer giveaways, ticket discounts, and more.

### **Dillard Receives CEO Cancer Gold Standard Employer Accreditation**

Dillard University representatives were recognized by the CEO Roundtable on Cancer for prioritizing and championing health and well-being for Dillard's students, faculty, staff, alumni, and surrounding communities. The CEO Cancer Gold Standard is a workplace wellness accreditation program developed by the CEO Roundtable on Cancer that celebrates organizations committed to reducing cancer risks. To earn Gold Standard Accreditation, organizations were required to demonstrate health benefits and workplace culture in five key areas: Health education and navigation, prevention and early detection, advancing treatment, survivorship, and well-being.

Dillard University continues to cultivate healthy, safe and innovative communities for all by







leveraging resources such as the College of Nursing, Minority Health and Health Equity Research Center and Food Studies minor, as well as allocating resources to improve mental and physical health for employees and their families. Dillard also formed a partnership with pharmaceutical company, Merck, to provide information on HPV vaccinations, and secured no-to-low cost screenings and vaccinations for employees.

### Staff Council Officers

The purpose of the Staff Council is to work with Dillard’s department leaders to identify areas of concern and foster cross-collaboration. Dillard’s elected Staff Council officers serving for 2023-2024 are as follows:

**Rachel Mercadel**  
Legal/Human Resources (Chair)

**Robert Mitchell**  
Enrollment Management

**Tiffany Kirkwood**  
Academic Affairs (Vice-Chair)

**Dana Gumas**  
Institutional Advancement

**Caleb Roberson**  
Student Success (Treasurer)

**Elsie Coleman**  
Institutional Advancement

**Shannon Neal**  
Business and Finance (Parliamentarian)

**Leonora Byrd**  
Business and Finance

**LaDrienna Howze**  
Legal/Human Resources

**Alisha Williams**  
Facilities Management

**Patrick Baptiste**  
Facilities Management

**Tracie Thomas**  
Academic Affairs

**Dawn Williams**  
Student Success

# Financing the Future for Our Students





# DU<sub>3</sub>



# Financing the Future for Our Students

*Donated talent, time and treasure powers the Dillard experience you know and love*

## Celebrating Dillard's Donors

The final focus area of the DU3 is to finance the future for present and future students of Dillard University. We are able to provide exciting new degree paths and classes, campus improvements, international exchange programs, research opportunities, scholarships, and more to our students thanks to the talent, time, and treasure that the Dillard Community has generously donated. On Giving Tuesday 2022, a 24-hour day of online giving held annually on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, Dillard received \$100,000.



## Supporters Share their Stories

Dillard University's donors, from longstanding to newly welcomed, from individual contributors to institutional partners, are essential to our institution. Their commitment to the power of education and profound belief in Dillard's mission propel initiatives forward, transforming ideas into reality. In their own words, they share the inspiration behind their support.

*"As a golden graduate, I want to ensure that future generations of Dillard students have the opportunities that I had as a student. Dillard opened the door to scholarships, internships and mentors that launched my career. Personally giving to Dillard annually and giving in partnership with my class of 1973 will help Dillard to continue providing opportunities,"*

— Ronnie Burns '73,  
Board of Trustees member





*“Our mission at DePaul Community Health Centers is to improve the health and well-being of our community and to be a presence of the Love of Jesus in the lives of all we serve and with whom we partner. We provide compassionate, high-quality health care to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. Our partnership with Dillard University is very important, as is that of all our partners throughout the communities we serve, in that it helps advance that mission. Having a health center on the campus of the University removes barriers to access for students and enhances our capacity to serve the entire Gentilly community.”*

— Dr. Michael Griffin ‘94, President and CEO  
DePaul Community Health Centers of New  
Orleans and Board of Trustees member

*“As a former colleague and mentor of Dr. Rochelle Ford, I was excited to galvanize her Howard University family to make a donation to Dillard University to help her create the environment where excellence without excuse flourishes. We want Dillard to continue to have a legacy of cultivating leaders.”*

— Dr. Jannette L. Dates  
Dean Emerita, School of  
Communications, Howard  
University

## Top 2022-2023 Donors

**\$1,000,000 +**

Kirkland & Ellis Foundation  
United Negro College Fund, Inc.

