

The Week:

Late this week, Provost Dr. Vickie Gentry announced the selection of two new deans for Northwestern State University: Dr. Greg Alan Handel, Dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, and Dr. Kimberly Walker McAlister, Dean for the Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development. Both were highly recommended by members of each search committee, and their appointments are pending approval by the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System on Dec. 1, 2017.

Dr. Handel holds a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from Arizona State University and has been serving as the Interim Dean for the College of Arts and Sciences since July of 2016, Director of CAPA since February of 2014, and a Northwestern employee since 2008.

Dr. McAlister holds a Doctorate in Education (Curriculum and Instruction) from the University of Louisiana-Monroe. She has been the department head for Teaching, Leadership, and Counseling since 2014 and head for the department of Teaching and Learning since 2010. She was first hired by Northwestern in 1998.

I would like to congratulate Dr. Handel and Dr. McAlister and to thank the search committee members for their diligence in the search process.

This week, we got some great news as *OnlineColleges.com* ranked our online programs as the best in Louisiana. This is a tremendous recognition and a tribute to so many of you. I want to thank Vice-President for Technology, Innovation and Economic Development Dr. Darlene Williams and our dedicated faculty and staff who continue to grow our programs in the highly competitive digital space.

Finally, we announced this week that because we now have more flexibility in our budget implementation timeline, we extended the suspense for the 2018-2019 Budget Enhancement Requests to January 19, 2018. This change allows additional time for open discussions and prioritization within organizations. You will hear more about Budget Enhancement Requests from department and unit heads in the coming weeks.

My Week:

Sunday afternoon, I attended our Theatre and Dance program's Modern in Motion V at Lee H. Nelson Hall, headquarters of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training. Choreography by Brett Gafinkel, Kirstin Riehl and Cher Anabo was phenomenal, and the student cast really exemplifies the unbelievable talent that we have in our School of Creative and Performing Arts.

Afterwards, I joined Coach Mike Heimerman and Chris Sauer as they finalized preparations for the State Cross Country Championship. Then I headed over to the men's basketball game versus LeTourneau University.

That evening, Greg Burke and I met with the LHSAA staff for dinner downtown.

Early Monday morning, I met with a candidate for the Dean of the Gallaspy College of Education. Afterwards, I drove to Alexandria and joined Commissioner of Higher Education Dr. Joseph Rallo, Louisiana College President Dr. Rick Brewer, LSU Chancellor Dr. Guiyou Huang, Central Louisiana

Technical Community College Chancellor Jimmy Sawtelle as speakers at the Seventh Annual Central Louisiana Economic Development Association Summit for Higher Education.

That afternoon, I checked in on the LHSAA State Cross Country Championships being contested on campus. Later, I met with a candidate for the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

Tuesday morning, I had separate meetings with Ron Wright, Dr. Marcus Jones, a prospective student and a candidate for the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

I spent Tuesday afternoon at the LHSAA event visiting with coaches, principals, LHSAA officials and high school personnel.

Wednesday morning, Dr. Darlene Williams and I had a conference call with a representative from Hanover Research, and afterwards Dr. Gentry and Mrs. Conine joined us to discuss another on-line opportunity.

For the rest of the morning, I met with the Vice Presidents to discuss some end-of-semester deadlines and some important dates for the spring semester. At noon, Jennifer and I hosted the Student Cashiering staff for lunch at the President's residence.

That afternoon, Dr. Chris Hynes and Harriette Palmer briefed me on the Final Summer 2017 Report for the ADVANCE Program for Young Scholars at NSU. They reported 150 students from seven states completed the three-week program this past summer and noted that this summer will be the 30th anniversary of the program on our campus.

Later, Jennifer and I met with Cole Gentry and Evan Temchin to film a welcome video for the Christmas Gala.

For the rest of the afternoon, I met with the Strategic Planning Team to complete the remaining tasks and recommendations from our AY 2016-2017 Assessment Cycle. Our AY 2016-2017 Assessment is now officially complete, pending the SACSCOC decision, which we will receive in early December.

Additionally, during Wednesday's meeting, we prepared for the AY 2017-2018 Mid-Year Strategic Plan and Assessment Review. We discussed that to achieve our vision, we must maintain our drive and commitment to our Strategic Plan. Therefore, we must continue with organizational self-assessments while working toward improving the quality of education and experiences for our students. The mid-year review provides an update on each Strategic Focus Area, including the status of program and unit assessments and our general education core competencies. Also, it helps us to identify areas requiring additional attention.

That evening, I briefly stopped by our women's basketball game vs LSUS and then had dinner with several business leaders in Natchitoches.

Thursday morning, I met with NSU student Emily McCoach and Professor Michael Antoon, who proposed planting a community garden on campus. Afterwards, I joined the development team, Dr. Gentry, Social Work Department Head Dr. Wade Tyler and Social Work faculty as we announced the first \$100,000 endowed professorship in Social Work at NSU, the Mathilde Bradford Endowed Professorship.

At noon, I joined our Student Government Association officers for the SGA Leadership Lunch in the Student Union.

That afternoon and evening, I joined a group of folks from Natchitoches for the Riverbank Unveiling/Ribbon Cutting ceremony followed by a live broadcast interview by KTBS television.

Friday, I drove to Baton Rouge for the Louisiana Music Educators Conference. NSU served as host for this year's conference, something we have not done in over a decade. As the featured institution at the conference, this afforded us the opportunity to feature our academic programs and dazzle the conference participants with performances by our Chamber Choir, Orchestra, Jazz Orchestra and Wind Symphony. Before driving home, I was able to watch our Chamber Choir perform, and it was truly amazing.

Friday evening I was able to catch part of our men's basketball game versus Rice University.

Saturday morning, I stopped by the NSU Festival of Lights Speech and Debate Invitational. I want to thank Dr. Davina McClain and so many of you for donating your time to make the tournament a huge success. Saturday afternoon, I spent time at the tailgating fields visiting with alumni and then watched our football team defeat Stephen F. Austin University.

Wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, and as always, please let me know if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.

Fork 'em Demons!

Chris



Dr. Chris Maggio
President
maggioc@nsula.edu

Northwestern State University
Office: 318-357-6441
223 Caspari Hall
Natchitoches, LA 71497
www.nsula.edu

