

A Message From President James T. Genovese



September 8, 2024

Faculty and Staff,

As we begin a new chapter at Northwestern, I will be providing regular weekly updates to keep you informed about the initiatives, developments, and successes happening across our campus. Since taking on the role of president Aug. 5, I've had the privilege of meeting with many of you from various departments, learning firsthand about the hard work and passion you bring to everything you do. I am so impressed by the talent and dedication of our faculty and staff. I look forward to working together to build on this strong foundation.

There will be *weekly* updates going forward. This first one comes after a month of accomplishment and progress, so much that I could write a chapter for a book and not an update today. I encourage you to visit the news link at our [nwstate.edu](https://www.nwstate.edu) website to read about the many achievements for Northwestern and our faculty and staff. By the way, you'll soon see a redesigned website that will be much more appealing and user-friendly.

Enrollment

Just two weeks ago, we welcomed 1,100 new students to campus. Monday, we will announce our 14-day count that will put our total enrollment at over 8,500 students for the Fall 2024 semester, a welcomed improvement from recent years. Campus housing is at 99% capacity, with 1,500 students living on campus.

Nearly 300 high school students have already registered for our premier recruiting event, *N-Side View Day*, on Saturday, October 12. This will be a fantastic opportunity for future students to explore all that Northwestern has to offer. Let's make it the showcase it must be.

Progress is driven by you, our dedicated faculty and staff. You consistently go above and beyond. This makes an immediate impact. We are continuing to assess and strengthen our recruitment and retention strategies. To keep moving forward, we are beginning to engage our alumni like never before, relying on their support to continue improving and reaching new heights.

Athletics

Our football team fought valiantly but wound up literally one foot short in a 37-31 loss to Prairie View A&M last night at Turpin Stadium. I want to commend our student-athletes and coaching staff for their hard work and dedication as we rebuild that program. We are taking early steps on the right path.

Home football games provide a unique showcase for all aspects of our university when thousands of friends, alumni and visitors converge in Natchitoches and on our campus. I had fun visiting with so many people this weekend. My dog Blue dragged me around Donald's Demon Alley tailgating area on a beautiful afternoon while Martha and I got to talk with many passionate supporters, faculty, staff and students. We had football players from most of our 12 championship football teams return and I heard players from the

1960s forward tell me they are committed to supporting Northwestern and Coach McCorkle's Demons.

It was awesome to be on the field for the halftime show and to conduct the Demon Fight Song for the fantastic Spirit of Northwestern marching band. What a thrill! They were joined by many high school band members for a great start to their season.

Elsewhere in NSU Athletics, our volleyball team is already off to a 4-2 start – including a win over the school from my backyard, ULL – and is home in Prather Coliseum Tuesday evening against Grambling. Our soccer team scored two shutout wins this weekend and is home for two matches next weekend. Well done, ladies! There's also a home tennis tournament next weekend.

Campus Enhancements

Our campus continues to grow. I'm pleased to share updates on several projects. I recently toured the Alost Hall construction site and learned more about this state-of-the-art facility that will provide new academic and collaborative spaces and benefit our students and faculty alike. The project is progressing well with anticipated completion set for Spring 2025.

Across campus at our athletic complex, site preparation for the David and Sherry Morgan Health Performance Center is nearing completion. Badly needed new turf is being installed at the baseball and softball fields through the generosity of a \$1.9M private gift from tremendous supporters of our university. These improvements will greatly enhance our athletic facilities for future seasons and strengthen our ability to recruit and retain outstanding student athletes.

Through Act 751 of the 2024 Regular Legislative Session, NSU is slated to receive over \$29M to address our deferred maintenance backlog. \$2.1M of which has been allocated for 2024-25. These improvements are part of our

broader strategy to invest in infrastructure that enhances the student experience and positions us for long-term success.

I've visited facilities around campus and am determined to quickly address glaring needs to give our students, faculty and staff much-improved places to learn and work. I thank those who are working with us, on and off campus, to make strides in this area.

Academic Innovation

Later this week, we will be announcing a partnership with IBM to bring cutting-edge technology education to our students. The launch of our first course using the IBM curriculum, with a focus on RPG IV Programming and artificial intelligence, marks a significant milestone for Northwestern State University and the state of Louisiana. There are just a handful of institutions around the country who have this level of engagement with IBM. This collaboration not only enhances our curriculum but also positions our students to be leaders in the rapidly evolving tech industry.

Affiliate Support

Over the past few weeks, I have attended quarterly board meetings of the NSU Foundation, Alumni Association, and Demons Unlimited Foundation. These organizations are engaged in promotions and outreach and actively secure private support for NSU. The members of these organizations are enhancing our institution and are energized. I look forward to working with them on ongoing and new initiatives.

We've also engaged governmental leaders on the local, regional and state levels to share our story and bang the drum for more financial support, along with listening to suggestions to broaden our engagement with the business sector and other potential sources of funding. Progress is made day-by-day.

Looking Ahead

As we move forward, I am completely committed to listening to your ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Together, we will build on our strengths and address the challenges that lie ahead. Please reach out to my office or send me an e-mail if there's anything you'd like to discuss.

Thank you for all that you do for Northwestern. You are what makes this institution truly exceptional.

Wishing you a productive and rewarding week ahead!

Fork 'Em Demons,



President James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
Northwestern State University



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