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A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

August 16, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

The beginning of a new academic year is always an exciting time at Northwestern. Over the past week, our campuses have come alive as faculty and staff prepared for the fall semester, students moved into residence halls and we welcomed the Class of 2030 to the Northwestern family. I am grateful to everyone whose dedication and hard work have positioned us for a strong start to the academic year.

On-Call Week

Last week's On-Call Week activities featured several new elements, including a refreshed approach to professional development for faculty and staff. This past spring, an ad hoc committee met regularly to

explore ways to enhance the professional development experience, encourage participation from all Northwestern campuses and develop presentations that combined meaningful takeaways with hands-on applications supporting our academic mission.

Led by Dr. Damien Tristant and comprising representatives from all academic colleges, the committee created valuable opportunities for faculty and staff to learn from and engage with one another. I extend my sincere appreciation to Dr. Tristant and committee members Dr. Sean Bartley, Dr. Timothy Bratt, Dr. MaryAnne Candley, Dr. Amy Craig, Dr. Jennifer Enoch, Andrew Killion, Dr. Nicole Lobdell, Dr. Meryn Olivier, Dr. Robert Page, Dr. Elizabeth Pursell and Megan Wedgeworth for their leadership and service. I would also like to thank Erin Bates, Haley Graves, Teresa Tilley and Hannah Wenninger for their work as members of the special committee responsible for last week's staff development programming.

Opening Convocation and Faculty and Staff Luncheon

Last week, faculty and staff from across our campuses gathered for our annual Opening Convocation and Faculty and Staff Luncheon. These events provided opportunities to celebrate accomplishments, share important updates, welcome new colleagues and recognize excellence in teaching, research, advising and service.

Several faculty members received special recognition:

- Dr. Cynthia Lindsey, professor of psychology, received the Distinguished Teaching and Impact Award, which recognizes a senior faculty member with 10 or more years of service whose sustained

excellence in teaching and scholarly activity has profoundly influenced students, programs and institutional culture.

- Dr. Rebecca Macijeski, professor of English, received the Excellence in Teaching Award, which recognizes effective instruction, student engagement, instructional quality and commitment to student learning.
- Melissa Kelly, professor in the Department of Mathematics, received the Award for Innovation and Academic Practice in Teaching in the General Education Core.
- Dr. Allison Rittmayer, professor of English, received the Outstanding Advisor Award for her commitment to sharing knowledge, supporting students, encouraging their growth and leading by example.
- Edgar Cano Lopez, assistant professor of art, and Dr. Nicole Lobdell, assistant professor of English in the Louisiana Scholars' College, received the Dr. Mildred Hart Bailey Faculty Research Award, which recognizes outstanding research, distinguished artistic performance or creative work substantially completed within the past three years.

We also recognized the following employees for reaching significant service milestones:

65 years: Hiram "Pete" Gregory

45 years: John Carter

40 years: Annette Greathouse

35 years: David West and Ben Rushing

30 years: Richard DeVault, Elizabeth Holloway, Terrie Sanders, Lyle Miller and Patrice Moulton

25 years: Charlotte Grayson, Rafiqul Islam, Leslie Gruesbeck, Daphne Delphin, Frances Welch, Kent Hare, Tammy Curtis, Alan Pasch, Becky Farmer, Melissa Aldredge, Ahmad Darvish and Alexei Muravitsky

I offer special congratulations to Dr. Pete Gregory on an extraordinary 65 years of service to Northwestern. His remarkable dedication, institutional knowledge and commitment to generations of students and colleagues represent the very best of our university community. Congratulations to all our award recipients and thank you to our service honorees for their longstanding dedication and impact on our university community. I also extend special thanks to the Official Bank of NSU, BOM Bank, for sponsoring our annual Faculty and Staff Luncheon.

