



A MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

March 8, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

As we move further into the spring semester, our campus remains active with academic initiatives, community engagement, and preparations for the months ahead. I would like to share a few highlights and updates from across Northwestern State University.

Legislative Session

The 2026 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature will convene tomorrow, March 9, and is scheduled to adjourn no later than June 1. Several bills have been filed that may impact higher education, and we will be monitoring these developments closely in coordination with the

University of Louisiana System and the Board of Regents government relations staff. Updates will be shared throughout the session as legislation progresses. University of Louisiana System Day at the Capitol is scheduled for March 24, and Natchitoches Day at the Capitol will take place on March 25. Let us know if you would like to attend Natchitoches Day at the Capitol on March 25.

\$1.8 Million in Federal Funding for Innovation Park

Northwestern State University has been awarded \$1.8 million in federal funding through the Congressionally Directed Spending process to support the development of Innovation Park, a transformative STEM initiative designed to expand research opportunities, strengthen workforce development, and drive technological innovation across Louisiana. Northwestern State University leadership extends sincere appreciation to U.S. Representative Cleo Fields and U.S. Senators Bill Cassidy and John Kennedy, along with their dedicated staff, for championing this project through the federal appropriations process. Their leadership secured funding that will allow Northwestern to purchase advanced equipment for Innovation Park, which will serve as a hub for STEM education in northwest Louisiana through a collaborative partnership between NSU and LSMSA. This funding represents a strong vote of confidence in Northwestern's mission and in the important role our university plays in preparing students for careers in high-demand fields.

New Training Course Offerings

Northwestern State University continues to expand opportunities for professional development and workforce training through the Office of Electronic and Continuing Education and the Office of Electronic Learning and Global Education. Beginning March 17, the university will offer a seven-week Phlebotomy Technician Training course in Natchitoches. This face-to-face program will provide students with the classroom instruction and hands-on experience needed to pursue certification through the National Healthcareer Association. Participants will complete required venipuncture procedures and receive Basic Life Support certification through the American Heart Association as part of the program.

In addition, a 40-hour Basic Private Investigator Training Course will be offered March 13–15 and March 20–22. This program, approved by the Louisiana State Board of Private Investigator Examiners, provides instruction in Louisiana private investigator law, criminal procedure, surveillance techniques, interviewing, evidence, and investigative reporting. These programs reflect Northwestern's commitment to providing accessible, career-focused training that supports workforce development and lifelong learning throughout our region.

CAPA Hall of Fame Induction

CAPA celebrated its 10th anniversary Creative and Performing Arts Hall of Fame induction last night during the Northwestern State Wind Symphony concert in Magale Recital Hall. The evening recognized three outstanding alumni whose careers reflect the lasting impact of Northwestern's School of Creative and Performing Arts: Chris Brown

(sports artist), Sherman Desselle (television news journalist), and Mark Poole (music educator). The Wind Symphony concert served as the centerpiece of the celebration, highlighting the excellence of Northwestern's music program while honoring the accomplishments of the inductees.

The three honorees represent the breadth of talent developed through Northwestern's creative programs. Brown has served as the official artist for the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame since 2009 and is nationally recognized for his dynamic sports artwork. Desselle is an evening reporter for Fox 26 Houston and an award-winning broadcast journalist whose career has included reporting and anchoring roles in Louisiana and Texas. Poole serves as director of bands at Lone Star High School in Frisco, Texas, where his ensembles have earned national recognition and prestigious performance invitations. If you would like to nominate an individual or organization for the CAPA Hall of Fame, please contact Scott Burrell at nfburrellc@nsula.edu. Nominees are selected based on their contributions to their art, profession, and CAPA.

Athletics Update

The Southland Conference Basketball Championships are underway in Lake Charles, and Northwestern is among five of the 12 conference members that qualified for both eight-team brackets in men's and women's competition. Congratulations to coaches Rick Cabrera and Anna Nimz, their staffs, and their student-athletes for reaching this milestone once again.

Our men's season ended tonight with a hard-fought loss to Nicholls. The Demons were intensely competitive throughout this season. Fourteen of our 23 games against Southland opponents were decided in the final minute of play. Our women's team, which had 14 SLC regular-season victories for the first time since 2003-04, plays its first game tomorrow at 11 a.m. against East Texas A&M.

Sophomore forward Vernell "Vee" Atamah was voted the SLC Women's Basketball Player of the Year by conference coaches last week. Vee was also a first-team selection on the ALL-SLC team. A computer information systems major, she is the first Lady Demon to earn that honor in 22 years. Also recognized on the 10-member All-SLC team was second-team selection Nya Valentine. Representing Northwestern on the men's all-conference team was Micah Thomas, also a second-team selection.

Our tennis, baseball, and softball teams all delivered noteworthy performances last week, and all three are scheduled to play at home over the upcoming weekend. Please visit NSUDemons.com for schedules and updates.

The Lady Demon tennis team completed a sweep of its south Texas road trip Monday with an impressive 4-3 victory at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, which shared last year's Southland regular-season championship with NSU and SFA. After Monday's win further established their status as a championship contender, this weekend's home matches were postponed to next weekend due to weather.

Our baseball and softball teams both won Southland Conference series on the road, capturing two of three games. The Demon baseball team bounced back from a first-game loss at UIW to post a pair of one-run victories, the last coming in 12 innings. Last Tuesday, the Demons defeated Grambling 13-1 at Brown-Stroud Field and will host Alcorn State Tuesday at 6 p.m.

The Lady Demon softball team has won six of its last eight games after capturing the first two games of a three-game series Thursday and Friday at Houston Christian. Coach Jenny Fuller's second NSU team scored 20 runs in the series, dropping only a narrow 3-2 decision in the finale.

Looking Ahead

We are looking forward to Flavor of Louisiana, our signature spring fundraiser and seafood celebration scheduled for March 20. The event will feature live music and specialty dishes from outstanding restaurants across the state. Sponsorship opportunities remain available, with the deadline set for Tuesday, March 10. For more information on tickets and sponsorships, click [here](#).

Northwestern Theatre and Dance will present the comedy: *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) [revised] (again)* March 11-15 in Theatre West. Directed by Pia Wyatt, the fast-paced production features three actors attempting to perform all 37 of Shakespeare's plays in a single evening. For tickets, click [here](#).

The Department of Music will host NSU Piano Day on Saturday, March 14, at 1:30 p.m. in Magale Recital Hall. The event includes mini lessons, workshops, and performance opportunities for students in grade five and above. That evening, guest artist Dr. Igor Lipinski will present *Piano Illusions*, a performance that blends virtuosic piano performance with elements of magic as part of the Louisiana Piano Series International. For more information or to register, click [here](#).

For a full listing of lectures, performances, athletic events, and campus activities, please visit our *What's Happening at NSU?* page by clicking [here](#).

Thank you for your continued dedication to our students and to the mission of Northwestern State University. Your efforts each day make a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve.

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" and "G".

James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
President
Northwestern State University

Northwestern **Now**

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