



A MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

April 26, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

It has been an exceptionally active and energizing week across our campus and community. From student engagement and academic events to alumni gatherings and community partnerships, the momentum at Northwestern continues to build in meaningful ways.

Menard High School Visit

On Wednesday morning, I had the opportunity to visit Menard High School in Alexandria. This visit was made possible through the efforts of Coach Mike McConathy and Van Erikson, along with Principal Chris Gatlin. I attended Mass with the students and later spoke to them

about the opportunities available at Northwestern. This was a valuable connection with a school that has not traditionally been a strong pipeline for us, and I am grateful for the opportunity to share our story and build new relationships.

Lisa Chesser Borders Meraki Scholarship

On Wednesday, I attended the Lisa Chesser Borders Meraki Scholarship presentation. Theo Hemphill of Sterlington was named the 2026 recipient of this scholarship, which supports students pursuing degrees in Fine and Graphic Arts. Established by James Borders in memory of his wife, Lisa, this scholarship reflects a legacy of faith, service, and creativity. We are grateful to Mr. Borders and to our campus team, including Leslie Grusbeck and Cristy Bernard, for their leadership in making this meaningful event possible.

Annual Flower Show Hosted by the St. Denis Garden Club

On Wednesday afternoon, Martha and I joined the St. Denis Garden Club for its Annual Flower Show, which was hosted at the President's residence. More than 15 floral arrangements were displayed throughout the home, with over 50 guests in attendance. It was especially meaningful to welcome former Northwestern State University First Ladies Brenda Webb and Jennifer Maggio, along with other distinguished guests from the community. This event provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the creativity of the Garden Club while strengthening the longstanding relationships that connect our university and the Natchitoches community. We are grateful to the St. Denis Garden Club for selecting Northwestern as the host for this

special occasion. I am grateful to my wife for helping coordinate this event.

Senior Ring Ceremony

On Wednesday evening, I participated in the Senior Ring Ceremony, celebrating our soon to be graduates. It was inspiring to see the pride of our students and to visit with their families as they marked this important milestone. The ring represents not only their time at Northwestern, but also the lifelong connection they will carry forward as members of our alumni family. Thank you to our Alumni and Development team, including Savannah Struppeck, Cristy Bernard, and Terry Wilson, for organizing a memorable event.

ULS Board Meeting and ULM Investiture

On Thursday, Martha and I joined Rodney Wilson and Jennifer Kelly for the April meeting of the University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors held in Monroe on the campus of ULM. I am pleased to report that the appointment of Bethany Edwards as Director of Internal Audit was approved. The Board also approved fee adjustment requests in accordance with Act 426 and Act 790. We appreciate the continued support of the Board in advancing the priorities of our university and the system. Following the meeting, we attended the investiture of Dr. Carrie Castille as the 10th president of the University of Louisiana Monroe. We look forward to working with Dr. Castille and our colleagues across the system.

Beacon Society

The Beacon Society held a campus update and engagement session Thursday evening. Athletics Director Kevin Bostian, Head Football Coach Blaine McCorkle, and consultants working with the Demons Unlimited Foundation provided an overview of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) fundraising strategies. As collegiate athletics continues to evolve, it is essential that we position Northwestern to recruit and retain outstanding student athletes by strengthening our resources and support systems. Special thanks to Doug Ireland and Danielle Cobb for organizing this session.

NSU Elementary Lab Visit

On Friday morning, Martha and I visited the NSU Elementary Lab School for a Reader's Theatre presentation by Mrs. Lisa Wiggins' WIN group, the "Egg-sperts." WIN groups are designed to provide targeted instruction and enrichment, allowing students to strengthen skills while building confidence in a supportive environment. The students delivered a creative and engaging performance surrounding the life cycle of a chicken, demonstrating their academic growth and enthusiasm for learning, and following the presentation, they took us on a tour of the school garden. It was a pleasure to see their hard work on display. The kids were amazing. Thank you to Mrs. Wiggins and Principal Caron Coleman for hosting us and for the outstanding work being done each day with our students. Their efforts, along with those of the entire Lab School team, are truly egg-ceptional.