Strategic Planning Meeting

Wednesday's Strategic Planning Team briefing marked the conclusion of Assessment Cycle 2025–2026, *Leading the Way*, and established the foundation for Assessment Cycle 2026–2027 under our Strategic Plan 2023–2028, *Setting the Standard*. The team completed its ninth comprehensive review of strategic focus areas, academic programs, administrative and student support services, core competencies, and special initiatives. Of the 1,396 objectives, outcomes, measures, and

metrics assessed, 84 percent, or 1,168, were achieved. These results provide clear and quantifiable evidence that Northwestern is advancing its mission and strengthening its impact on our students, region, and state.

This work took on added significance as Northwestern recently submitted its final report for the SACSCOC Differentiated Review, an important milestone in the reaffirmation process. Our comprehensive, data-informed assessment demonstrated institutional effectiveness and reinforced our continued commitment to accreditation standards and continuous improvement. I extend special thanks to Frank Hall, who recently retired, for his hard work, dedication and leadership of this important process over the past decade. His contributions have had a lasting influence on Northwestern's strategic planning and accreditation efforts. Dr. Amy Craig has now assumed this role, and we look forward to building on the strong foundation and momentum already established.

A Successful Summer of Camps

Northwestern concluded one of its most active summer camp seasons in recent history, hosting 77 camps, the highest number since 2010. More than 7,000 participants are estimated to have attended academic, athletic, arts and enrichment camps on our campus. These programs introduced prospective students and their families to Northwestern while providing meaningful opportunities for learning, skill development and personal growth. They also generated significant activity on campus throughout the summer and strengthened our connections with communities across Louisiana and beyond. Thank you to the faculty, staff, coaches, students and volunteers whose

planning, hospitality and hard work made this outstanding summer possible.

Record Philanthropic Support and Alumni Engagement

I am pleased to report that the NSU Foundation secured more than \$8 million during this past fiscal year to support student scholarships, academic programs and other university priorities. This represents an increase of more than \$500,000 over the previous year and reflects the generosity of our donors and the dedication of our advancement professionals. I would like to thank Jill Bankston, Cristy Bernard, Terry Wilson and Jared Boydstun for their tremendous work in helping the Foundation reach this milestone.

As part of the university's recently aligned organizational structure, this team has transitioned to focus fully on alumni affairs. The Office of Alumni Affairs is dedicated to strengthening lifelong relationships with our graduates through communications, events, reunions, chapters, membership opportunities, and continued engagement with Northwestern. We look forward to seeing great things from this team as it expands alumni engagement. That work begins this fall with alumni tailgating events, for which the team is currently securing sponsorships. On behalf of the Alumni Association, I am also pleased to invite all faculty and staff to attend the tailgate for our first home football game at no charge as a gesture of appreciation for all that you do for our university and students.

Move-In Day and First Night Fest

On Friday, Northwestern welcomed students and their families to campus for Move-In Day. Residence halls were filled with excitement as students unloaded vehicles, arranged their rooms and prepared for the first week of classes. For incoming first-year students and their families, move-in represents much more than settling into a residence hall. It marks the transition from preparing for college to beginning a new chapter. Our faculty, staff, student leaders and volunteers worked throughout the day to make that transition as welcoming and supportive as possible.

Among those arriving was Anna Baggett of Haughton, a kinesiology major and member of the President's Leadership Program. Anna said she chose Northwestern because of the personal connections she experienced during her first campus visit and the genuine interest our university community showed in helping her achieve her goals. Her experience reflects the welcoming, student-centered environment we strive to provide for every member of the Northwestern family. Thank you to everyone who helped make Move-In Day a success and provided our students and their families with such a positive beginning.

As part of the day's activities, students gathered that evening for First Night Fest. The event featured a performance by SM6, along with food trucks, games and opportunities for students to connect. Special thanks to the Student Activities Board, First Year Experience, our Registered Student Organizations and everyone who helped make Move-In Day and First Night Fest a welcoming and memorable beginning for our students and their families.

New Student Convocation and President's Picnic

Earlier today, we held our annual New Student Convocation to officially welcome the Class of 2030, our largest freshman class in three years. The class includes more than 1,100 students representing 262 high schools across the United States and 45 international high schools, bringing a remarkable diversity of experiences and perspectives to our university. During Convocation, students were introduced to university administrators and faculty and reminded that we are here to serve and support them throughout their academic journey. Following Convocation, we gathered for the President's Picnic in Iberville Dining Hall. The event provided a wonderful opportunity for students, faculty and staff to enjoy fellowship and celebrate the beginning of another year filled with promise and Demon pride. I would like to extend a special thank-you to Dr. Mary Katherine Maggio and Christopher Richard for their hard work in planning and coordinating these events.

