

III | NORTHWESTERN STATE



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

September 13, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

This week provided meaningful opportunities to advance our institutional priorities, connect with prospective students, support our regional partners, honor the sacrifices of others and celebrate the accomplishments of members of the Northwestern family. I am grateful to everyone whose work continues to strengthen our university and extend its impact throughout Louisiana and beyond.

Leadership Team Meeting

On Tuesday, our Leadership Team, comprised of all deans, all division heads, and key personnel, met to discuss institutional priorities and strengthen communication and coordination across the university. Reports centered on the focus areas of our strategic plan: student experience, academic excellence, market responsiveness, community

enrichment and athletic prominence. Team members shared updates on key initiatives, emerging needs and accomplishments within their respective areas. These discussions help ensure that important information is communicated throughout the university and that our collective efforts remain aligned with Northwestern's mission and goals. I appreciate the leadership, insight and commitment each member brings to this important work.

First-Year Scholars' Dinner

On Wednesday evening, Martha and I joined over 60 first-year Louisiana Scholars' College students and faculty for a dinner in the Orville J. Hanchey Gallery. It was a pleasure to welcome these exceptional students to Northwestern, recognize their hard work and visit with the faculty members who will help guide them throughout their academic journeys. Our Scholars' College students are among Northwestern's brightest and most motivated scholars, preparing to become leaders in law, medicine, engineering, education and many other fields. By fostering meaningful connections among students, faculty and university leaders, we strengthen their sense of belonging and establish a foundation for their success at Northwestern and beyond.

St. Mary's Visit

On Thursday, I visited St. Mary's Catholic School to speak with juniors and seniors about the many opportunities available at Northwestern. St. Mary's is just across the river from our campus, and it is important for local students to know that they have an outstanding university in their own backyard. This was the first of several high school visits I

plan to make this fall as part of our continuing effort to connect personally with prospective students. I look forward to sharing the Northwestern experience with students throughout the region and encouraging them to pursue their educational and career goals as members of the Demon family.

Fort Polk Progress Military Appreciation Dinner and Community Briefing

Northwestern was represented Thursday at the 2026 Fort Polk Progress Military Appreciation Dinner and Community Briefing hosted by the Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce in Leesville. The event brought together military, business, governmental and community leaders from across Central and Southwest Louisiana. Fort Polk Progress is a regional advocacy organization dedicated to supporting and strengthening the missions of Fort Polk and the Joint Readiness Training Center. Its work promotes military readiness, community resilience and the long-term sustainability of the installation's mission. The annual event provided important updates on regional initiatives and military activities. Northwestern remains committed to supporting military-connected students, families and communities through education, engagement and regional partnerships. Special thanks to Martha Koury, director of the NSU Leesville/Fort Polk Campus, and Michelle Stephens, military liaison, for representing the university at this important event.

Patriot Day Observances

On Friday, Northwestern students, faculty and staff gathered in the heart of campus to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the

September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Our annual Patriot Day observance included the lowering of the flags to half-staff, a moment of silence and a message honoring those who lost their lives. The ceremony also recognized the courage of first responders and ordinary citizens and reflected on the enduring importance of compassion, community and service. I am deeply grateful to the Student Government Association for coordinating the program and to the Demon Battalion and School of Creative and Performing Arts for their meaningful contributions. Their efforts ensured that this tradition remained a powerful expression of remembrance, unity and resilience.

Northwestern was also represented at Barksdale Air Force Base's 25th anniversary 9/11 memorial gathering. Ty Whatley, assistant director of engagement strategy and operations and NSU's Barksdale Air Force Base coordinator, assisted with the event and represented the university alongside Barksdale Education Center staff and 2nd Force Support Squadron leadership. Our participation reflects Northwestern's strong partnership with Barksdale and our commitment to serving the Airmen, families and broader military community connected to the installation.

Natchitoches Young Professionals Level Up Conference

Northwestern served as the Home Base Sponsor for the Natchitoches Young Professionals Annual Level Up Conference at the NSU Student Union. The event welcomed more than 100 professionals, emerging leaders, students and community partners for a day of professional development, leadership training, networking and career growth. A program of the Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce, Natchitoches Young Professionals brings together individuals ages 20

to 40 and works to attract, develop and retain talent in Natchitoches Parish through leadership, connection, innovation and community engagement. Our support of the Level Up Conference strengthens connections among Northwestern, local employers and the regional workforce. It also creates opportunities for professional growth and contributes to making Natchitoches a community where the next generation wants to live, work and thrive.

Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts Hall of Fame

Congratulations to Karl Carpenter of Pineville and Stephanie Hodgdon and Carlos Ortiz IV of New Orleans, who have been selected as the 2026-27 inductees into the Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts Hall of Fame. Carpenter, a three-time Northwestern graduate and distinguished music educator and administrator, devoted 46 years to education, including 42 years in the Rapides Parish School System. Hodgdon, a 1997 theatre graduate, has built an international career as a vocalist and performer while continuing to mentor young artists through masterclasses and outreach programs. Ortiz, a 2009 graduate and accomplished musician, arranger and educator, serves as operations officer and assistant director of the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve Band in New Orleans.

The inductees will be honored during the NSU Jazz Orchestra concert on Thursday, October 1. Carpenter, Hodgdon and Ortiz will each perform during the concert, and a reception honoring them will follow. Their professional accomplishments and continued commitment to the arts reflect the excellence of Northwestern's creative and performing arts programs. We are proud to welcome them into the CAPA Hall of Fame.

Dr. Oliver Molina Selected as Fulbright Scholar

Congratulations to Dr. Oliver Molina, director of Percussion Studies, who has received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program Award to teach and conduct research in the Philippines. Dr. Molina will serve at the University of the Philippines College of Music in Quezon City from January through June 2027. The Fulbright Program is the U.S. government's flagship international educational exchange program. Participants are selected for their academic achievement and leadership potential and are given opportunities to teach, conduct research, exchange ideas and strengthen understanding among nations. Dr. Molina will research the kulintang, an ancient gong instrument with deep significance in Filipino culture and musical tradition, while teaching percussion seminars and masterclasses. He plans to bring the knowledge and traditions he gains back to Northwestern and share them with schools, conferences and audiences throughout our region. His Fulbright selection is an extraordinary professional achievement and another source of pride for the entire Northwestern family.

Athletics Update

The Demon soccer team was spotlighted on ESPN's *SportsCenter* Thursday night after a record-shattering 24-1 victory over visiting Arkansas-Pine Bluff. The scoring total was just one goal shy of the NCAA Division I record. Senior Paige Baumgartner set a school record with five goals, including four in the first 15 minutes of the 90-minute match. The Demons led 16-1 at halftime, and coach Ian Brophy substituted liberally, using his entire roster and taking a more

conservative approach on offense. The team plays at Grambling this Thursday night before beginning defense of its Southland Conference championship Sept. 24 against Lamar.

Our volleyball team brings a four-match winning streak into its home contest against Louisiana Tech Tuesday evening at 6:30 in Prather Coliseum. Coach Ben Kaszeta's team swept three matches at the Bulldog Bash in Ruston this weekend, including 3-1 victories over ULM and Grambling.

At the NSU Demon Invitational Cross Country Track Meet held on Friday at the Walter P. Ledet Track Complex, Sophomore Andrew Kent won the men's race, while freshman Abby Poche was the fastest Lady Demon with a second-place overall finish.

Our football team took an early lead for the third consecutive game Saturday night in Commerce, Texas, but East Texas A&M answered with a convincing 38-14 victory in the Southland Conference opener for the Demons. The Demons will play Weber State in Utah next Saturday night before returning home Sept. 26 to face Southeastern. As the rebuilding effort continues, please be mindful that developing new revenue streams to support our athletic programs is critical as we compete against the substantially better-funded Texas members of the Southland Conference.

Excitement continues to build around two major initiatives benefiting Northwestern Athletics. Tickets are available for the [Top of the Boot Music Festival](#), North Louisiana's premier music festival, which will take place October 16-17. The festival will bring nationally recognized artists and visitors from across the region to our campus.

The [Rhodes Properties & Development Demon Dream Home Giveaway](#) gives supporters an opportunity to win a newly constructed home valued at \$265,000 with the purchase of a \$100 raffle ticket. Proceeds benefit Northwestern Athletics through the Demons Unlimited Foundation and provide resources that enhance the student-athlete experience across all 14 athletic programs. The drawing will be held November 6.

Looking Ahead

The Department of Engineering Technology will offer two free workforce development workshops in October with support from Weyerhaeuser. The workshops are open to participants with at least a high school diploma, and lunch will be provided. For additional information or to register, [click here](#).

Please also mark your calendars for our 2026 Homecoming festivities on October 23 and 24. Homecoming is a special opportunity to celebrate Northwestern's history, tradition and accomplishments while welcoming alumni and friends back to campus. Additional information is available on the [Homecoming webpage](#).

Thank you for your continued dedication to Northwestern and to the students and communities we serve. The accomplishments highlighted this week reflect the talent, service and commitment found throughout our university. I hope everyone has a productive and rewarding week.

Fork 'Em Demons



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
President
Northwestern State University

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