

III | NORTHWESTERN STATE

A Message From President James T. Genovese



February 2, 2025

Dear Faculty and Staff,

I hope this update finds you well. It has been another busy and productive week for Northwestern State University as we continue working toward our goals of enhancing academic excellence, strengthening community partnerships, and advancing the university's impact. I appreciate your ongoing dedication to our students and mission. Below are some highlights from the past week.

Thespians Festival

Northwestern hosted the highly successful Louisiana Thespians Festival this past weekend, welcoming over 800 students and faculty from theatre programs across the state. Over the course of two days, students competed in performances, participated in showcases, took master classes led by our faculty, and attended the college auditions and expo area.

This festival serves as a valuable recruiting tool, showcasing the university's strong Theatre and Dance program. Faculty and students worked diligently to ensure a seamless experience for all participants. A highlight of the event was seeing Northwestern alumni now leading theatre programs and bringing their students to campus. Notably, the top two performances in the competition were from students taught by Northwestern alumni, a testament to the lasting impact of our program.

Committee of 100 Shreveport

On Monday, I attended a new member orientation for the Committee of 100 Shreveport, a nonprofit educational, civic, and charitable organization comprised of local business and professional leaders in Northwest Louisiana. The Committee is committed to mobilizing the business community to improve the region, with a focus on economic development, education, and community relations. I look forward to working alongside this distinguished group to advocate for initiatives that align with Northwestern's strategic priorities.

Shreveport Campus Visit

Later that day, I visited our Shreveport campus and met with Dr. Aimee Badeaux, who provided an update on the College of Nursing and Allied Health. Under Dr. Badeaux's leadership, the college continues to make strides in securing external support and ensuring Northwestern remains a leader in nursing and allied health education. Her commitment to maintaining high standards and expanding opportunities for our students is commendable, and I appreciate her dedication to our programs.

OMB Memo

On Monday evening, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memo freezing all federal funding. This directive created a period of uncertainty for institutions nationwide, including Northwestern. However, on Wednesday, the memo was rescinded, allowing federal funding to proceed as usual.

In response to this unexpected development, I was proud of our team's swift action and commitment to maintaining open communication with our students and stakeholders. Their efforts ensured transparency and provided clarity during a challenging time. A special thank you to Rodney Wilson, Lauren Jackson, and Amber Beasley for their exceptional work in responding to the situation with professionalism and efficiency.

Board of Regents Meeting

On Tuesday, I traveled to Baton Rouge to attend the Louisiana Board of Regents meeting. As the state governing body for higher education, the Board of Regents oversees academic policy, budget recommendations, and statewide planning for all public colleges and universities in Louisiana. During the meeting on Tuesday, the Board adopted a new funding formula model that focuses on student completions in high-demand fields. The new model rewards institutions for graduating students with credentials that lead to high-need occupations and supports progression, research, transfers, and participation in work-based learning. Additionally, the formula increases the percentage of funds awarded to student outcomes to 35%, with 65% based on institutional funding.

Although the new funding formula was adopted, it is important to note that the model will not be implemented unless new funding becomes available. At this time, indications are that a standstill higher education budget will be proposed for the upcoming year.

Sonography Accreditation

On Tuesday afternoon, I participated in the exit briefing for the accreditation of our sonography program, concluding a two-day site visit evaluating the program. I want to extend a special thank you to Dr. Aimee Badeaux, Chelsea McMullin, and Jennifer Evans for their hard work in preparing for this visit. Their commitment to ensuring our program meets and exceeds accreditation standards is truly commendable, and I appreciate their efforts in following up on the recommendations from the accrediting agency. The university is committed to taking all necessary steps to promptly accomplish accreditation, reinforcing our dedication to providing a high-quality education for students.

Future Business Leaders of America Regional Conference

On Wednesday morning, I had the pleasure of speaking to over 300 students attending the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Regional Conference, which Northwestern is honored to host annually. FBLA plays a critical role in preparing the next generation of business leaders, and this event provides an excellent opportunity to showcase our university and engage with high school students who may soon become part of the Northwestern family.

