NORTHWESTERN STATE



A MESSAGE FROM

PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

October 4, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

This week brought meaningful opportunities to celebrate our faculty, welcome future students, and strengthen partnerships that support our university and region. I am grateful for the dedication of our faculty and staff, whose work continues to create opportunities for our students and extend Northwestern's impact beyond campus.

Demon Days and Family Day

Last Saturday marked the conclusion of Demon Days, a 42-day celebration of free events that helped students connect with one another and become involved in campus life. More than 1,600 students participated throughout the first six weeks of the semester. The celebration concluded with Family Day, which welcomed nearly 600 family members and guests for tailgating, games, music, and Demon football. Thank you to our campus and community partners,

student organizations, volunteers, and the Parker James Trio for making the day memorable. I especially appreciate Dr. Mary-Katherine Maggio, Trevor O'Bannon, and Christopher Richard in the Department of Student Engagement for their work organizing Demon Days and Family Day.

Small Business Opportunity Program

On Monday, NSU's Office of Economic Development, in partnership with the Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce, Louisiana Central, and Louisiana Economic Development, launched the five-week Small Business Opportunity Program. Gary Perkins of Louisiana Central led the opening session on capital readiness and access to funding. Upcoming sessions will address business finances, effective marketing, time-saving technology, and customer service. The program continues each Monday through October 26 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. in the Natchitoches Room at Russell Hall, providing practical guidance to help local entrepreneurs and small business owners grow and succeed.

Newly Tenured and Promoted Faculty Reception

On Monday afternoon, I had the pleasure of attending a reception at Orville Hanchey Gallery honoring our newly tenured and promoted faculty. Deans, department heads, and directors joined us to celebrate these important milestones and recognize our colleagues' contributions to teaching, scholarship, and service. The event provided an opportunity for faculty to connect across disciplines and strengthen relationships that benefit our students and academic programs. Congratulations to each honoree, and thank you for your dedication to Northwestern's academic mission.

Advanced Manufacturing Program Industry Partner Meeting

On Tuesday, in conjunction with NSU's Fall Career Fair, we welcomed industry partners in our Advanced Manufacturing Program for a discussion about aligning education with workforce needs. Their insight helps us ensure that our curriculum, hands-on learning experiences, and student preparation reflect the skills employers need. I appreciate the continued engagement of the Office of Economic Development and University Advancement and the faculty supporting this program with our industry partners. These relationships prepare students for successful careers while supporting the economic development of our region.

National Park Foundation Grant

NSU Technical Services recently received a $1.5 million grant from the National Park Foundation to support its work with the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT). Through this project, NSU and NCPTT will develop a risk assessment tool for historic sites in the Southeast Region. That work will inform a National Cultural Resource Risk Atlas, helping site stewards plan for and preserve important historic buildings and sites across the National Park Service. The grant will support new staff, contractors, and upgrades to LiDAR and GIS equipment. Please join me in celebrating this achievement, which builds on more than three decades of collaboration among NSU administrators, staff, students, and NCPTT.

Nursing Scholarship Grant

Northwestern has been awarded a five-year grant expected to provide $3.25 million through the Health Resources and Services Administration's Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students Program. This funding will support eligible full-time Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) students while helping strengthen Louisiana's nursing workforce. NSU received $650,000 for the first budget period, with annual support of $650,000 anticipated for the following four years, subject to the availability of federal funds and satisfactory program progress. Approximately 40 students each year are expected to receive need-based scholarships, complemented by academic advising, faculty mentoring, and workforce preparation.

Our ASN program has graduated 651 nurses over the past five years and provides pathways for both students entering healthcare and professionals building on previous education and experience. This investment will help reduce financial barriers to degree completion and prepare more nurses to serve rural and medically vulnerable communities. I appreciate project director, and dean of the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health, Dr. Aimee Badeaux, and the faculty and staff whose work makes these opportunities possible. Supporting our nursing students is an investment in their futures and in the health of communities across Louisiana.

Demon Code Wars

On Friday, Northwestern hosted the first Demon Code Wars, a programming competition that challenged students to apply their problem-solving, teamwork, and critical-thinking skills.

Congratulations to all participants, especially our top finishers. Korbin Richard earned first place, followed by Harper Marcotte, Jack Odom, Joseph Rodriguez, and Javier Sanchez in second place. Cody Carmen, Gabe Chisholms, and Daniel Gallager finished third, while Shannon Boone and Natalie Sutton placed fourth. Thank you to Dr. Nicholas Richardson of the College of STEM, Dr. Jason Powell of the College of Business and Technology, and graduate assistant Justin Dysarz for making the competition possible. We look forward to seeing this event grow into a Northwestern tradition.

Hall of Distinguished Educators

During Homecoming weekend, the Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development will recognize outstanding alumni and friends whose careers reflect a lasting commitment to education. This year's Hall of Distinguished Educators inductees are Mark Minton of Bossier City, Tommy Alan Moore of Henderson, Texas, and LeAnn Gray Skinner of Stonewall. The School of Education's highest honor recognizes alumni with at least 30 years of service and significant contributions to education and their communities. Their distinguished careers span music education, classroom teaching, and school administration.

