

Tulane SoPA Education student named New Teacher of the Year

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Tulane School of Professional Advancement teacher certification student Sarah Gauthier receives her New Teacher of the Year Award during a surprise presentation on Feb. 3, 2022. (Photo provided)

Tulane School of Professional Advancement (Tulane SoPA) student, Sarah Gauthier, has been named the Louisiana Department of Education's New Teacher of the Year for the Jefferson Parish School District. Gauthier is working toward her [Secondary Education Certificate](#) through SoPA's [Teacher Preparation and Certification Program](#).

The New Teacher of the Year honor recognizes educators new to the profession who have demonstrated outstanding instructional practices. As a result of Gauthier's recognition at the district level, she is now eligible to compete at the state level to become the 2022 Louisiana New Teacher of the Year. State-level winners will be notified in May.

"My parents, superintendent, principal, and department all surprised me at work on Feb. 3, after tricking me into thinking that the District's Communications Department was coming for some new photos of our school," recalls Gauthier. "It turned out that everything was for me."

A total of three honorees from Jefferson Parish Schools were named. The others were Madeleine Williams of Congetta Trippe Janet Elementary School (Elementary New Teacher of the Year), and Andrew Bullock of GT Woods Elementary School (Middle School New Teacher of the Year). Gauthier, an English II teacher at L.W. Higgins High School, was chosen as the High School New Teacher of the Year.

"This experience has been so amazing getting to meet with other teachers in my parish and learn from them," said Gauthier. "I am so grateful for all that this program at Tulane SoPA has taught me."

Richard Mihans, a professor of practice in Tulane SoPA's Teacher Preparation and Certification Program, said that he and others who know Gauthier were not surprised to learn that she had been given the honor of New Teacher of the Year.

"Sarah is laser-focused on her students' emotional well-being and cognitive growth and success. Any endeavor in which she is engaged is motivated by the belief that every student she teaches will be successful in life and harmonious in mind," said Mihans. "We are honored to have Sarah in our program."

Excerpt from the Jefferson Parish Schools announcement:

Sarah Gauthier earned a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Anthropology with a minor in History from Tulane University. Gauthier became a teacher because she saw a need for educators who wanted to see future generations of learners become their most successful selves. Writing is the heart of Ms. Gauthier's class, where she places an emphasis on the "why" and encourages students to create well-crafted essays. At L.W. Higgins, Gauthier serves as the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) leader, volunteers as an assistant coach for the cheer team, and

helps with the girls' and boys' soccer teams. Gauthier says that when students enter her classroom they are greeted by name and when they leave, they are encouraged to be good humans.

Learn more about Tulane SoPA's [Education Program](#).