

## III | NORTHWESTERN STATE



### A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

March 16, 2025

Dear Faculty and Staff,

I hope this message finds you well as we move forward into another busy and exciting week at Northwestern State University. This past week has been filled with important developments, impactful events, and meaningful collaborations that continue to strengthen our institution. Thank you for your dedication to our students, community, and mission. Here are a few key updates:

#### **Southland Conference Board of Directors Meeting**

On Monday, I attended the Southland Conference Board of Directors meeting in Lake Charles, along with the Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament. As the landscape of college athletics evolves rapidly, we were briefed on the *House v. NCAA* settlement and the proposed revenue-sharing model. These changes could have significant implications for scholarships and roster limits, but Southland Conference institutions remain committed to providing the best experience possible for our student-athletes.

### **Morgan Extra Mile Scholarship Banquet**

Monday evening, I had the privilege of attending the Morgan Extra Mile Scholarship Banquet, a truly inspiring event that celebrates the generosity of David and Sherry Morgan and their commitment to supporting our students. Their permanent endowment of over \$1 million has funded over 100 scholarships totaling more than \$200,000. These awards recognize students from Sigma Sigma Sigma and Pi Kappa Phi who exemplify hard work, character, and service. The banquet featured an inspiring keynote address by NSU Football Coach Blaine McCorkle, and we were honored to welcome national fraternity and sorority leadership. Thank you to the Morgans for their unwavering support of NSU students and for investing in their futures.

### **MOU with North Louisiana Criminalistics Lab**

On Wednesday, I participated in a Memorandum of Understanding signing between NSU and the North Louisiana Criminalistics Laboratory. This partnership will provide forensic science students with hands-on training and internship opportunities, allowing them to

apply their skills in real-world settings while bringing fresh perspectives and innovation to the lab. This collaboration strengthens our academic programs and enhances NSU's reputation in forensic science education.

### **Strategic Planning Mid-Year Brief**

The University Strategic Planning Team presented the Assessment Cycle 2024-2025 Mid-Year Brief on Wednesday, highlighting progress and areas of focus. The review affirmed that our planning and assessment efforts continue to drive measurable improvements across campus. Vice Presidents, Directors, and the Student Government President shared positive trends and challenges while discussing strategic priorities moving forward. The updates covered academic programs, capital outlay projects, community service, research, and institutional support activities. The university continues to gain momentum, and I appreciate your hard work in driving these successes.

### **Long Purple Line**

On Thursday, I met with the Long Purple Line selection committee to begin the nomination process for the 2025 class. Established in 1990, the Long Purple Line is the highest honor bestowed upon our alumni, recognizing individuals whose careers and service have enhanced NSU's reputation. Nominations open tomorrow, March 17, at 8:00 a.m. Please encourage your colleagues and community members to submit nominations. The nomination form can be found [here](#).

## **Northwest District Literary Rally**

Saturday marked the 100th year that NSU has hosted the Northwest District Literary Rally. I was honored to address the teachers, counselors, and principals at the event. This year, 34 high schools participated, with 2,093 tests administered to 2,009 students. In addition to academic competitions, students engaged in hands-on experiences with 15 of our academic departments. The rally is conducted by a joint committee selected from among the high school principals and the College faculty. Contests are held in athletics, music, and literary subjects. Thanks to Dr. Yonna Pasch and committee members Star Hamous, Peyton Romero, Emily Miller, and Rebecca Boone for organizing this outstanding event, and to the many faculty and staff members who volunteered their time.

## **Athletics Update**

In four sports last week, NSU teams defeated their counterparts from Southland Conference rival Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, beginning with identical 66-63 victories over the Islanders women's and men's basketball teams Monday in the Southland Conference Tournament at Lake Charles. Also Monday, our Lady Demon tennis team posted a 4-3 homecourt triumph over a Corpus Christi program that had not lost to a conference opponent since 2022 – a 28-match streak. The week wrapped up with an NSU baseball series victory over the Islanders on the road.

I was in Lake Charles Monday morning, attending Southland Conference meetings, and was able to watch our women's basketball

team's victory. I returned Tuesday to support our teams in their tournament games. Although neither ended happily for Northwestern, overall, both teams had significant improvement in 2024-25 and each tied for fourth place in the 12-team conference standings. Jobs well done to men's coach Rick Cabrera, women's coach Anna Nimz, their student-athletes and coaching staffs, and thanks to everyone for supporting our teams.

I want to applaud our Lady Demon tennis team for that remarkable win over Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, and for a 4-0 start to Southland Conference competition. Our team is now the pacesetter in the race for the SLC championship, last achieved in 2022.

The Demon baseball team posted two shutout victories literally on the Gulf Coast in Corpus Christi this weekend, including a complete game performance Sunday afternoon by Trent Hillen. Coach Chris Bertrand's squad has won seven of their last eight games and is 11-8 overall. NSU plays at Grambling Tuesday and visits UNO next weekend in an SLC series.

Our softball team continues to show impressive competitiveness despite losses, most recently to Baylor and at McNeese. A home weekend against Southeastern is ahead.

Congratulations to our Southland Conference Indoor Championship women's track and field team, which picked up some honors this week as voted by SLC coaches. Senior sprinter Maygan Shaw was voted Southland Indoor Female Athlete of the Year, junior sprinter/hurdler Dynia Lewis won Co-Newcomer of the Year honors, and for the third

consecutive year, Mike Heimerman was chosen SLC Indoor Coach of the Year. The outdoor season begins Saturday at LSU.

## **Looking Ahead**

We are excited to welcome Dr. Neilank Jha, Distinguished Professor in Leadership and Neuroeconomics, to campus this week. Dr. Jha will be meeting with faculty to develop a new multidisciplinary leadership course for the fall semester. A major highlight of his visit will be the *Leadership in the Age of AI Forum* on Wednesday, March 19, at 5:30 p.m. in Magale Recital Hall. He will be joined by Dr. Julian Bailes and Monty Chicola for a discussion on AI's practical applications in education, business, and society. If you haven't registered yet, please do so [here](#).

Additionally, our *Demons on the Road* alumni events begin this Thursday, March 20, in Shreveport. These gatherings provide an excellent opportunity to connect with NSU alumni and supporters. To find an event near you, click [here](#).

Thank you all for your continued dedication and hard work. Your efforts are making a difference in the lives of our students and the broader NSU community. I look forward to another productive week ahead.

Fork 'Em Demons,



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese  
President  
Northwestern State University

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