**\$100,000 - \$999,000**

Ann Leith Benjamin Hill  
David Dillard  
MacGregor Area CDC honoring James J. Smith  
Michael D. & Shaun Jones  
NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital  
The United Methodist Church (GBHEM)  
UNCF Foundation  
Vanguard Charitable

**\$50,000 - \$99,999**

AccessLex Institute  
AETNA, Inc.  
Coca Cola Bottling Company United, Inc.  
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund  
(Donor Advised Fund)  
Dathel C. Georges  
John Georges  
Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation, Inc.  
Methodist Health System Foundation  
RosaMary Foundation  
Schwab Charitable  
Sherman Fairchild Foundation, Inc.  
Simmons Family Foundation  
The Council of Independent Colleges  
Verizon Innovative Learning  
William S. Banks, III



### **New Additions to the Dillard Family**

In 2023, Dillard University appointed Victoria Alexis as the director of communications. As a experienced leader in communications operations, Alexis brings a strong track record in strategic marketing and community engagement to the office.

Dillard University also welcomed Stephanie Rodgers in 2023 to serve as Dillard University's new executive vice president of institutional advancement and development. She will act as Dillard's chief fundraiser and advancement officer, as well as serve as a key member of the president's cabinet. Rodgers has more than 20 years of experience with nonprofit leadership and fundraising in higher education.



### Dillard Selected for Competitive UNCF Transformation Project

Dillard University is a United Negro College Fund (UNCF) cohort member in UNCF's HBCU Transformation Project—a first-of-its-kind project to provide HBCUs with funding to support strategic initiatives that will improve students, faculty, and staff's experience. The UNCF is providing HBCUs with more than \$1.6 million over the coming four years.

Dillard University is utilizing the funds in several key areas that will greatly advance our efforts toward fortifying our staff and faculty, improving campus facilities, and financing our future, such as:

- Supporting the increased submission of federal grant writing to help secure more

than \$1 million in higher education and HBCU grants.

- Development of a Campus Master Plan which will outline how Dillard will physically transform to meet the needs of students, staff and faculty, and the community. Upon completion of the plan, Dillard will launch various strategies to raise funds to begin campus transformations, renovations, new builds, and expand our footprint in the Gentilly community. The Campus Master Plan will be complete by December 2023.
- Hiring an employer engagement coordinator who will connect Dillard students with more companies and potential employers. By filling this new staffing need, Dillard will be able to increase off-campus employment opportunities for students in New Orleans and beyond.



*“It’s an honor to share stories that illuminate Dillard University’s mission and motto. Each generation has selflessly given the world its brilliance of thought, and compassion of heart with grace and style. I look forward to joining this historic legacy.”*