Bridging Law and Legacy II

I was honored to co-chair Bridging Law and Legacy II on Friday with NSU alumnus and Natchitoches Parish District Attorney Billy Joe Harrington. This continuing legal education program welcomed legal professionals from across the region and covered a wide range of topics, including professionalism, ethics, multi district litigation, writ procedure, legislative updates, the appeals process, and voir dire (the questioning of jurors during a jury trial). We are grateful to our distinguished presenters who contributed to the success of this program, including attorneys Robert Salim, Nicholas Cordaro, Taylor Townsend, and Austin Townsend; District Attorney Billy Joe Harrington; 3rd Circuit Court of Appeal Judges Elizabeth Pickett, Van Kyzar, and Charles Fitzgerald; and Associate Supreme Court Justices Scott J. Crichton (Retired) and Jay McCallum. Special thanks to Dr. Mary Edith Stacy, Dean of our Graduate School, for her leadership in organizing this outstanding event, along with Dr. Scott Wysong, Dean of our School of Business.

44th Annual Chris Roper Memorial Golf Tournament

On Friday evening and Saturday morning, I joined alumni, friends, and supporters for the 44th Annual Chris Roper Memorial Golf Tournament. During the kickoff reception, we announced the naming of the Roper Kinesiology Motion Simulator Lab in honor of Rick and Mary Roper and in memory of their son Chris Roper. I appreciate the School of Kinesiology faculty who joined us for this special presentation, including Dr. Tara Tietjen-Smith, Dr. Haley Blount, and Dr. Lauren Mitchell. The Ropers have contributed more than \$420,000 in support of student scholarships and continue to make a lasting

impact on our university. It was wonderful to spend time with Rick and Mary Roper, and their daughter, Cindy. We express our gratitude for their long-standing support. We also extend our thanks to the Roper family and to our Alumni and Development staff, including Terry Wilson and Cristy Bernard, for their continued leadership in organizing this meaningful event.

Sam Goodwin Memorial Celebration

On Saturday, we joined the Northwestern community in honoring legendary Demon football coach Sam Goodwin at Turpin Stadium. Coach Goodwin remains the winningest coach in program history and led our football program to sustained success, including multiple conference championships and deep playoff runs. More importantly, his legacy is reflected in the many student athletes he mentored and the lives he impacted. Several former players and coaches shared remarks, reflecting on the profound impact Coach Goodwin had on their careers and lives, including Coach Ed, “Bébé,” Orgeron. We extend special thanks to Louisiana State Senator Rick Edmonds for presenting resolutions from both the Arkansas and Louisiana legislatures, including those authored and presented by NSU alumnus Jeremy Lacombe to the Louisiana House of Representatives and Jeff Wardlaw to the Arkansas House of Representatives, as well as to Quinton Aught for presenting a resolution from the United States House of Representatives on behalf of Congressman Cleo Fields. The strong turnout and tributes were a powerful testament to Coach Goodwin’s lasting influence on Northwestern and our community.

Joe Delaney Bowl and Demon Brothers Crawl

Following the memorial celebration, we joined football alumni and supporters for the Joe Delaney Bowl and the Demon Brothers Crawfest. The spring game provided a great opportunity to see our much-improved team in action and offered an exciting preview of the talent and potential we have heading into the fall season. It was encouraging to watch our student athletes compete and to see the progress being made across the program. The atmosphere throughout the day was outstanding, with strong attendance, enthusiastic support, and a visible sense of pride in Northwestern football. We are grateful to the Demon Brothers Booster Club and all who helped organize the event, as well as the many alumni and supporters who continue to invest their time and energy into the success of our student athletes. The Crawfest was a big success. The crawfish were big and tasty, and the band was terrific. Thank you Demon Brothers, Bryan Arceneaux, and staff for making it happen.

Empowering Business Success Through Practical Workshops

Northwestern's Office of Economic Development and University Advancement continues to support entrepreneurs through its Business Workshop Series in partnership with BOM Bank. Recent sessions, including Business Insurance 101 led by BOM Financial Services and Reba Phelps, provided valuable guidance for business owners. These workshops, offered in Natchitoches and Leesville, reflect our commitment to workforce and economic development across the region. We extend our sincere appreciation to BOM Bank and to our Office of Economic Development and University Advancement for

their continued leadership and partnership in delivering these impactful programs.

Demons Engage Showcases Cybersecurity Expertise

As part of Northwestern's Demons Engage initiative, sponsored by the Office of Economic Development, Dr. Jason Powell, graduate student Justin Dysarz, and undergraduate student Seth Thurman were featured speakers at the Rotary Club of Natchitoches, hosted by Dr. Scott Wyson. Their presentation highlighted the growing importance of cybersecurity and showcased the strength of our College of Business and Technology. The team provided a live demonstration of ethical hacking and shared insights from collegiate cybersecurity competitions. Initiatives like Demons Engage continue to connect our campus expertise with the community while preparing students for high demand, technology-driven careers.

