ALUMNI BRIEF · TULANE ATHLETICS · SEPTEMBER 2026

Tulane has what a power conference wants. Except the money.

Audience, winning and broad-based success: Tulane already checks the boxes the ACC weighs. What it lacks is financial backing, from the university and its alumni, like the donor money that earned SMU its seat.

WHAT TULANE ALREADY HAS

634K viewers — Avg. per game 2021 to 2025 with postseason. Most in the group (SMU 539K, USF 398K).

Proven winner — Cotton Bowl win over USC, 3 hosted title games, 2025 Playoff (6.2M viewers).

97th Directors' Cup — 2025-26, best in the American. The broad-based success the ACC values.

160,000 alumni — More than SMU (140,000) or Wake Forest (82,000).

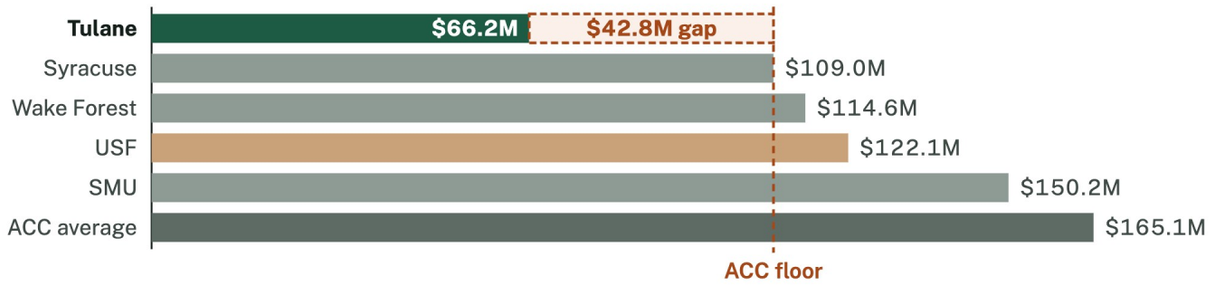
WHAT IT IS MISSING

$42.8M a year
The gap between Tulane ($66.2M) and Syracuse ($109.0M), the ACC's lowest spender. FY2025 EADA.

$414 per alum
Athletic spending per living alum. SMU: $1,073. Wake Forest: $1,398.

THE FUNDING GAP: FY2025 ATHLETIC SPENDING

Gray: ACC schools. Tan: USF, chasing the same seat.



TULANE TODAY VS. SMU WHEN THE ACC INVITED IT

Three seasons before	SMU, 2021 to 2023 (invited Sept. 2023)	Tulane, 2023 to 2025
Regular-season TV viewers per game	226K	**348K**
Average home attendance	23,964	**24,411**
Postseason games (title games, bowls, Playoff)	3	**6, incl. the Playoff**
AAU research university	No	**Yes**
Athletic spending (EADA)	**$86.0M (FY2023)**	**$66.2M (FY2025)**

WHAT THE SEAT DID FOR SMU

In the two years after its ACC invitation, SMU's university-wide gifts rose 65%, applications hit an all-time high, it finished a $1.64B campaign three years early, and it earned R1 research status. SMU's own board chair credits realignment.

CLOSING THE GAP: WHAT IT TAKES EACH YEAR

10x today's giving



Spending target	Annual gap	Per alum (160K)	Per donor (7% give)	9-year total
Syracuse (ACC floor)	**$42.8M**	**$267**	**$3,824**	**$385M**
Wake Forest (small private)	$48.4M	$303	$4,323	$436M
SMU (the model)	$84.0M	$525	$7,501	$756M

70% of fans polled would give more. If 1 in 10 follows through (7% of alumni, 11,200 donors), the ACC floor is about $320 a month each.

WHY NOW

A proposed 19-member cap would leave the ACC about one open seat, and USF is chasing it.

THE ASK

Tulane has built the program. Now fund it: 8 to 12 major donors committing about $43M a year for nine years, a university that matches that ambition, and alumni in the seats.

Sources: EADA via nil-ncaa.com; viewership from Run It Back With Zach (regular season, missing games counted as zero), Sports Media Watch, On3, Wikipedia bowl listings; attendance from game-by-game home results incl. hosted title games; Front Office Sports; CBS Sports (Protect College Sports Act); SMU, S&P Global, Dallas Morning News (SMU results).

Four years to earn a seat. Two groups have to move together.

The administration has to commit the institution. Alumni and fans have to fund it and fill it. Neither is enough alone: SMU got in because its university and its donors moved at the same time.