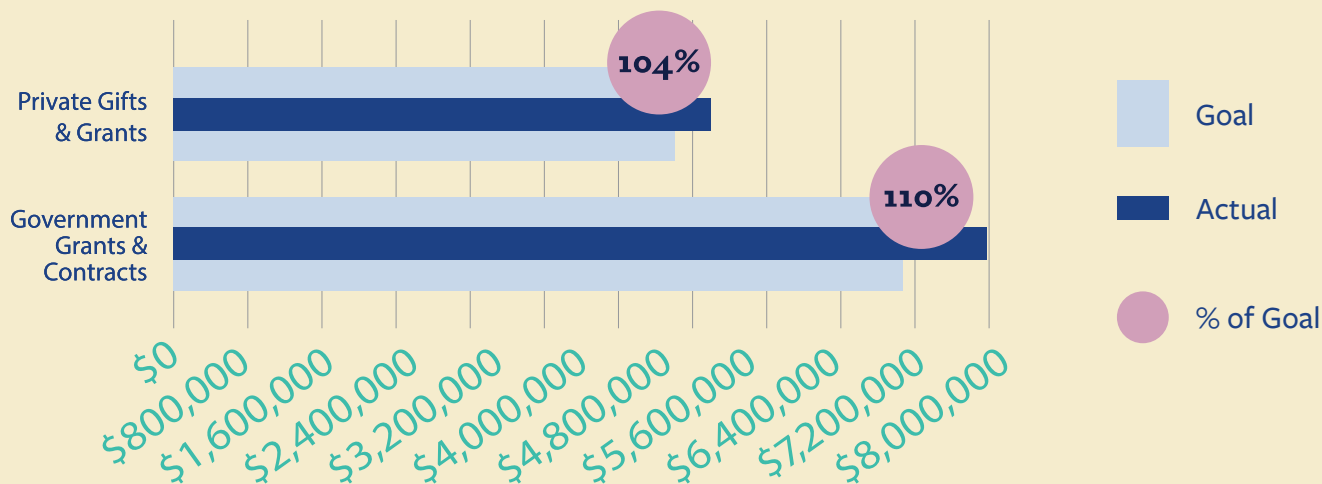
— Victoria Alexis



*“I am excited to join the Dillard University family, and I’m looking forward to this next chapter of my career. Dr. Ford is a visionary leader with an aggressive plan for strengthening fiscal capacity for the university. I look forward to working with this talented team of advancement professionals to execute her vision by expanding philanthropic support.”*

— Stephanie Rodgers

## ***FY 2023 - Institutional Advancement***



*\* Includes \$500K from cash allocations of Planned Gift notice in final MOU draft stages of gift execution*

### **Dillard Awarded Fully-Funded Paid Internships**

Dillard University established new partnerships, which will provide students with hands-on internships and opportunities in order to get work experience relevant to their majors. Dillard was awarded several fully-funded paid internships with organizations including TrailRunner International, a strategy and communications advisory firm, and Donohoe Hospital, where business students will experience day-to-day hospital operations. These partnerships will provide students with mentors, stipends, housing, transportation, and scholarships.

testing, as well as provide additional certifications and new degree programs that meet the needs of our community stakeholders in the Southern Louisiana region.

### **New Grant Funding Brings New Opportunities**

Dillard University received many exciting, new grants in 2022 and 2023, including a \$271,000 grant from UNCF which will help establish a Center for Graduate and Professional Education at Dillard. The center will provide students, alumni, and community stakeholders with opportunities to prepare for graduate and professional school





