

A Message From President James T. Genovese



October 13, 2024

Faculty and Staff,

As we move through the busy month of October, I want to take a moment to express my appreciation for the continued hard work and dedication shown by everyone in our community. Your contributions, both inside and outside the classroom, are what makes Northwestern a place where students can thrive and achieve their dreams.

This update highlights important events and initiatives happening across our campus. From strategic meetings and capital projects to cutting-edge developments in artificial intelligence, we are enhancing the academic experience, fostering innovation, and strengthening our community.

Business Affairs Visit

On Monday morning, I had the pleasure of meeting with our Chief Financial Officer, Rodney Wilson, and the dedicated staff in Business Affairs. We had productive conversations about ongoing and future endeavors that will

enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations. I appreciate the team's commitment to supporting the university's mission through their work.

Capital Outlay Meeting

Later Monday morning, we hosted representatives from the Louisiana Division of Administration, the Board of Regents, the University of Louisiana System, and our regional legislative delegation. I was particularly pleased to welcome Representative Julie Emerson, Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, who joined us for this important visit. We provided updates on Northwestern's capital outlay priorities and toured Alost Hall. Their continued support for our projects is invaluable, and we are grateful for their engagement.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence continues to be a focus area of growth and innovation at Northwestern. Our School of STEM has recently formed an Artificial Intelligence Club that meets on Wednesdays from 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. in Fournet Hall Room 123. Faculty members are exploring cutting-edge AI concepts and how they apply to research. The club is open to all interested faculty, and more information is available from Dr. Nabin Sapkota (sapkotan@nsula.edu).

I would like to highlight two upcoming events that underscore our commitment to leading in this field:

- **Lecture by Vincent Mathieu, President of Fédération Française du Bâtiment (FFB)**

Vincent Mathieu, President of the FFB in France, will be visiting Northwestern this week as part of an ongoing collaboration between NSU, FFB, and NCPTT. Together, the organizations are working on AI-

driven projects to model various infrastructure parameters and enhance our understanding of building insulation and renovation. Mathieu will present a lecture this Friday, Oct. 18, from 12:00 noon-1:00 p.m. in Bienvenu Hall Room 114.

- **Lunch and Learn: Navigating the World of Artificial Intelligence, with Monty Chicola**

Hosted by the Office of Economic Development & University Advancement, this event will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 30 from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at Room 164 on our Cenla Campus. The session will feature Northwestern alumnus and AI expert, Monty Chicola, who will discuss how AI is transforming industries. Monty will also share details on the groundbreaking AI programming course he will teach in Spring 2025 in partnership with IBM and NSU's School of Business. More information about this event and the Spring 2025 AI course can be found at <https://nsu.la/ibm>.

Welcome Reception

On Wednesday evening, I had the privilege of attending a welcome reception at the home of Van and Angela Eversull. It was a remarkable evening that provided an opportunity to connect with local business leaders, many of whom are deeply invested in the success of Northwestern. We had meaningful conversations about the future of our university, including how we can work together to support our students, faculty, and the broader community through strategic partnerships and innovative initiatives. I am deeply grateful to the Eversulls for their generous hospitality and continued support. Events like these are essential in building the relationships that help Northwestern thrive, and I look forward to continued collaboration with our business community.

N-Side View Day

Over 500 students attended N-Side View Day yesterday, providing a fantastic opportunity to showcase everything Northwestern has to offer. I had the honor of welcoming the students and their families. I emphasized that our theme, Find Your Path, Build Your Future, aligned with the purpose of the event, where students have the chance to explore every facet of Northwestern to discover their path and begin shaping their future.

I also shared with the parents that our goal at Northwestern is to create future leaders through a hands-on approach to mentorship. Our President's Leadership Program, for example, gives students the chance to make an impact on campus and in the community. As the day came to a close, I reminded everyone that Northwestern is a family, and we look forward to welcoming these future students into the Demon family next fall. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this event a success.

School of STEM Events

Over the last few weeks, the School of STEM has brought approximately 450 students from 20 different schools across 10 different parishes to campus to experience hands-on learning through events such as STEM Day and the Engineering Technology Symposium. These events are pivotal to recruiting students into the School of STEM. The Professional School and Natural Science Career Fair was also a tremendous success, with over 120 college students attending and engaging with over thirty professional schools, government agencies, and community partners. This event provided students with invaluable exposure to future career opportunities. I would like to thank all the faculty and staff for their dedication to making these events such a success. These contributions have made a lasting impact on students and strengthened our partnerships across the region.

Driving Change

Northwestern has undertaken a thorough and reflective review of its strategic plan and assessment practices during *Assessment Cycle 2023-2024*. As a result, *Strategic Plan 2023-2028 Providing Education of Enduring Value* has become a more inclusive and balanced approach to achieving the University's vision. [Assessment Cycle 2023-2024 Driving Change](#), marks the second quantitative evaluation of this strategic plan and ensures uninterrupted, institution-wide, research-based planning and evaluation that guides strategic decision-making for improvement.

Northwestern recently completed its seventh cycle of assessment, covering six strategic focus areas: Student Experience, Academic Excellence, Market Responsiveness, Community Enrichment, Athletic Prominence, and Cultural Competency. This process evaluated 26 objectives, 100 metrics, and 165 academic programs alongside administrative units and core competencies. These findings support informed decision-making by university leadership, enabling Northwestern to continuously advance toward our vision of becoming the premiere regional university.

Athletics Update

We had less than desired outcomes this past week in football, soccer, and volleyball. Northwestern Lady Demon Soccer is among the top teams in the Southland Conference, but fell 2-1 Sunday to A&M-Commerce, another championship challenger. The Lady Demon Volleyball team will play in Prather Coliseum Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday afternoon at 1:00 p.m. The Demon Football team keeps battling as injuries are resulting in more freshmen stepping into significant playing time, including our true freshman starting quarterback yesterday.

I do want to recognize our student-athletes' great effort away from competition. The group of nearly 400 compiled a cumulative 3.1 GPA last

spring, and our graduation rate is over 85 percent as of last year's NCAA report. This is a credit to these young people, their coaches, athletic academic staff, and also, our faculty for accommodating these students' travel schedules and providing a nurturing academic environment that is geared toward success.

As we continue through the fall semester, I want to thank you all for your continued commitment to our students and university. The initiatives and efforts highlighted this week are a testament to the impact we are making together.

Fork 'Em Demons,



President James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
Northwestern State University



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