

January 2019

Dear Parents and Families,

Happy New Year from the [Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life](#) and from Tufts University! I hope you enjoyed a restful and joyful holiday season with your student and that they are looking forward to the upcoming semester. As a former Tufts parent myself, I remember well the bittersweet happiness of having my daughter at home for all-too-short a time during Winter Break. Still, I knew she was returning to engaging courses, dear friends, and a campus community that she truly cherished – just as I did as a Tufts student 50 years ago. Be assured that we're ready to welcome your student back to Tufts with new challenges, experiences, and opportunities to fuel their learning and growth.

As we turn the calendar to 2019, it is only natural to reflect on the year behind us. Since its founding nearly two decades ago, Tisch College has worked to advance [a vital mission](#): to study and promote the civic and political participation of young people; to create and improve pathways for civic engagement, across all academic disciplines, to tackle society's most pressing issues; and above all to prepare a new generation – your kids – to be effective leaders and problem-solvers throughout their lives, whatever they do, and wherever they go after completing their Tufts education.

A Banner Year for Youth Engagement

We believe our mission to educate and empower young people to serve, to vote, to lead, and to create change improves our society and our democracy. This past year gave us a glimpse of how true that is. Many [young people raised their voices](#), transforming a senseless tragedy in Parkland, Florida, into a rallying cry for change. [Young people also turned out to vote](#) in record numbers for a midterm election, as shown by Tisch College's own exclusive research. Whatever your political views, I hope we all agree that civic and democratic life is stronger when people of all ages speak out, act, and advocate. It is encouraging to see a new generation of young people rise to meet our collective challenges, just as the youth of previous decades led many of the movements for equality and justice that transformed our country for the better.

In 2018, we stepped up efforts to match the enthusiasm expressed by young people throughout the nation and by our own students. [Our JumboVote initiative helped more than 1,000 students](#) register to vote. We created new pathways for Tufts students to engage in civic life on campus, in our communities, and even as alumni around the country – whether it’s [helping to enhance education in prisons](#) or [working in local governments](#). We invited leading figures to campus to challenge and inspire students: from former [governors](#) and [presidential candidates](#), to [journalists](#), [environmentalists](#), and [faith leaders](#). We also [launched a new major in Civic Studies](#) that will give students an academic foundation for their ambitions to change the world, and which reflects our belief that civic life deserves to be studied with as much scholarly rigor as any other discipline.

Opportunity: 2019 Tisch Summer Fellows Application Open Now for All Students

While we understand the importance of giving civic life its proper place in the classroom, we also know that students learn best while doing – and that learning shouldn’t stop when the semester is over. Each year, our [Tisch Summer Fellows \(TSF\)](#) program gives more than 100 Jumbos a chance for substantive summer internships in the public and nonprofit sectors. Students expand their skills and knowledge, create professional networks, and explore potential careers – all while working on issues they care about and having a tangible impact. Thanks to the generous support of parents and alumni, all Tisch Summer Fellows receive a stipend to cover their expenses so they can enjoy these opportunities regardless of their circumstances.

In 2019, we’re excited to offer Tisch Summer Fellowships in three cities, encompassing a wide array of professional fields and areas of interest. Here in [Greater Boston](#), students can work at community health centers in Lynn or Jamaica Plain, support diverse immigrant communities at The Welcome Project or the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, or intern at the Boston City Council or in the offices of the Massachusetts delegation to the United States Congress. In [New York City](#), we offer opportunities to support youth at the Fiver Children’s Foundation and the Madison Square Boys and Girls Club, or to support the arts at the American Ballet Theater and the Magnum Foundation. In [Washington, D.C.](#), summer fellows can take a deep dive into public policy at the Pentagon, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, or the League of Women Voters, and they can support the

environment at the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, hone their communications skills at Blue Engine Message & Media, or help protect civil rights at the National LGBTQ Task Force.



Elaine Harris, A20, poses for a photo with her supervisor Kelly Ryan at the American Ballet Theater Company during her 2018 Tisch College of Civic Life summer fellowship in Manhattan.

These are just a handful of the opportunities available to Tufts students this summer. In addition, there's a special [Tisch Summer Fellows program in India](#) through which Jumbos can work at a rural school, enhancing the education of children from impoverished families. Students can also apply for TSF funding for their own [international summer civic engagement projects](#).

Tisch Summer Fellows have truly extraordinary experiences during their internships that bring their academic learning to life and, often, inform or transform their professional aspirations. Our Fellows have drafted legislation and served as expert witnesses, written op-eds for major publications, and met with diplomats and other high-ranking government officials. Beyond their day-to-day work, students are mentored by Tufts alumni and attend special events with a diverse array of inspiring leaders. Every summer, students speak about the profound connections forged

between their personal and professional development by their summer fellowship experience.



Shabnam Bista, a second-year graduate student in the Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning program, at Medford City Hall in July 2018, where she worked with the Energy and Environment Office for her Tisch Summer Fellowship.

Leann Louis, a 2018 Tisch Summer Fellow at the Lynn Community Health Center, told us: “I felt like I grew as a person, I got rid of stigmas I had about the opioid epidemic, and now I actually feel comfortable and sure that I want to be a provider working with pregnant women with substance use disorders. I really have Tisch Summer Fellows to thank for that.” I hope you’ll consider sharing this opportunity with your student.

[Applications are open now](#) and should be submitted by January 22 – though applications for positions at the Pentagon are due on January 14. If you have any questions about the program, please don’t hesitate to contact us.



Mentoring is an important part of the Tisch Summer Fellowship program. Nicolas Chung, A20, meets with his alumni mentor Sabrina McMillan, A15, in the summer of 2018.

Looking Ahead

We're looking forward to a fruitful 2019 for the Tisch Summer Fellows and for all our growing [student programs](#), [research endeavors](#), and [initiatives on campus and beyond](#). Soon we'll be announcing another exciting lineup of distinguished speakers – [join our mailing list](#) to be in-the-know – and we'll continue expanding our efforts to make civic engagement a quintessential part of the Tufts experience, a central theme of higher education's mission, and a cornerstone of public life.

I am immensely proud to lead Tisch College in that mission, alongside outstanding colleagues throughout the University. But we don't do this work alone. We feed off the energy of our students, the expertise of our faculty members, and the support and philanthropy of Tufts alumni, parents, and friends. Because we are a University-wide school, we aim to enhance the education of every Jumbo. So every student at Tufts University is also a Tisch College student. And that means every Tufts parent is also a Tisch College parent. I hope you will connect with us, support our work, share

your ideas with us, and help us ensure that your student and all students are ready to lead our world forward – today and tomorrow.

With my very best wishes for the year ahead,

Alan D. Solomont, A70, A08P
Pierre and Pamela Omidyar Dean
Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life