



A MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

June 21, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

Happy Father's Day to all the dads and father figures in our Northwestern family. I hope you have enjoyed a wonderful day filled with gratitude, joy, and time spent with those who matter most. As summer continues, Northwestern State University remains active across every area of our mission.

Freshman Connection

This past week, we hosted our third Freshman Connection session of the summer. Although the threat of inclement weather required us to consolidate activities into a single day, turnout remained strong, and

our newest students and their families arrived enthusiastic and ready to begin their Northwestern journey. Freshman Connection continues to be one of our most important enrollment and transition programs, helping students navigate the move from high school to college while introducing them to the academic resources, support services, and campus community that will help them succeed. I appreciate the outstanding work of our faculty, staff, and student leaders who make each session a positive and welcoming experience. Earlier in the week, I also enjoyed spending time with our Freshman Connectors during a friendly game of pickleball. Their energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to helping incoming students feel at home are a wonderful reflection of the Northwestern spirit.

Poche Family Scholarship Presentation

This week, I had the privilege of joining members of the Poche family, friends, alumni, Northwestern State Foundation staff, and members of our Bass Fishing Team as the Poche family presented proceeds from the 10th Annual Dylan Kyle Poche Memorial Bass Fishing Tournament. The presentation served as a meaningful reminder of the tremendous support generated through this year's event and the lasting impact it continues to have on our students. Through scholarship support for our Bass Fishing Team, Dylan's legacy remains an important part of Northwestern State University. I want to extend my sincere appreciation to Burt and Shelly Poche and their family for their dedication to this event and their continued commitment to Northwestern State University. Their generosity, leadership, and passion for supporting student success have created a lasting legacy that continues to make a difference in the lives of our students.

Congressman Cleo Fields Town Hall

Later Thursday evening, I attended a town hall meeting in Natchitoches hosted by Congressman Cleo Fields. Congressman Fields provided updates on federal priorities, congressional activities, and the impact of congressional redistricting. We are grateful for Congressman Fields' support of Northwestern State University and our region during his service representing Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District. Throughout his tenure, he has been a strong advocate for higher education, economic development, and the communities we serve. His leadership was instrumental in securing federal funding for Innovation Park, helping move forward a project that will create new opportunities for innovation, workforce development, and economic growth in our region. We appreciate his partnership, his accessibility to our university, and his efforts on behalf of our community.

Department of Engineering Technology Student Success

Northwestern State University's Department of Engineering Technology earned international recognition this month at the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers and Operations Management (IEOM) Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Our students achieved an extraordinary milestone by winning first place in all three student competition categories. Recent graduates Brad Powell, Brett Brady, Sterling Player, and Spencer Yellott earned top honors in the Senior Capstone Design Project Competition, and senior Maria A. Fariña captured first place in both the Undergraduate Student Paper Competition and the Undergraduate Research Competition.

Adding to the department's success, Dr. Shahriar Hossain, head of the Department of Engineering Technology, was recognized with the IEOM Outstanding Advisor Award for 2025-26. These accomplishments reflect the talent of our students, the dedication of our faculty mentors, and the strength of Northwestern's Engineering Technology programs. Congratulations to everyone involved for representing our university with distinction on an international stage.

Alumni Association Awards Nominations

The Northwestern State University Alumni Association Honors and Awards Committee is currently accepting nominations for several prestigious alumni recognition awards, including the Outstanding Young Alumnus/Alumna Distinguished Service Award, Outstanding Alumnus/Alumna Distinguished Service Award, Alumni Association Volunteer of the Year Award, and Distinguished Supporter Service Award. These awards recognize individuals whose achievements, service, and commitment have made a meaningful impact on Northwestern State University and our alumni community. I encourage you to participate and consider nominating deserving alumni, volunteers, and supporters. Nominations will be accepted through Friday, August 28, 2026. To learn more about these awards, click [here](#). Nominations may be submitted online through the Alumni Association website.

Athletics Update

Academic All-Southland Conference accolades continued for our spring sports student-athletes. Nearly the entire Lady Demon tennis

team was recognized for maintaining cumulative grade point averages of at least 3.25, while making significant contributions in competition. Congratulations to senior Sofi Garcia, juniors Maria Farina and Honoka Umeda, and freshmen Martina Acebedo Bonocore and Lija Mumlek.

In baseball, Demons honored were juniors Brooks Leonard, Joe Siervo, and JT Simonelli, along with sophomores Jacob LeBlanc and Carter White. Carter White has maintained a 4.0 GPA through his first two years at Northwestern.

The Louisiana Sports Writers Association also announced its All-Louisiana Softball Team, recognizing the top players from across the state. Sophomore Brynn Daniel earned first-team honors, while junior Mattison Buster was selected to the second team.

Congratulations to our student-athletes for their well-deserved recognition and for representing Northwestern with excellence both academically and athletically.

Looking Ahead

The Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame's annual Induction Celebration begins Thursday in Natchitoches. Mike McConathy and Dewain Strother, two distinguished Northwestern alumni, along with 10 other remarkable individuals, will be celebrated as members of the Class of 2026. Several events are free and open to the public. The free and open events are the Welcome Reception on Thursday from 5-7 p.m. at the museum, located at 800 Front Street; Friday evening's Rockin' River Fest on the downtown riverbank; and Saturday morning's Junior

Training Camp at the Webb Wellness and Recreation Center and Turpin Stadium. Four additional events are ticketed, with tickets and more information available at LaSportsHall.com. Congratulations to Mike and Dewain, and to all members of the Class of 2026!

The [Rhodes Properties & Development Demon Dream Home Giveaway](#) provides an innovative way for supporters to invest in Northwestern Athletics while offering participants the opportunity to win a brand-new home valued at \$265,000 with the purchase of a \$100 raffle ticket. Proceeds benefit the Demons Unlimited Foundation and help provide resources that enhance the student-athlete experience across all 14 athletic programs.

Tickets are also on sale for the [Top of the Boot Music Festival](#), which will take place October 16-17 on the Northwestern campus. As North Louisiana's premier music festival, the event will bring nationally recognized artists and visitors from throughout the region to Natchitoches, creating opportunities to showcase our university and community to a broad audience.

Both initiatives reflect the strong support Northwestern enjoys from alumni, friends, and community partners while generating excitement and engagement that benefit our university. For information on upcoming university events, click [here](#).

As we celebrate these accomplishments, I am reminded that Northwestern's success is built on the dedication of our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and supporters. Thank you for the work you do each

day to advance our mission and create opportunities for 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".

James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
President
Northwestern State University

Northwestern Now

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