

## III | NORTHWESTERN STATE



### A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

August 2, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

As we prepare to welcome students back for the fall semester, our campuses are filled with activity and anticipation. Faculty and staff are working across every area of the university to strengthen our programs, support our students and ensure Northwestern is ready for a successful academic year. I appreciate the energy, collaboration and commitment evident throughout our university community.

#### **State of the University Discussions**

Over the past week, I have begun a series of individual meetings with members of our university leadership team for state of the university

discussions. These meetings provide an opportunity to review accomplishments, assess current priorities, identify challenges and discuss opportunities for continued progress. I have been pleased with the accomplishments shared and the thoughtful dialogue taking place.

The meetings will continue next week and provide additional context for a state of the university summary that will highlight accomplishments and ongoing initiatives across the university's major focus areas. The summary will be shared with our campus community and alumni. These conversations will help ensure that our leadership team remains aligned and focused as we begin the new academic year.

### **Service Behind the Scenes**

Much of the most meaningful work at Northwestern takes place quietly, through faculty and staff members who answer questions, solve problems and help students navigate important transitions. I recently received a letter from the parent of a student-athlete who transferred to Northwestern this past semester. His message offered a meaningful reminder of the difference that attentive and compassionate service can make:

"This past semester, my son transferred to Northwestern State University and joined the football team. I am writing to thank the university for the assistance he received from numerous administrators, staff members and professors who made his transition an easy process. I would especially like to recognize Van Erikson, Binky Speir, Carolyn Jones, Chasity Tousek, Dustin Litton, Dr. Mark Melder, Reatha Cox and Dr. Charles Pellegrin for their time and assistance. My

son enjoyed his classes and was impressed by the quality of instruction and the dedication his professors displayed toward their students and the Northwestern community. He is the fourth generation of our family to have attended, graduated from or taught at the university. Thank you for allowing him to be part of Northwestern State University. Go Demons!"

I am grateful to these individuals and to the many other members of our faculty and staff who provide this same level of support each day. Their work may not always be visible, but its impact is lasting.

### **NSU Leaders Engage in Workforce Planning for Louisiana's AWS Investment**

Representatives from Northwestern's Office of Economic Development and University Advancement, College of Business and Technology and Department of Engineering Technology participated in two invitation-only events hosted by Louisiana Economic Development focused on Amazon Web Services' planned investment in Caddo and Bossier parishes. Through an academic roundtable and community leadership forum, our representatives gained valuable insight into the workforce needs associated with one of the largest economic development projects in Louisiana history.

The discussions highlighted the critical role that regional colleges and universities will play in preparing a skilled workforce for careers in construction, engineering, information technology, data center operations and other high-demand fields. Northwestern will continue collaborating with AWS, Louisiana Economic Development,

community and technical college partners and other regional stakeholders to align academic programs, strengthen workforce pipelines and prepare graduates for the emerging career opportunities this transformational investment will create.

### **Behavior Intervention Team Participates in U.S. Secret Service Training**

On Wednesday, Northwestern's Behavior Intervention Team participated in specialized training conducted by Jeffrey Murray of the U.S. Secret Service's Dallas Field Office. The session was arranged after Julie Powell attended a virtual Secret Service training and contacted the agency about providing an in-person program for the university. Murray conducted four hours of specialized training for the Behavior Intervention Team, followed by a one-hour collaborative session with team members, university administrators and the Natchitoches chief of police. This partnership provided an important opportunity to strengthen coordination, share best practices and enhance the university's approach to identifying and responding to potential concerns.

The mission of Northwestern's Behavior Intervention Team is to identify, assess, intervene and respond to individuals of concern while balancing their needs with the safety and well-being of the university community. The core team includes representatives from University Safety, Title IX, Student Affairs, Human Resources, Student Conduct, University Police, Health Services, Accessibility and Disability Support, Academic Affairs, Counseling and Residential Housing. Representatives from the Cenla, Leesville and Shreveport campuses

also serve as part of the team's extended network, supporting a coordinated university-wide approach.

### **Proud to Be Purple**

This week, the Department of Marketing and Branding relaunched the Proud to Be Purple campaign. With support from faculty and staff in the College of Business and Technology, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Nursing and School of Allied Health and Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development, the university organized a community-wide effort to distribute yard signs and flags throughout Natchitoches.

We also hosted a community drive-through event where members of the cheer, football, volleyball and women's basketball teams volunteered to distribute signs, flags and other Northwestern items. Through this campus-wide collaboration, more than 550 Proud to Be Purple yard signs were distributed this week, creating a visible display of Demon pride throughout our community. Thank you to everyone who helped make this effort a success and to the residents and businesses proudly showing their support for Northwestern.

### **Athletics Update**

Our fall sports teams are fully engaged in preseason practices, and our defending Southland Conference champion soccer team will play two exhibition matches this week. The Demons travel to ULM on Wednesday before hosting LSU Eunice at the Demon Soccer Complex on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. Last week, Southland Conference coaches

selected Northwestern as the preseason favorite, reflecting the respect Coach Ian Brophy and his program have earned during his first three seasons at NSU.

Former football players and team members are invited to watch practice on Saturday, August 8, and join this year's Demons for lunch. An alumni social will begin at 11:30 a.m. in the east concourse of Prather Coliseum, followed by lunch at noon. The cost is \$25, payable by cash or check. RSVPs are appreciated and can be made at [tinyurl.com/NSUFBLLunch](http://tinyurl.com/NSUFBLLunch).

Volleyball Coach Ben Kaszeta has combined a strong recruiting class with an experienced group of returning letterwinners as he prepares to lead the Demons into his first full season. Northwestern opens the season at home against Alcorn State on Friday, August 21.

I also want to thank the NSU and community personnel who helped conduct the month-long Summer Bridge program for incoming freshman student-athletes. This experience gives participants an early start on their academic and athletic careers before the demands of their competitive seasons begin. It also strengthens their connections to Northwestern and the Natchitoches community.

As the fall semester approaches, I am encouraged by the progress taking place across Northwestern and grateful for the people whose dedication makes that progress possible. Thank you for continuing to serve our students, support one another and represent our university with pride. I look forward to sharing more of our preparations and accomplishments in the weeks ahead.

Fork 'Em Demons,



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese  
President  
Northwestern State University

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