As of summer 2023,  
we exceeded our  
revenue goal at

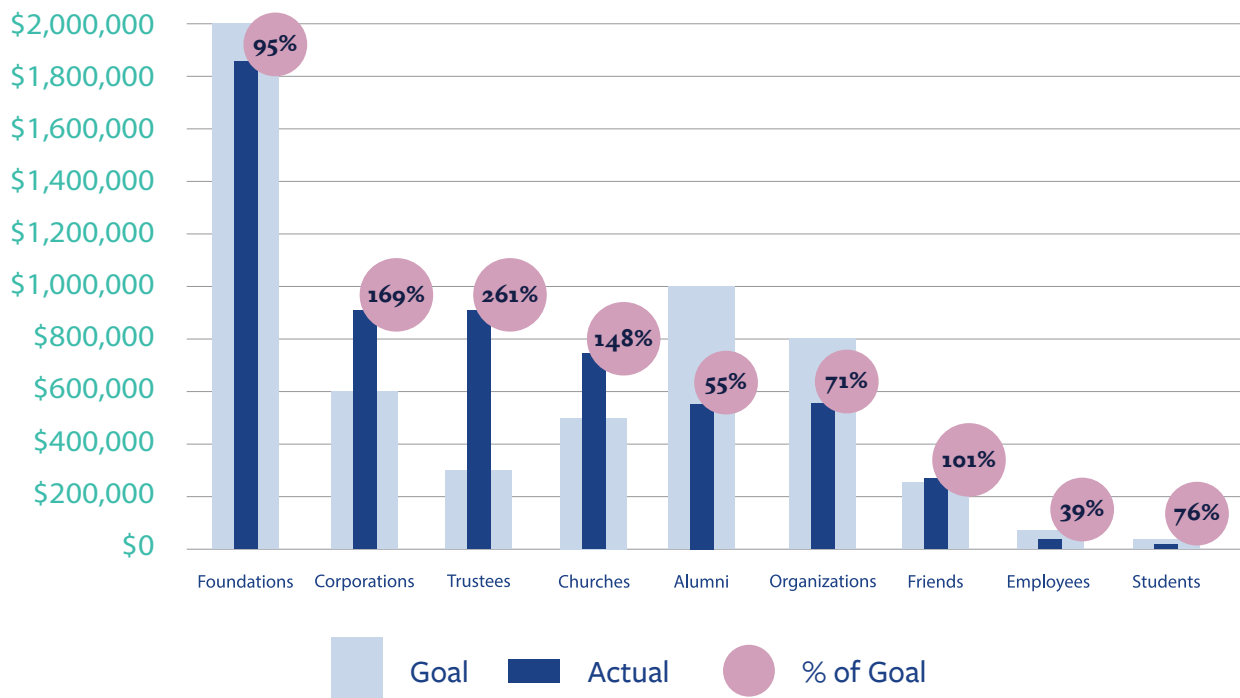
**110%**

with a combined private and  
public income totalling

**\$13,753,808**



***Progress to goal breakdown: by constituent groups — Private***



Dr. Dorian Williams, the dean of the College of Business at Dillard, was awarded a sizable grant totalling \$320,000 in order to grow certificate and graduate programs.

The esteemed Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, in the arts and humanities space, awarded Dillard with a \$700,000 grant for a multi-year project in collaboration with the Dillard University Ray Charles Program in African American Material Culture. The grant, entitled “Higher Learning Through Humanities in Food Studies,” will enhance our research, food studies, community programming and fellowships, further establishing Dillard’s legacy as a leader in liberal arts education.

Dillard University was selected to receive the Institute of International Education (IIE) American

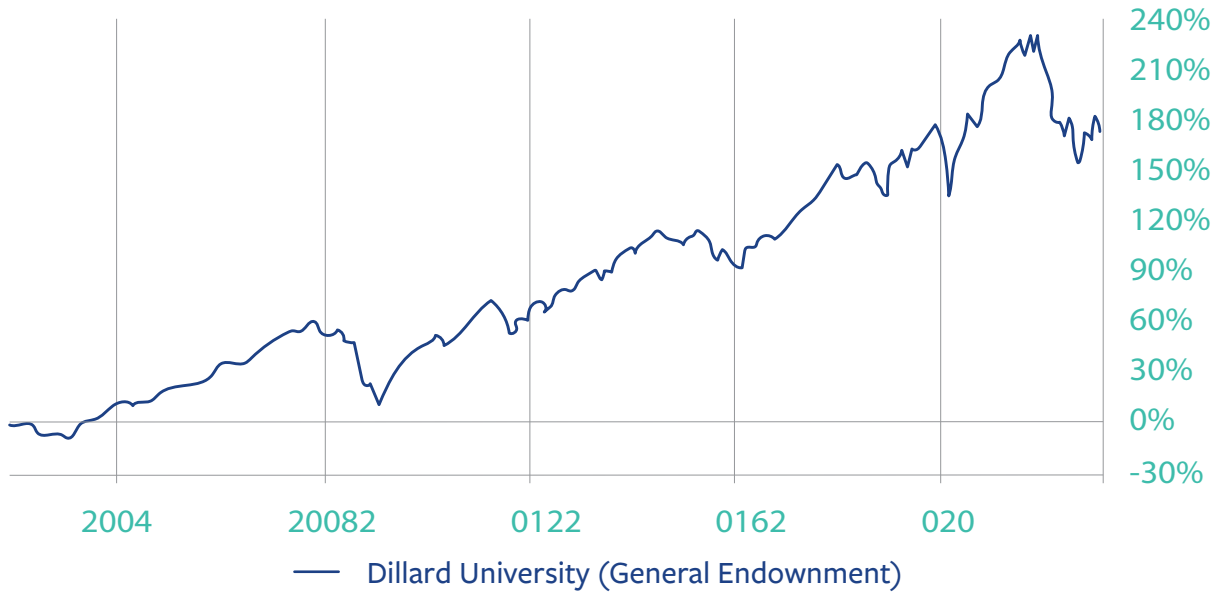
Passport Project grant in order to financially assist students studying abroad. The grant will help up to 25 students obtain a U.S. passport, the cost of which is often a deterrent for students interested in studying abroad. The IIE American Passport Project is a key initiative within IIE’s recently launched Center for Access and Equity. The program prioritizes first-year students with limited funding and aims to help increase diversity and inclusion of students studying abroad.

