

The Week:

We continued this week to receive recognition about the academic quality of programs at NSU. It was announced that our online bachelor's program in addiction studies has been ranked as the number six program in the nation for quality and affordability according to two higher education websites. Associate Professor and Louisiana Addiction Technology Transfer Center Director Jody Biscoe said it best, "This type of acknowledgment shows Northwestern State is preparing students who can graduate and move into the workforce."

Also, it was announced this week that several student groups received accolades. Our Demon Heat Color Guard won the Independent World Division at the Louisiana-Mississippi Color Guard and Percussion Circuit Championships, and our freshman orientation leaders won awards at the nine-state Southern Regional Orientation Workshop in Orlando, Fla.

Congratulations to our faculty and students for these and other recent honors.

A few weeks ago, I mentioned the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee provided me with their recommended prioritization (1-N List) of Budget Enhancement Requests for the 2018-2019 budget year. The committee received over 65 enhancement requests, totaling more than over \$2.1 million, from various university organizations in Natchitoches, Shreveport, Alexandria and Leesville. Using the committee's recommended priority list, my advisory team and I carefully considered how to best leverage the \$500,000 we have committed to this process. I am happy to report that we will release the final 1-N list next Sunday, April 8, 2018. To all who participated in our new budgeting process, thank you. This process will continue in concert with our fiscal capabilities.

My Week:

Sunday afternoon, I watched our baseball game vs Texas A&M Corpus Christi. Afterwards, I took part in the Alpha Lambda Delta Induction Ceremony. Over 200 NSU freshmen students with at least a 3.50 GPA were inducted into the national honor society at A.A. Fredericks Auditorium.

Monday, I had lunch with faculty in the Department of Criminal Justice, History and Social Sciences at Kyser Hall. That afternoon, I met with students and then attended the Play-a-thon fundraiser for NSU student Orlando Gonzalez Trucco.

Monday evening, Jana Lucky and I traveled to Mansfield for the DeSoto Parish School Board Elite Scholars' Dinner honoring the top graduating students in DeSoto Parish.

Tuesday morning, I met our Radiologic Science faculty and students at the Friedman Student Union as our Shreveport and Alexandria Rad Science students gathered on the Natchitoches campus for workshops and review sessions. Afterwards, I met with Dr. Vickie Gentry, Frances Conine and Alan Pasch to discuss summer camp opportunities at NSU.

At lunch, Jennifer and I hosted the Business Affairs Office staff at the President's Residence.

Tuesday afternoon, I met with a prospective student and parents and later with current students about a service-learning project. Late that afternoon, Jennifer and I attended the International Festival of Culture and Cuisines on Front Street. Students and faculty from our Department of Hospitality

Management and Tourism did a phenomenal job preparing food and representing cultures throughout the world. Student musicians added entertainment that highlighted the family-friendly event.

Tuesday evening, Jennifer and I attended the NSU Concert Choir and Chamber Choir performance at Magale Recital Hall. Under the direction of conductors Dr. Nicholaus Cummins and Michael Rorex, our choirs were masterful!

Wednesday morning, Judy Daniels asked to visit with me about a community outreach project in the community of Campti and NSU's potential involvement in the project.

At lunch, Jennifer and I hosted staff from Information Technology Services at the President's Residence for lunch.

Wednesday afternoon, Dr. Greg Handel, Dr. Jeff Matthews, Drake Owens, Jill Bankston, Brittany McConathy and I met to analyze fundraising efforts for our new band uniforms and to plan for one final initiative to reach our fundraising goals for this project.

Thursday morning, I met with Natchitoches Regional Medical Center CEO Kirk Soileau to discuss our dynamic partnership. NRMC remains committed as a vital community partner, and Mr. Soileau and I discussed many facets of our collaboration moving forward.

Afterwards, I met with our vice presidents as we continued to review current and next year's budgets and discuss briefings from each of their areas. Later that morning, Dr. Marcus Jones, Daphne Sampite and I met with representatives from a payment systems provider as they highlighted how they may assist our students with their services.

At noon, I had lunch with Community Renewal International Associate Director Mike Leonard and volunteer Jeff Zeagler.

Thursday afternoon, I met with Louisiana Economic Development Director of Community Competitiveness Stacey Neal and Natchitoches Community Alliance President Tony Davis about NSU's important role in regional economic development efforts.

Later, I enjoyed a wonderful evening at our football scrimmage. A large group of NSU students, faculty, staff, community supporters, high school coaches and high school students gathered at Turpin Stadium to watch the fast-paced action on the field.

Friday evening, I watched our Lady Demon softball team compete against McNeese State University. A major motivation to attend the game was to watch Jennifer throw out the ceremonial first pitch. She was concerned that she might not reach the plate with her toss but was delighted when the umpire graciously called her toss a strike!

Saturday, I again spent time at the softball complex to catch our games against McNeese.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

Fork 'em Demons,
Chris