

III | NORTHWESTERN STATE



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

August 30, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

The opening weeks of the fall semester have brought renewed energy to Northwestern State University. From welcoming students back to campus and strengthening our residential experience to engaging in important statewide conversations about higher education and workforce development, we continue to focus on the opportunities and challenges that will shape NSU's future. I appreciate the dedication of our faculty and staff as we build momentum for another successful academic year.

Legislative Higher Education Funding and Formula Task Force

The Louisiana Legislative Higher Education Funding and Formula Task Force held its first meeting Tuesday as the state confronts significant challenges in financing public higher education. Colleges and universities are being asked to play an increasingly important role in workforce development, particularly as Louisiana prepares for major industrial investments, while state and federal funding remain uncertain. The

Louisiana Board of Regents reported that the state's public colleges and universities are underfunded by more than \$800 million. Louisiana currently uses an outcomes-based funding formula, with approximately 70 percent allocated as base funding for institutional operations and 30 percent tied to outcomes such as student retention, workforce preparation, and other state priorities.

These financial pressures could intensify as Louisiana's population and the number of traditional college-age students decline. The Public Affairs Research Council projects that the state could experience a 7.5 to 15 percent decrease in college enrollment by 2029. This presents a significant challenge because Louisiana's colleges and universities have become increasingly dependent on tuition revenue. The task force is chaired by Senator Mike Reese and includes participation from presidents and other leaders throughout the University of Louisiana System. Following the meeting, I participated in a call with UL System formula funding consultant Matthew LaBruyere to discuss the implications for Northwestern and provide feedback on how potential changes to the formula could affect Northwestern. We will remain actively engaged in this process and continue advocating for a funding model that recognizes NSU's mission, performance, and contributions to Louisiana's workforce and economy.

NSU Participates in Louisiana Workforce Roadshow

On Wednesday, faculty and staff from Northwestern State University participated in the Northwest Louisiana at Work Forum in Shreveport, part of a statewide roadshow focused on Louisiana's workforce future. The forum brought together education, workforce, business, and community leaders to discuss regional needs, changes to the state's workforce system, and opportunities to align education and training more closely with the needs of employers and communities. NSU's participation reflects our continued focus on workforce and economic development throughout the

region. Through the Office of Economic Development and University Advancement, we are strengthening connections among education, industry, and community partners. That work includes the Region 6 STEM Center at NSU Cenla in Alexandria. Supported through Louisiana Works, the center connects schools, industry, and workforce partners to expand STEM education, career awareness, and workforce preparation. Participation in forums such as Louisiana at Work ensures that NSU remains engaged in the conversations shaping talent development and the future workforce needs of our state.

Campus Housing Update

This week, NSU and Campus Living Villages continued working together to enhance the residential experience for our students. Following feedback received during move-in, CLV leadership has been on campus working directly with the University team, residents, and families to address individual needs, conduct additional unit inspections, expand vendor support, and resolve remaining maintenance items. Significant progress has been made, and we appreciate the responsiveness and collaboration of everyone involved. Looking ahead, NSU and CLV are strengthening unit preparation and inspection standards, enhancing work-order follow-up, increasing vendor accountability, and improving communication and staffing during key move-in periods. I am encouraged by the work underway and appreciate the feedback from our students and families. Their input is helping us improve campus housing and provide the welcoming, comfortable living environment our students deserve. Students with lingering housing concerns are encouraged to contact the management team directly at manager@nsuvillage.com so those matters can be promptly reviewed and addressed.

UL System Board Meeting

On Thursday, I traveled to Baton Rouge for the University of Louisiana System Board meeting, where I joined fellow presidents in discussions centered on advancing the growth and development of our institutions, the System, and Northwestern. NSU Chief Financial Officer Rodney Wilson and NSU Provost Dr. Greg Handel joined me for the meetings. The Board approved several items for Northwestern, including faculty promotions and recommendations for tenure for the 2026-27 academic year and our academic planning documents for 2026-29. The Board also approved renaming the Health and Human Performance Building as the Kinesiology Building and naming a laboratory within the building the Roper Biomechanics and Movement Analysis Lab. In addition, the Board approved a contract with Jason Anderson, our new head softball coach. These actions recognize the accomplishments of our faculty, advance our academic planning, strengthen our facilities, and support the continued progress of Demon Athletics.