### **Dillard Institutional Advancement**

Dillard University’s Division of Institutional Advancement made significant strides in furthering our mission to support students, staff, and faculty in cultivating leaders who make the world a better place. The increase in giving from



## Strong Endowment — General Cumulative Portfolio Performance



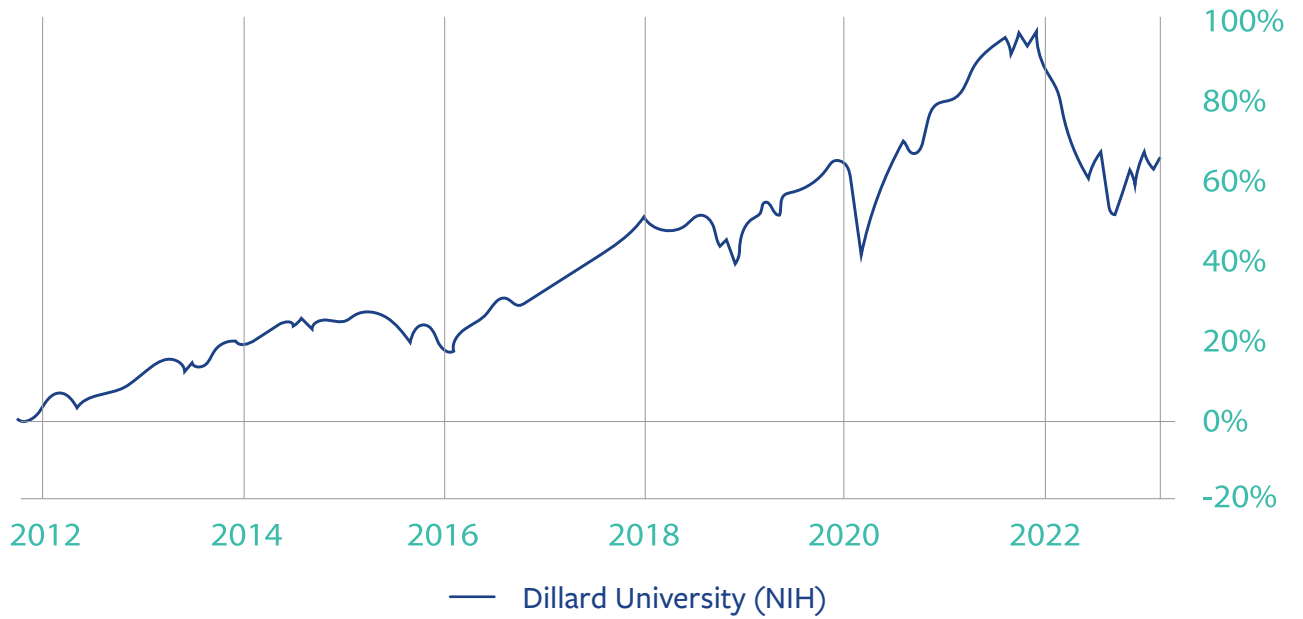
friends of Dillard, ranging from alumni to key constituency groups, reflects the positive impact we’re making in the lives of students and the Gentilly community.

Considering the diverse revenue pipeline of submitted proposals totalling more than \$20 million, we anticipate closing out the year with an even stronger revenue total. The Advancement Division is partnering with campus teams in order to establish aggressive strategies to increase revenue by nearly 100% to \$25 million—the highest advancement goal in recent history.