Online Gateway Launch

I'm pleased to share an important milestone in our efforts to modernize the digital experience for our campus community. On Wednesday, we officially launched VIC, the Virtual Information Concierge, a new online gateway that brings essential university services together in one convenient, easy-to-use platform. VIC replaces myNSU and NSUConnect and provides a cleaner, faster, and fully mobile-friendly experience for students, faculty, and staff. Its personalized home screen and intuitive card-based layout make it easy to access everyday tools such as email, Moodle, class registration, financial aid, advising, and other academic resources. Built with the

future in mind, VIC will continue to evolve with new features and expanded services to support teaching, learning, and campus operations. Special thanks to the dedicated professionals in our Information Technology Services Department, especially Ron Wright, with support from Bill Rose, Anna Jennings, Jorge Rodriguez, and Austin Green, whose hard work and commitment made this launch possible.

LMEA State Music Assessment

Over a ten-day period, the School of Creative and Performing Arts hosted three major statewide events in Magale Recital Hall: the Louisiana Music Educators Association (LMEA) State Choral Assessment, the Fourth-Annual Northwestern State Invitational Band Festival featuring composer Kevin Day, and the LMEA State Instrumental Assessment. These events welcomed nearly 5,000 students from more than 80 schools and included 115 performances, providing an outstanding opportunity to showcase our facilities, faculty, and student experience, while supporting recruitment efforts across the state. A special thank you to the students of the Theta Nu chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, Eta Pi chapter of Tau Beta Sigma, the NSULA collegiate chapter of the National Association for Music Education, and the collegiate chapter of the American Choral Directors Association, who created a warm and welcoming environment for visiting students and directors, while providing essential logistical support ranging from stage crew to administrative coordination.

Athletics Update

Our track and field student-athletes are delivering record-breaking performances almost weekly this season. Saturday's new mark, achieved at the LSU Alumni Gold meet, was especially remarkable. Will Achee, a sophomore from Bossier City and Parkway High School, set a new school record in the men's 400-meter dash with a time of 45.81, breaking a 50-year-old Demon record set by Andrei Moore almost to the day, April 30, 1976. Teammate Charlie Bartholomew also had a sensational race and nearly matched Achee with a time of 45.82. These performances headlined a number of strong showings as the Southland Conference Outdoor Championships approach, beginning May 14 in Nacogdoches, TX.

The Lady Demon softball team closed its regular season with a 5-3 victory over Nicholls Colonels softball on Senior Day at the Demon Diamond. Having returned the program to contender status in the Southland Conference, coach Jenny Fuller and her staff lead the team into the SLC Tournament Lake Charles Regional in a four-team pool that includes three teams Northwestern has defeated at least once this season. The first game in the double-elimination bracket is a rematch with Nicholls Thursday night at 7:00 pm. The regional winner will advance to next weekend's SLC Championship series.

Our Lady Demon tennis team was defeated in the SLC Tournament semifinals last Monday by Texas A&M-Corpus Christi Islanders tennis, ending an exciting season highlighted by a second-place finish in the Southland regular season. Congratulations to coach Marcos Morelli and his team for a strong season, finishing with a 12-8 record.

The home baseball season also concluded this weekend with a series win over Stephen F. Austin. After a pair of wins over SFA, the Demons are in third place in the SLC standings with two weekends remaining, and again this weekend displayed the gritty competitiveness that has made this a successful spring for coach Chris Bertrand's ballclub. A dozen seniors were honored for their contributions to the program following Sunday's game. The team travels to face the Arkansas Razorbacks, led by former Demon head coach Dave Van Horn, on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Looking Ahead

The Natchitoches Northwestern Symphony Orchestra and the Cane River Singers will present parts two and three of Handel's *Messiah* on Tuesday, April 28, at 7:30 p.m. in Magale Recital Hall. And the Department of Theatre and Dance will present its Senior Dance Concert on Saturday, May 2, at 7:00 p.m. in A.A. Fredericks Auditorium. Admission is free and open to the public.

Spring 2026 Commencement will take place May 13 and 14, with three ceremonies recognizing graduates across our academic colleges. As part of the celebration, we will also welcome members of the Class of 1976 back to campus for their Golden Jubilee Reunion and the presentation of 50-year diplomas. We look forward to celebrating this meaningful milestone with our graduates and honoring our returning alumni.

For more information on upcoming events and activities, please visit our What's Happening at NSU webpage by clicking [here](#).

Sorry for the long Weekly Update, but as you can see there's a lot going on at NSU—and that's a good thing. Thank you for your continued dedication to Northwestern State University.

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".

James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
President
Northwestern State University

Northwestern Now

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