Game Day Festivities and Football Home Opener

Following the UL System Board meeting, I returned to Natchitoches to join the excitement surrounding our football home opener. Martha and I enjoyed visiting with faculty, staff, alumni, students, and supporters at Collins Pavilion during the Alumni Association tailgate and making our way through Tailgate Town to greet fans. It was wonderful to see such a large and enthusiastic crowd come together in support of Northwestern. One of the evening's highlights was joining our freshman class for the annual Inferno Run. Their enthusiasm was contagious as anticipation built for kickoff. Although the final score was not the outcome we wanted, the game-day atmosphere reflected the tremendous spirit and pride of the Northwestern family. The Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band delivered an outstanding halftime performance, and its dynamic presence in the

stands energized the crowd throughout the evening. I appreciate everyone who helped create such a memorable opening night and all who came out to support our students.

NSU Alumni Association Board Meeting

On Friday, the NSU Alumni Association held its annual board meeting. Members discussed new and innovative ways to build momentum, expand engagement, and reconnect alumni across the country. I extend special thanks to Alumni Association President Scott Repp for his leadership, our dedicated Board of Directors for their service, and Executive Director Jill Bankston and the Alumni Affairs staff for their tireless efforts in preparing for the meeting and hosting our volunteers. The work of the Alumni Association is vital to Northwestern's long-term success. The Alumni Association recently established the Council of Presidents to engage former Alumni Association presidents alongside the Office of Alumni Affairs. The council held its inaugural meeting following the board meeting. We look forward to drawing upon the experience, institutional knowledge, and continued commitment of these alumni leaders as we strengthen connections throughout the Northwestern family.

NSU Means Business: Beyond the Brick Way Lunch & Learn Series

Northwestern State University is taking business-focused learning beyond the traditional classroom through *NSU Means Business: Beyond the Brick Way*, a fall Community Lunch & Learn Series designed to connect business professionals and community leaders with practical information on timely workplace and business topics. Presented through a collaboration between NSU's College of Business and Technology and the Office of Economic Development and University Advancement, the complimentary series will bring NSU faculty, staff, and industry experts into communities across the region. Sessions will address small-business sponsorships, artificial

intelligence, generational differences in the workplace, military-to-business transitions, and the changing role of human connection in business. The series reflects NSU's continued commitment to supporting economic and workforce development by sharing University expertise, strengthening community partnerships, and creating meaningful opportunities for engagement throughout the region. Admission is complimentary, but registration is required. Click [here](#) to learn more and register.

Athletics Update

Disconcertingly, and in upset fashion, our football team was edged 42-37 by a veteran Louisiana Christian team in Thursday night's season opener, despite several strong individual performances that bode well for the season ahead. The Demons head to Ruston this Saturday to renew our rivalry with Louisiana Tech before opening Southland Conference play at East Texas A&M on September 12. The Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band will also make the short trip. There is still time to reserve a seat on the Demon Fan Bus for the NSU-Tech game. Reservations are available through Wednesday at 5 p.m., and the package includes transportation, tailgating and a game ticket. For details, click [here](#).

Our Demon volleyball team began its second season under Coach Ben Kaszeta at a tournament in Carrollton, Georgia, winning one of three matches. The Demons defeated Grambling but fell to West Georgia and Presbyterian. The team plays at ULM on Tuesday before competing in a tournament at Missouri State on Friday and Saturday.

After a week away from competition, the Demon soccer team travels to Alcorn State on Thursday night. The team will then return home for the first time in six contests to host Louisiana Tech next Sunday at 1 p.m.

Our cross country teams will compete in their first meet of the fall Friday afternoon at McNeese.

For the fourth consecutive year, NSU Athletics has secured a grant through the NCAA Accelerating Academic Success Program. The \$100,000 award is the largest available through the program, which is open to schools competing in the Football Championship Subdivision. This support will expand academic services, enhance professional development and strengthen the academic center serving nearly 400 student-athletes.

I want to continue encouraging you to participate in two important and innovative fundraising initiatives of the Demons Athletic Foundation. There is still time to enter the Rhodes Properties and Development Dream Home Giveaway, with the prizes to be drawn in early November. More information is available [here](#).

We are also just six weeks away from a fantastic weekend of entertainment on campus during the Top of the Boot Music Festival on October 9-10. The lineup of outstanding country music performers and ticket information are available [here](#).

As we move further into the semester, I am grateful for the many ways our faculty and staff serve our students and advance Northwestern's mission. The work highlighted this week reflects the breadth of our impact, from the daily experiences of students on our campuses to statewide discussions about higher education and workforce development. Thank you for your commitment, professionalism, and continued belief in the future of Northwestern State University.

Fork 'Em Demons



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
President
Northwestern State University

Northwestern **Now**

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