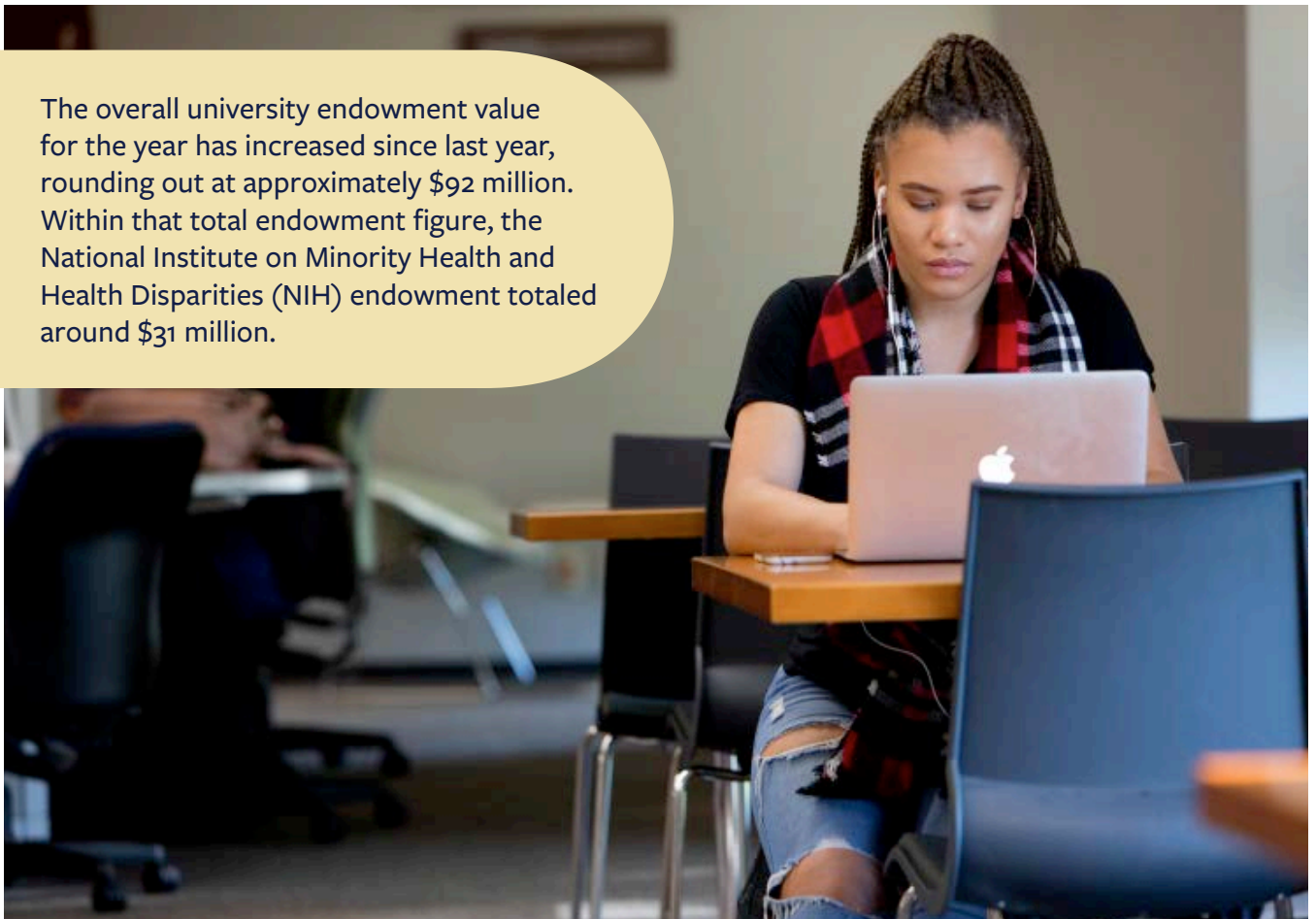
Of the \$13.7 million in income, more than \$7.5 million is in the form of new grants, including a \$1.4 million Ronald McNair grant, a \$700,000 Mellon Foundation grant, and a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Defense. We also embarked on several Title III program initiatives including reorganizing \$3 million in Title III carryover funding to support campus infrastructure needs, identifying support to expand the nursing program, upgrading academic technology, and more.



## ***Strong Endowment — NHI Cumulative Portfolio Performance***



The overall university endowment value for the year has increased since last year, rounding out at approximately \$92 million. Within that total endowment figure, the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIH) endowment totaled around \$31 million.



## *Support Dillard's Legacy*

Those inspired by Dillard University's achievements and impact are invited to be a part of our journey forward.

Whether through philanthropic contributions or active involvement, you have the power to make a difference in the lives of Dillard students and the future of our institution.

### *Partner with us! Share your...*

#### **TIME**

Get involved by volunteering at DU events.

