



## **NOSHIP & Tulane SDS Joint Statement on Week of Actions Against New Orleans' Trade Ties to Israel**

New Orleans, LA – NOSHIP (New Orleans Stop Helping Israel's Ports) and Tulane University's SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) staged a week of actions calling out New Orleans Entrepreneurship Week's (NOEW) ties to the State of Israel and its ongoing genocide of Palestinians in Gaza, as well as Tulane University Professor Walter Isaacson's violent assault of a trans Tulane student at a NOEW panel.

### **March 13 NOEW Panel Disruption**

On Wednesday, March 13, members of NOSHIP, SDS, and community allies disrupted three panels at NOEW. Companies were targeted strategically and included **GNO, Inc., Halliburton Labs, Entergy, ExxonMobil, Ochsner**, and others:

- **GNO, Inc.:** GNO, Inc. is a lead partner in developing an Innovation Embassy tying the Port of New Orleans with the Port of Ashdod in Israel. Other Israeli innovation embassies have led to the development of further predatory surveillance, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence technology that would put New Orleanians at risk, especially our Black community members.
- **Halliburton Labs:** Halliburton Labs is a startup accelerator focusing on the energy industry, and 3 out of the 11 companies it has supported are in Israel. This means they are deeply involved in making the Israeli energy industry vital to global markets in the future. Its parent company, Halliburton, is involved in offshore drilling along the coast of Israel for at least the past four years, and boasts record profits as oil prices increase due to Israel's genocide. When a Tulane student disrupted a panel featuring Scott Gale, founder of Halliburton Labs, the company's board member and Tulane professor, Walter Isaacson, attacked the student.
- **Entergy:** Entergy is funding the Clean Energy Engineering Chair at Tulane University which is partnering with Israel to develop a \$27 million US-Israel





Energy Center in New Orleans, money that funds and normalizes Israel's occupation of Palestine. One of the Energy Center's goals is "facilitating cooperation among U.S. and Israeli companies, research institutes and universities." We steadfastly believe that New Orleans does not need Israel to innovate; it needs to divest completely from and cut all ties with Israel.

- **ExxonMobil:** Along with its unconscionable contributions to the climate crisis, something that is already devastating New Orleans and will only continue to do so into the future, ExxonMobil provides Israel with fuel for its fighter jets that are used to drop bombs on Palestinians. ExxonMobil is directly complicit in the current genocide in Gaza.
- **Ochsner:** Ochsner has been part of multiple trade missions to Israel meant to build ties between Louisiana and the genocidal state, specifically in the area of biotechnology and artificial intelligence. In 2023, Ochsner announced a partnership with Israeli AI healthcare company, Aidoc. We believe this partnership will only lead to more data on Americans being shared with Israel and contribute to Israel's bioterrorism against Palestinians.
- Other targets for disruption included **Clean Energy Ventures, and Newlab**, all of whom are heavily invested in Israeli companies, directly funding technology tested on Palestinians before being sold to the rest of the world.

One of the peaceful disruptors during NOEW week was Rory Macdonald, a trans student at Tulane University. Almost immediately after Rory stood up to speak out against the panel's complicity in normalizing trade ties to Israel, **Professor Isaacson - who did not have any role in security at NOEW and was there as a board member of Halliburton Labs and the co-chair of New Orleans Book Fair, a partner of NOEW this year - grabbed them and physically dragged them from the room.** Outside, Rory displayed bruises on their arm and scratches on their back from the professor's assault. **Professor Isaacson himself has yet to publicly acknowledge the attack.**





## March 16 Book Fest Rally

On March 16th, during New Orleans Book Fest, which was **co-chaired by Walter Isaacson**, members of Tulane SDS carried out a die-in on Tulane's campus to protest Tulane's partnership with Israel and NOEW. The students were forced to leave the building, later joining the concurrent rally on Freret Street. The rally was called by SDS and NOSHIP in response to Tulane's refusal to acknowledge the violent professor.

As the students returned to the rally, TUPD officers shouted at Macdonald and eventually approached them at the rally. The officers told Macdonald that they were no longer allowed on Tulane's campus and began attempting to grab Macdonald and separate them from the crowd at the rally.

Upon witnessing this, Toni Jones, a trans Black woman and lead organizer in the New Orleans community, began communicating with the officers. Jones attempted to reason with the officers and prevent Macdonald from being detained for exercising their right to protest. TUPD officers **then arrested Jones**, who now faces four exaggerated charges: battery, obstructing a public place, interfering with a lawful investigation, and resisting/obstructing an officer.

NOSHIP and Tulane SDS strongly denounce the attempts to silence pro-Palestinian voices by Tulane University, which has allowed its professors and police officers to target and harass trans members of the community. Further, NOSHIP stands against all political repression, especially of those who use their voice to demand a free Palestine. Through this past week of action and others like it, NOSHIP will continue to **amplify the growing concerns of New Orleans residents—including over 20,000 Palestinians**—regarding the role of city leaders and the appropriation of local tax dollars to aid Israel's military occupation of Palestinian people and territories.



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**We stand with our **brave** local  
activists and against all systems  
of oppression in New Orleans  
and Israel.**

**We demand:**

- 1. The dropping of charges against Toni Jones and all other protestors repressed by Tulane.**
- 2. Tulane Professor Walter Isaacson must be removed from his positions and charged.**
- 3. Tulane must cut all ties with Israel.**

