NORTHWESTERN STATE



A MESSAGE FROM

PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

September 27, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

This week offered opportunities to connect with prospective students, celebrate the talents of our students and faculty, and strengthen partnerships that support Northwestern State and the communities we serve. I am grateful to everyone whose work made these efforts possible.

Hazing Prevention Week

On Monday, students launched Hazing Prevention Week with activities encouraging them to pledge to take action against hazing. Throughout the week, the Office of Greek Life and its campus partners offered presentations, conversations and events focused on recognizing hazing, speaking up and building healthy relationships. Hazing can occur in any organization or group. Every student deserves

to find connection and belonging without pressure to take part in something harmful. I appreciate Dr. Mary-Katherine Maggio and everyone who helped bring this important message to students across campus.

FastSites Investment Strengthens Natchitoches' Economic Future

On Tuesday, members of NSU's Office of Economic Development and I attended the announcement of a $2.55 million Louisiana Economic Development FastSites investment in the Natchitoches Parish Port. The funding will support site grading and additional warehouse space, nearly doubling the Port's existing warehouse capacity and improving its ability to serve current industry and attract new opportunities. I commend Travis Tyler and the Port's leadership for their vision, and I thank Louisiana Economic Development and our state legislators for supporting this investment. A special thanks to Representative Jack McFarland and Representative Daryl Deshotel for spearheading this project and making it happen. As our region grows, Northwestern State has an essential role in preparing the workforce employers need. Our academic programs, employer partnerships, internships and work-based learning opportunities help connect students with that future.

Faculty Senate Meeting

Tuesday afternoon, I attended the Faculty Senate meeting. I appreciate Dr. Benjamin Forkner and our faculty leaders for their thoughtful work on academic and institutional priorities. Their participation and insight strengthen our programs, support our faculty and help us improve the student experience.

Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Society

Martha and I enjoyed attending the reception and opening concert of the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Orchestra's 61st season Tuesday evening. The patriotic program began *American Mosaic*, a season celebrating our nation's musical heritage. It was a wonderful showcase for the students, faculty and community members who make this orchestra such a valued part of Northwestern State and Natchitoches. The 63-member orchestra brings together students from many academic disciplines and places across the United States and beyond. I am proud of their talent and dedication, and grateful for the leadership of Dr. Douglas Bakenhus, the music faculty and staff, and the Symphony Society. The season continues Nov. 3 with *American Reflections*, followed by the orchestra's participation in our annual Christmas Gala Dec. 2–4.

NSU Participates in Annual LCTCS Conference

Northwestern State was represented at this week's Louisiana Community and Technical College System Conference in New Orleans by Dr. Jarrod Sanson, Payton Romero, Dr. Christy Hornsby and Dr. Kari Cook. Over three days, they connected with current and prospective students and alumni, sharing opportunities to continue their education at NSU. Their conversations placed particular emphasis on graduate programs and paths to further academic and professional advancement.

Strategic Plan Key-Findings Brief

Wednesday's Key-Findings Brief concluded the 2025–2026 assessment cycle, *Leading the Way*, and helped set the direction for the next cycle, *Setting the Standard*. The Strategic Planning Team presented a comprehensive review of our strategic focus areas, academic programs, support services, core competencies and special initiatives under *Strategic Plan 2023–2028: Providing Education of Enduring Value*. Of the 1,396 objectives, outcomes, measures and metrics assessed, 1,168, or 84 percent, were achieved. These findings give us a clear picture of our progress and guide the work ahead. I thank everyone who contributed to this institution-wide process and uses its results to improve how we serve our students, region and state.

STEM Day

On Friday, more than 600 prospective students from 18 high schools visited campus for STEM Day. Through demonstrations, workshops and conversations with our students and faculty, they explored subjects ranging from drones and aviation to veterinary technology, mathematics and codebreaking. The event gave students a firsthand look at the programs and career paths available through NSU's School of STEM. I thank Dr. Anna Dugas and the many faculty, staff and students who welcomed our visitors and helped them imagine their futures at Northwestern State.

Rodeo Team Makes Its Collegiate Debut

This weekend, 12 members of our reestablished Rodeo Team competed at the Panola College Rodeo in Tatum, Texas. The event marked Northwestern State's first competition in the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association's Southern Region since the program's return was announced in May. Under Coach Cody DeMoss, the team has grown to 14 student-athletes. I congratulate them on reaching this milestone and look forward to following their inaugural season.

Athletics Update

For the second consecutive game, the Demon football team showed offensive explosiveness and greater continuity, but Southeastern maintained control throughout Saturday night's game at Turpin Stadium. Our team's competitive spirit was evident, and Coach Blaine McCorkle noted continued signs of improvement. The Demons visit another top Southland Conference opponent, Lamar, next Saturday as the season approaches its halfway point.

The defending Southland Conference champion Demon soccer team opened conference play with two wins against fellow contenders. The Demons defeated visiting Lamar 2-0 Thursday, then rallied for a 4-3 victory Sunday afternoon at Stephen F. Austin. Coach Ian Brophy's team has won five straight games heading into a conference match at UIW in San Antonio on Thursday night.

Winners of seven of their last nine matches, the Demon volleyball team returns to Prather Coliseum this week to face Southeastern on

Thursday night and LSU-New Orleans on Saturday afternoon. Coach Ben Kaszeta's young team opened Southland play with a 3-1 win at Houston Christian last Thursday before falling at UIW on Saturday.

Our Lady Demon tennis team competed well in its second fall event this weekend at Rice and will return to Texas next weekend for a tournament at Texas State. Several cross country runners improved their times at the Cowboy Stampede in Lake Charles. The teams will train during the first half of October before competing again.

If you haven't already gotten on board, please consider joining two major initiatives supporting Northwestern Athletics. Tickets remain available for the Top of the Boot Music Festival, just three weekends away, on Oct. 16–17. The festival will bring nationally recognized artists and visitors from across the region to our campus for two days of music and entertainment.

Supporters can also enter the Rhodes Properties & Development Demon Dream Home Giveaway for a chance to win a newly constructed home valued at $265,000. Tickets are $100, and proceeds benefit Northwestern Athletics through the Demons Unlimited Foundation, supporting the student-athlete experience across all 14 athletic programs. The winning ticket will be drawn Nov. 6.

Thank you for the care and energy you bring to Northwestern State each day. I hope you will continue to take part in the many activities that connect our campus and community. For more upcoming events, visit What's Happening at NSU.

Fork 'Em Demons



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
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Northwestern Now

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