#### **TALENT**

Join an Industry Advisory Board or Speakers Bureau.

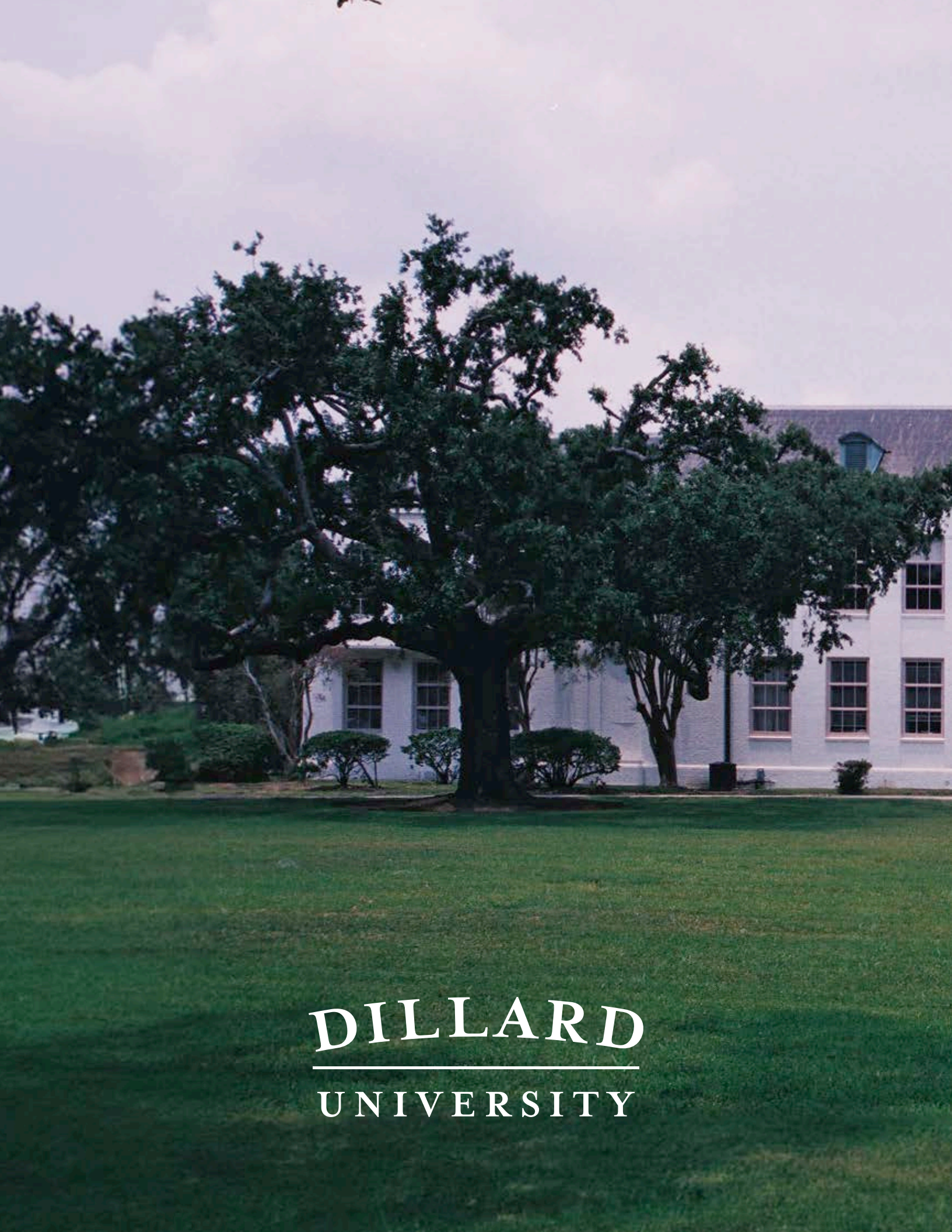
#### **TREASURE**

Invest in Dillard to ensure access to a college education remains available to all.

Go to [www.dillard.edu/give](http://www.dillard.edu/give) or email [development@dillard.edu](mailto:development@dillard.edu) for more information on how to support the legacy of Dillard University.







*DILLARD*  

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*UNIVERSITY*