Miss Lady of the Bracelet

Later Wednesday morning, I had the opportunity to meet with Miss Lady of the Bracelet, Jesse Foshee. We discussed ways she can represent NSU at recruiting and alumni events, sharing her story with prospective students and their families. Her passion for NSU and her success story make her a wonderful ambassador for the university.

Fundraising Meetings

On Thursday morning, I met with Wes Breeden, Chair of the NSU Foundation Fundraising Committee, along with Jill Bankston and Laurie Morrow, to discuss plans for a major fundraising event this spring. Later that day, I participated in a university-wide fundraising committee meeting focused on prospect management and strategic collaboration. I appreciate the hard work and commitment from Jill in leading this effort, and everyone involved in ensuring we stay on track with our fundraising goals.

Natchitoches Kiwanis Club

On Thursday, I had the privilege of speaking to the Natchitoches Kiwanis Club, providing an update on NSU and the exciting initiatives we have on the horizon. I always enjoy engaging with civic organizations and our community partners. The support this club has provided to Northwestern over the years, particularly in the form of scholarships that benefit our students, is greatly appreciated. Special thanks to club president-elect Tiffany Woods and former club president, Don Barker, for reaching out and organizing the opportunity to engage with the club.

Cheer Team Success

Congratulations to our Demon cheerleaders for their highly successful competition recently at the 2025 ICU University World Cup Cheerleading Championships, which truly are international: Northwestern's cheer team competed against other university squads from the USA, Puerto Rico, Japan, and Canada, among others.

NSU won first in the Large Coed Game Day category, our team's third consecutive year to claim the title; and also first in the Nations Rankings University World Cup Game Day competition with the highest score among 16

teams competing. Our Demon cheerleaders earned their highest finish in program history, second, in Division I Game Day, and captured fifth place in the Division I Traditional category. Congratulations to these students and to their coaches, Amy Faith Dodson Stepp and Tre' Jackson, for continuing excellence representing Northwestern.

Athletics Update

Our women's basketball team won both Southland Conference games last week to start the second half of the SLC season successfully. Mya Blake continued her sensational play with 31 points in Thursday night's home victory. The men's team plays at home Monday night at 6:30 hoping to rebound from a rough trip to East Texas A&M.

The indoor track and field season resumed this weekend with another school and Southland Conference record time by our remarkable women's 4x400 meter relay team, a school record by the men's 4x400 relay foursome, and many more impressive performances. Our women's tennis season began on the road Saturday. As a former tennis player at Northwestern, I am eagerly anticipating home matches this spring, beginning next Sunday.

Wednesday is National Signing Day for several sports and our football program will celebrate its signing class during an 11:30 luncheon you're invited to attend at Merci Beaucoup Restaurant on Church Street in Natchitoches. Softball season begins late this week in a tournament in Mobile, Ala., and baseball season starts the following weekend at home.

Doug Ireland Scholarship and Mike McConathy Court Dedication

I am pleased to announce that our very own Doug Ireland is being honored by the establishment of an endowed scholarship totaling \$100,000 at Northwestern State University, to be commemorated by an announcement

ceremony Saturday, February 15. Natchitoches attorney and member of the University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors, Robert "Skeeter" Salim, is making a \$100,000 gift to create the scholarship as the latest in a series of endowments he has established honoring friends who have served the university. For more information about the announcement ceremony or to donate to the scholarship, click [here](#).

As a reminder, later that day, the basketball court at Prather Coliseum will be officially named the Mike McConathy Court during halftime of the men's basketball game against Stephen F. Austin on Saturday, February 15. The women's game will begin at 1:00 p.m., followed by the men's game at approximately 3:30, with the court recognition around 4:15. A tribute lunch will be held between the games. Friends and fans planning to attend the lunch should RSVP by February 10 at www.nsu.la/mcconathy where they can also submit photos for a slideshow honoring Coach McConathy.

As we move forward, I am grateful for the dedication and hard work of our faculty and staff. Your efforts continue to make a meaningful impact on our students and the broader NSU community. Thank you for all that you do.

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



You are receiving this email because you are affiliated with Northwestern State University.

© Northwestern State University of Louisiana

<https://www.nsula.edu>

A Member of the University of Louisiana System

Accredited by SACSCOC