



A MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

March 22, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

This week reflected the strength of our partnerships and the meaningful impact of our work across the university and throughout our region. From connecting students with career opportunities to expanding military training programs and celebrating the generosity of our supporters, Northwestern State continues to move forward with purpose and momentum.

College of Business and Technology Connects Students with Banking Careers

Northwestern State University's College of Business and Technology, in partnership with the Louisiana Bankers Association, recently hosted "Cookies and Careers in Banking," an engaging event designed to introduce students to opportunities within the banking industry. Representatives from regional banking partners shared insights into their career paths, highlighted the wide range of roles available in the industry, and discussed how they began their professional journeys. The program concluded with a networking session that allowed students to connect directly with banking professionals and share their résumés with participating institutions. We extend our appreciation to the Louisiana Bankers Association for its partnership, and to City Bank and Trust Company, Exchange Bank, Red River Bank, Sabine State Bank, and BOM, along with the Louisiana Office of Financial Institutions, for their participation and commitment to developing future financial professionals.

Natchitoches Leaders Convene to Discuss Economic Development Priorities

Northwestern State University was well represented at the Natchitoches Economic Development Alliance's first Breakfast Club of 2026, where leaders from across the parish gathered to discuss site readiness, legislative priorities, and the industries shaping our region's future. The Office of Economic Development and the School of Business and Technology participated in discussions focused on certified site development, infrastructure, and statewide initiatives led by Louisiana Economic Development. I appreciate our team's continued engagement in these important conversations. Their involvement ensures that Northwestern State remains aligned with

industry needs and positioned to support economic growth, workforce development, and opportunity across Natchitoches Parish and beyond.

Demons of Destiny 20th Anniversary Celebration

On Tuesday evening, Martha and I joined Coach Mike McConathy and members of the 2005–06 Demon basketball team at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum to celebrate the 20th anniversary of one of the most memorable moments in Northwestern State University history. The “Cinderella Wears Purple” event commemorated the Demons’ remarkable 64–63 victory over third-seeded Iowa in the NCAA Tournament, highlighted by Jermaine Wallace’s iconic last-second three-pointer. That moment, etched into March Madness history, capped an extraordinary comeback from a 17-point deficit and continues to be one of the most celebrated finishes in tournament history. The evening featured a reception and panel discussion moderated by Doug Ireland, providing an opportunity for attendees to hear firsthand reflections from Coach McConathy and players Byron Allen and J.A. Anglin. Byron, whose wit and charm stole the show, went on to play eight professional seasons in Asia before going into business in south Louisiana. J.A. is the head coach at Centenary.

It was especially meaningful to relive how the players embodied their coach’s philosophy that “the MVP of our team is our team,” a mindset that defined their unselfish resilience and ultimate success. That victory not only brought national attention to Northwestern State but also created a lasting legacy for our university. Wallace’s shot remains a staple of NCAA Tournament highlight reels and earned national

recognition, including the 2006 Pontiac Game Changing Performance award providing a \$108,000 scholarship contribution that continues to benefit our students. It was a special evening to honor a team whose impact still resonates today (most recently, prominently cited in Thursday's Washington Post) and to celebrate a defining moment in Demon athletics history.

NSU Expands Military Partnership Through UAS Training for Fort Polk

On Wednesday, I had the opportunity to engage with soldiers from Fort Polk and the Joint Readiness Training Center during Northwestern State University's three-day Unmanned Aircraft Systems training led by faculty member JD Cox. The program combined classroom instruction with hands-on flight exercises, equipping participants with knowledge in drone systems, aviation weather, and mission planning. The training concluded with written exams and flight evaluations.

This initiative reflects our continued commitment to serving the military community while aligning service members with high-demand, emerging technologies. As unmanned systems play an increasingly critical role in modern operations, programs like this help translate military experience into valuable workforce skills. This effort was made possible through strategic partnerships led by the NSU Office of Economic Development and reinforces our role in connecting education, industry, and military to drive regional impact.

Strategic Planning Team Mid-Year Brief

On Wednesday afternoon, the Strategic Planning Team presented the Mid-Year Brief for Assessment Cycle 2025–2026, *Leading the Way*. This report establishes the foundation for our annual strategic plan assessment and the President’s Key Findings Brief scheduled for September 23, 2026. The team delivered its ninth comprehensive review of all strategic focus areas, including academic programs, administrative and student support units, core competencies, and special topic areas such as the Student Government Association, mission-based research, community engagement, and capital outlay priorities. This process provides rigorous year-to-year analysis, ensures accountability to performance targets, and reinforces a culture of continuous, data-informed improvement across the university. Most importantly, it allows us to measure our mission performance in a meaningful and quantifiable way.

Morgan Extra Mile Scholarship Ceremony

Thursday evening, Martha and I attended the Morgan Extra Mile Scholarship Ceremony, a meaningful event that highlights the generosity of David and Sherry Morgan and their commitment to our students. Their permanent endowment of more than \$1 million has funded over 100 scholarships with over \$350,000 assisting our students since the program began in 2008. This includes awards to First Generation students who are the first in their families to attend college began several years ago.

