

A Message From President James T. Genovese



December 22, 2024

Dear Faculty and Staff,

As we approach the end of the fall semester, I want to take a moment to reflect on some of the remarkable activities we experienced this past week at Northwestern. Your dedication and passion continue to inspire me, and it's a privilege to share these highlights with you.

Management and Leadership Institute

This week, Northwestern State University hosted the University of Louisiana System Management and Leadership Institute. This program is designed to support faculty and staff who aspire to broaden their leadership roles within academia and administration. Two representatives from each institution participate, and it was a pleasure to meet these emerging leaders during the two-day session. I am particularly proud of Northwestern's representatives, Lindsey Vasocu and Qwontice McDowell, who exemplify the talent and

potential that define our university. Their commitment to growth and leadership inspires all of us to aim higher.

Natchitoches Central High School Visit

On Tuesday morning, I had the opportunity to visit Natchitoches Central High School and speak to seniors about the opportunities awaiting them at Northwestern. As the flagship institution in our region, it is critical to recruit students locally and ensure that our neighbors see Northwestern as their first choice for higher education. Connecting with these young minds and discussing their futures was a rewarding experience, and I look forward to welcoming many of them to our campus next fall.

City of Natchitoches Partnership

Later Tuesday morning, I sat down with Natchitoches Mayor Ronnie Williams Jr. and engaged in a very productive discussion centered on ways we can strengthen our town-gown relationship. Northwestern and Natchitoches are synonymous, and building on our partnership is vital to the growth and success of both the university and the city. We discussed several initiatives that will reinforce our bond and bring mutual benefits in the coming year. I want to thank Mayor Williams for his support and presence at all three commencement ceremonies this week, a testament to his commitment to our shared community.

Commencement

Celebrating 602 graduates across three ceremonies was an unforgettable experience and a profound reminder of the transformative power of education. As my first commencement as President, it was deeply meaningful to shake the hand of each graduate and share in their moment of triumph. Among these moments of celebration, I was honored to present a posthumous degree to the

family of Seth Stanfield during the Wednesday afternoon ceremony. This solemn occasion was a poignant reminder of the enduring bonds of community and love that unite us as a Northwestern family.

I was deeply moved by the extraordinary support of families who traveled from across the globe, including as far as Africa, to celebrate this milestone with their loved ones. This outpouring of pride and dedication underscores the significance of commencement as more than just a ceremony; it is a celebration of achievement, resilience, and dreams realized.

Athletics Update

The men's basketball team defeated visiting Southern-New Orleans Saturday behind a remarkable game from Addison Patterson, who scored 33 points, collected 10 rebounds, and issued four assists. It was cited as the best individual performance of the day in Division I basketball by one national media outlet, and was the first 30-point, 10-rebound game by a Demon in 13 seasons. The Demons will visit the Texas Longhorns December 29.

The Lady Demons lost their last non-conference game at South Florida, and will resume Southland Conference play December 29 at Houston Christian. Our basketball teams are home in early January, and I encourage you to check NSUDemons.com for schedule information.

Congratulations to the football team's Blake Gotcher and Chancellor Owens. Gotcher received two more FCS All-America honors while Owens made the Sports Illustrated FCS Freshman All-America team.

Special cheers for 45 student-athletes and staff members who took part in commencement after successfully balancing their extensive engagement with their competitive schedules and completing pursuit of their degree programs.

They reflect the over 80 percent of their peers who represent us in sports, while reaching their ultimate goal, a college degree from Northwestern.

Looking Ahead

As we wrap up an incredible semester, I am inspired by the determination and drive I see across our campus. Each of you has contributed to our shared success in ways that reflect the strength of our Northwestern family.

Together, we've proven the power of resilience and a focus on what's possible, even in the face of challenges. Your efforts have elevated our community and laid the foundation for even greater achievements in 2025 and beyond.

This holiday season let's take a moment to celebrate what we've accomplished and the promising future ahead. Weekly updates will resume in the spring after we kick off the new semester on January 6. Until then, I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with joy, peace, and rejuvenation.

Thank you for being a part of this remarkable journey.

Fork 'Em Demons,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James T. Genovese". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

President James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
Northwestern State University



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