	Phase 1 · Commit FY2027 (fall 2026 to summer 2027)	**Phase 2 · Build** FY2028 to FY2029	**Phase 3 · Win the seat** FY2030: invite by 2030
The administratic Commit the institution	• Publicly commit to a power-conference goal and a five-year plan. • Raise revenue sharing above the American's floor, on a path to the full cap. • Name a realignment lead; start quiet talks with ACC presidents. • Launch a university match for new athletics gifts.	• Grow the budget to about $83M, then $96M. • Reach the full ~$20.5M revenue-sharing cap. • Borrow for Yulman upgrades and premium seats, as USF did. • Close sport gaps the ACC values; schedule marquee games.	• Reach the ACC floor: $110M a year. • Pitch a complete case: audience, results, academics, money. • Be ready for SMU-style terms: little or no media share at first.
Alumni and fans Fund it and fill it	• Recruit the first 3 to 5 founding donors; land a $25M lead gift. • Grow the Green Wave Club to 4,500 members. • Lift attendance to 25,000; sell out the big games.	• Grow athletic giving to $15M, then $28M. • Complete 8 to 12 founding donors; pursue a $100M anchor gift. • Fund the Green Wave Talent Fund (NIL) to keep talent. • Chapters in Dallas, Houston, Atlanta, New York host watch parties.	• Deliver $43M a year in new money. • Build a transition fund for lost media revenue (SMU: ~$200M). • Average 30,000 at Yulman.

SCORECARD: PROPOSED TARGETS

Measure	Today (FY2025)	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030 (ACC-ready)
Athletic budget (EADA)	**$66.2M**	$72M	$83M	$96M	**$110M**
Annual athletic giving	**$4.2M**	$7M	$15M	$28M	**$43M**
Green Wave Club donors	**3,500 (goal)**	4,500	6,500	9,000	**11,200**
Avg. home attendance	**24,057**	25,000	26,500	28,000	**30,000**
Revenue sharing	**Opted in**	Above floor	Full cap	Full cap	**Full cap**
Largest athletics gift	**~$16M**	$25M	$50M	$100M	**Anchor fund**

Fall 2026
Senate vote on the Protect College Sports Act; House expected after the midterms.

If enacted
Power conferences capped at 19. The ACC has about one open seat, and USF wants it.

By 2030
Tulane must be ACC-ready. Waiting for the limits to sunset around 2032 risks losing the seat.

Targets are proposals for discussion, not Tulane commitments. Steps start modestly and accelerate once anchor gifts land. Sources: EADA via nil-ncaa.com; Business of College Sports (House opt-ins); SI (American revenue-share floor, Green Wave Club goal); Tulane News (Peters gifts); USF Oracle; Front Office Sports; CBS Sports.

By November, prove the backing is real.

No program becomes ACC-ready in two months. What can happen by November is proof: organized alumni, signed pledges, full stands and a clear ask on the president's desk, before Congress settles how many seats are left.

Now to Oct. 10 — Organize

- [ ] Recruit a 12-person alumni steering committee. **ORGANIZERS**
- [ ] Share the case (pages 1 and 2) with the committee. **ORGANIZERS**
- [ ] Launch a pledge-of-intent form: "I will give more to athletics if Tulane commits to the ACC." **ORGANIZERS**
- [ ] Build a list of 25 potential founding donors. **COMMITTEE**

Oct. 10 to Oct. 31 — Show up

- [ ] Sell out Memphis, Fri. Oct. 16 on ESPN: the national showcase. **ALUMNI & FANS**
- [ ] Chapter watch parties for Army (Oct. 10) and Memphis. **ALUMNI & FANS**
- [ ] Request a meeting with the president and athletic director. **ORGANIZERS**
- [ ] Hold the first 10 founding-donor meetings. **COMMITTEE**

Nov. 1 to Nov. 30 — Deliver

- [ ] Big crowds for Tulsa (Nov. 7) and North Texas (Nov. 21). **ALUMNI & FANS**
- [ ] Nov. 3 midterms: watch for House timing on the bill. **ORGANIZERS**
- [ ] Hand the administration signed pledges, donor commitments and a written ask. **ORGANIZERS**
- [ ] Green Wave Club drive through Giving Tuesday (Dec. 1). **ALUMNI & FANS**

BY NOV. 30: THE TARGETS

12
alumni leaders on a steering committee

1,500
signed pledges of intent (about 1% of alumni)

$10M
a year in stated giving intent, vs $4.2M today

25 / 10 / 3
donor prospects named, met, and verbally committed

27,000+
average at the four remaining home games

+500
new Green Wave Club members

THE ASK OF THE ADMINISTRATION

Delivered in writing by late November, with the pledges and donor commitments attached, so the answer comes before the next budget cycle.

1. Meet with the alumni steering committee.
2. Say publicly that a power-conference seat is the goal.
3. Commit to a funded five-year plan by spring 2027.
4. Launch a university match for new athletics gifts.

Targets are proposals for the organizing group. Schedule from Tulane's 2026 football schedule; kickoff times and some networks still to be announced. Protect College Sports Act status per the Senate Commerce Committee; House timing depends on the post-midterm calendar.