Athletics Update

Excitement spread across north and central Louisiana Tuesday with the announcement of the Lady Demon basketball nonconference schedule for 2026-27, which features a Sunday afternoon matchup against Kim Mulkey and her powerhouse LSU Tigers at Prather Coliseum on December 6. LSU senior star Mikaylah Williams of Bossier City is the daughter of LaTonya Perry Williams, a Northwestern alumna and former Lady Demon who played from 2002-05. Ticket information for that game, as well as the complete men's and women's basketball schedules, will be announced in the coming weeks.

Congratulations to a deserving group of 13 former student-athletes, coaches and staff members who will be honored at 9 a.m. on October 24 as part of our Homecoming festivities. Twelve will be inducted into the N-Club Hall of Fame, while one will receive the N-Club Distinguished Service Award. The honorees were chosen through a combination of voting by Northwestern athletic letterwinners and selections by a committee.

Five-time track and field All-American Mike Brown (1973–76) leads a group representing seven sports. The class also includes football All-American offensive lineman Greg Buckley (2001–04), quarterback Warren Patterson (1995–98) and tight end Carlos Treadway (1988–92). Baseball is represented by pitcher Jason Slanina (1999–2002) and first baseman Anatole Vincent (2002–03), while soccer inductees include Katie Priest Riccobono (2001–04) and coach Jimmy Mitchell, the program's all-time leader in victories, who led Northwestern to three NCAA Tournament appearances from 1999–2011.

Women's basketball standout Louise Chase (1996–2000), softball pitching ace Crista Miller Hobbs (2001–04) and men's basketball post player Byron Allen (2002–06) will also be inducted. John Fleckenstein contributed throughout the athletic department during his time as a manager and trainer from 1979–87. Steve Pezant, a longtime supporter who served as a student manager and has remained actively involved with Northwestern Athletics as an alumnus, has been selected to receive the N-Club Distinguished Service Award.

The Demon football season is quickly approaching. Northwestern will open the season against Louisiana Christian at 7 p.m. Thursday, August 27, in Turpin Stadium. Following the game, fans can continue the

evening at Flying Heart Brewery near campus, which will remain open late to welcome the Demon faithful. Coach Blaine McCorkle will discuss the team's development and his excitement for the upcoming season during the annual NSU/Independence Bowl Kickoff Luncheon this Thursday at Superior's Steakhouse in Shreveport. I encourage Demons throughout the Shreveport-Bossier area to attend this event at an alumni-owned business. The \$25 lunch includes a salad, plated entrée and dessert. Reservations may be made by contacting the Radiance Technologies Independence Bowl office at 318-221-0712.

In another noteworthy recognition, successful NSU graduates Phil Barbaree and Bobby Kirchoff were recently inducted into the Louisiana Restaurant Association Hall of Fame for their lasting contributions to the state's restaurant industry. Among the many distinctions they have received, both are members of Northwestern's Long Purple Line.

The Demon soccer season began with its two biggest challenges: visits to Oklahoma on Wednesday and LSU on Sunday night. Although both nationally prominent opponents shut out NSU, head coach Ian Brophy saw encouraging signs. The Lady Demons battled LSU to a scoreless tie at halftime before the Tigers took control with three early second-half goals. This week, NSU travels to Houston on Thursday night and UL Lafayette next Sunday evening.

As classes begin tomorrow, let us carry forward the energy and sense of purpose that defined the past week. Every interaction provides an opportunity to encourage a student, strengthen our university community and demonstrate what it means to be part of the Northwestern family. Thank you for the many ways you serve our

students and support one another. I look forward to what we will accomplish together during the year ahead.

Fork 'Em Demons,



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
President
Northwestern State University

Northwestern Now

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