The Outstanding Young Professionals in Education honorees are Jessica Fain Blanchard of Denham Springs, Aaliyah Rachal Seawood of Natchitoches, and Dr. Joshua V. Sims of Shreveport. Each has demonstrated a strong commitment to student success through teaching, mentorship, and educational leadership. Donna "DeeDee" Foster Perot of Natchitoches will receive the Friend to Education Award in recognition of her extraordinary contributions to education and her longstanding relationship with Northwestern as a student,

educator, and mentor. Friends and colleagues are invited to a reception at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, October 24, in the Teacher Education Center Commons, followed by the induction program at 11 a.m. in the NSU Middle Lab School auditorium. Congratulations to all of this year's honorees.

N-Side View Day

N-Side View Day brought 441 prospective students and family members to campus for a day focused on exploring academics, student life, and the NSU experience. The new check-in and browsing format in Alost Hall received positive feedback and helped create a more natural transition into academic sessions and campus activities. Students and families engaged with academic programs, toured campus, learned more about housing and financial aid, and received assistance with the admissions process. Thirty-four students submitted applications during the event, and many received an admission decision while still on campus.

One of the best stories of the day came from a student who had recently decided to attend another Louisiana university. Her mother encouraged her to follow through with her N-Side View Day registration. After spending the day on campus, she changed her mind and is now excited about attending Northwestern State next fall. Her experience illustrates the impact that personal interaction and a campus visit can have on prospective students and their families.

Athletics Update

The Demon football team has reached the halfway point of its season, with an open date this Saturday followed by home games on the next

two Saturdays. At Lamar last Saturday night, facing a nationally ranked Southland Conference opponent, our team again showed signs of progress but was overpowered by a veteran Cardinals squad.

In volleyball, the Demons split a pair of home matches last week, beating LSU-New Orleans 3-0 Saturday in Prather Coliseum after a tough 3-2 loss Thursday night to Southeastern. Coach Ben Kaszeta's team is vastly improved this season, with a 10-8 overall record, including a 2-2 mark in conference competition. This week, the Demons host defending SLC co-champion UT-Rio Grande Valley Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and Texas A&M-Corpus Christi Saturday at 1 p.m.

The Demon soccer team is also home Thursday at 7 p.m. for an SLC contest against East Texas A&M. In its only competition last week, the team lost for the first time in six games, falling 2-0 to Incarnate Word in San Antonio Friday night despite recording twice as many shots and shots on goal as the Cardinals.

The Lady Demon tennis team demonstrated progress over the weekend in individual singles and doubles matches at the River State Shootout, hosted by Texas State in San Marcos. Coach Marcos Morelli's squad will be back in action in two weeks in Huntsville, Texas.

Basketball single-game tickets went on sale last week, including tickets for the women's home game against LSU on Sunday, December 6. Seats are going fast, so I encourage you to call the NSU Athletics Ticket Office at 318-357-4268 or purchase tickets online at NSUTickets.com before the game sells out.

I also encourage you to support two upcoming initiatives benefiting Northwestern Athletics.

With the Top of the Boot Music Festival just two weeks away, tickets remain available for October 16 and 17. The festival will bring nationally recognized artists and visitors from across the region to campus for two days of music and entertainment.

The Rhodes Properties & Development Demon Dream Home Giveaway offers a chance to win a newly constructed home valued at $265,000. Tickets are $100, with proceeds benefiting the Demons Unlimited Foundation and the student-athlete experience across all 14 athletic programs. The winning ticket will be drawn November 6.

Looking Ahead

The Creole Heritage Center is celebrating Creole Heritage Month with activities open to the NSU community and the public. Upcoming events include a Creole Heritage Lunch and Learn on October 6, “Show & Share: Louisiana Creole Treasures” on October 13 and 14, a Paint and Poetry event on October 19, and an open house on October 27 and 28. Throughout the month, #CreoleQuest2026 invites participants to explore locations and activities connected to Louisiana Creole heritage. Click here to learn more.

Our NSU Means Business: Beyond the Brick Way lunch and learn series also continues this fall, with upcoming sessions in Natchitoches, Alexandria, Marksville, and Bossier. Topics include generational differences in the workplace, artificial intelligence, sponsorships, and cybersecurity. Admission and lunch are complimentary, but registration is required. Click here to learn more and register.

With Homecoming just three weeks away, I look forward to welcoming alumni and friends back to campus for a memorable weekend. I encourage you to join us for the Long Purple Line Luncheon on October 23 as we celebrate our distinguished alumni during Homecoming. Tickets are available, and a complete schedule of Homecoming activities can be found here.

For additional information on upcoming events and activities, visit What's Happening at NSU.

Thank you for the care and commitment you bring to Northwestern each day. Your efforts strengthen our university, enrich our students' experiences, and build connections that serve our communities. Martha and I wish you a productive and enjoyable week.

Fork 'Em Demons



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
President
Northwestern State University

Northwestern Now

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