The scope of the program has rapidly expanded in recent years. More than \$100,000 in scholarships were awarded to nearly four dozen

deserving students on Thursday evening. These support outstanding members of Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority and Pi Kappa Phi fraternity who demonstrate hard work, character, academic achievement, and service. We were honored to welcome parents, family members, faculty, staff, and alumni to this inspiring annual event. We are grateful to the Morgans for their continued investment in our students and their futures.

NSU Foundation Board Meeting

On Friday morning, I attended the NSU Foundation Board meeting, where the impact of the Foundation's support was clearly evident. One of the highlights was hearing from students who completed the Dave Ramsey financial literacy course, which is funded entirely by the Foundation and offered at no cost to faculty, staff, and students. It was encouraging to see how these practical skills are already shaping their financial futures. We also received an update from our partners at Merchant McIntyre, who outlined recent successes in securing federal grants and congressionally directed funding. I am deeply appreciative of the Foundation's continued leadership and support, which plays a vital role in advancing our mission and enhancing student success.

Flavor of Louisiana

Friday evening, Martha and I joined more than 500 alumni and supporters at Flavor of Louisiana, our spring fundraising event celebrating Northwestern State University. The event showcased specialty dishes from outstanding restaurants across the state and

featured fundraising booths hosted by our colleges and campus organizations. Hosted by the NSU Foundation, this event generates critical support for faculty, staff, programs, and scholarships. I extend my sincere thanks to the Office of Alumni and Development for their outstanding work in organizing this event, and especially to Flavor of Louisiana Director Cristy Bernard for her leadership and dedication.

CONSAH Open House

On Saturday, the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health (CONSAH) hosted a successful Open House at the Shreveport campus, welcoming prospective students and their families for an engaging and informative experience. Attendees had the opportunity to visit with admissions, financial aid, and recruiting staff, while CONSAH faculty and staff led tours, facilitated hands-on demonstrations in the skills lab, and answered questions related to clinical admission requirements and career pathways. This event highlighted the strength and growing demand of our nursing and allied health programs, which continue to play a critical role in preparing highly skilled professionals to meet workforce needs across our region and state. I am grateful to the faculty and staff of CONSAH for showcasing their programs with such professionalism and enthusiasm, and to our Enrollment Management and Recruiting teams for their efforts in connecting with prospective students and their families.

In Memoriam: Coach Sam Goodwin

We mourn the passing of Coach Sam Goodwin, one of the most influential figures in Northwestern State University history and a true

giant in football and in Demon Athletics. Coach Goodwin, who passed away Friday at the age of 82, remains the all-time winningest coach in program history with 102 victories over 17 seasons. He led the Demons to four conference championships and guided the 1998 team to the FCS semifinals, all of this after his 1988 squad produced one of the most memorable seasons in school history with an unbeaten conference record and a run to the FCS quarterfinals.

Beyond his success on the field, Coach Goodwin's legacy is reflected in the countless student-athletes he mentored and developed. He coached 22 All-Americans, 42 first-team All-Southland Conference selections, and 38 players who advanced to the NFL, while also emphasizing academic and personal success. Coach Goodwin continued to support not only our football program but other sports and elements of the university. His impact on Northwestern State, the Natchitoches community, and generations of Demon football players is everlasting, and we extend our deepest condolences to his family and all who knew him.

Athletics Update

The Demon baseball team remains atop the Southland Conference standings after winning its home series this weekend against the University of New Orleans. With victories in eight of their last 10 games and a 15-9 overall record, including an 8-4 mark in conference play, the Demons travel to ULM on Tuesday before heading to Nicholls for their next Southland Conference series this weekend.

Although our softball team was swept Friday and Saturday by league-leading Southeastern, the Lady Demons were very close to winning the series, falling 3-1 in the final at-bat of the second game and 2-1 in the third contest. They return home this Friday and Saturday to host Southland Conference opponent East Texas A&M.

After winning three 4-3 matches in Southland Conference play, the Lady Demon tennis team found itself on the other end of a nailbiter Saturday at McNeese. They visit Southeastern on Monday and return home Saturday for a matchup with Stephen F. Austin. Last year, SFA shared the Southland Conference championship with our team and Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

Track and field opened the outdoor season Saturday with a number of strong performances at the Louisiana Classics meet in Lafayette. Next up is our highly anticipated home meet, the Leon Johnson NSU Invitational, which will take place Saturday at the refurbished Walter P. Ledet Track Complex. With a brand-new track that is among the fastest in the world, and men's and women's teams filled with outstanding competitors and student-athletes, this will be Northwestern's only on-campus track and field competition of the year. I hope you will join us to support them.

Looking Ahead

A reminder that the 11th Annual Dylan Kyle Poche Memorial Bass Tournament will take place this Saturday, March 28, at Toledo Bend's Cypress Bend Park. Since its founding in 2016, the tournament has honored Dylan's legacy by supporting scholarships at Northwestern

State University. The event will include family-friendly activities such as bank fishing for children, food, raffles, inflatables, and live music. The registration deadline is Friday at 2 p.m. Additional information and online registration are available [here](#).

For more information about upcoming events and activities at Northwestern State University, please click [here](#). Thank you for your continued dedication to our students and to Northwestern State University.

Fork 'Em Demons,



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
President
Northwestern State University

Northwestern Now

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