

I hope all of you are enjoying the Memorial Day Weekend!

The Week:

Monday, NSU and our School of Allied Health received approval from the Louisiana Board of Regents to offer post-baccalaureate certification programs in Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Invasive Cardiovascular Technology (ICT). I want to thank School of Allied Health Director Dr. Joel Hicks, the school's faculty and Dean Dr. Dana Clawson for their diligence and hard work in making these programs a reality.

In addition, our School of Allied Health's Radiologic Technologist to Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Sciences (RT to BSRS) program was recognized nationally this week for quality and affordability, <http://news.nsula.edu/home/rt-to-bsrt-program-ranked-for-low-cost/>.

Thanks to the entire campus community for your hard work in hosting the first of six Freshman Connection programs (four on the Natchitoches campus, one on the Leesville/Fort Polk campus and another on our Shreveport campus). The campus was immaculate, and incoming students and parents praised our faculty, staff and students for your friendliness, helpfulness and genuine concern for their needs. Thank you so much as I truly understand how much time you spend making this important transitional event a memorable one for our incoming students.

This week at the legislature, ULS President Dr. Jim Henderson testified before the Senate Finance Committee to stress the importance of reinvestment in higher education. With less than two weeks before the end of the 2017 Louisiana Legislative Regular Session, the Senate Finance Committee is expected to wrap up its debate on the state's budget (HB1) over the weekend. Committee members will amend the House's version of HB 1 before sending the bill to the senate Floor for debate early next week.

Here is a link to a detailed legislative update provided by our University of Louisiana System office, <http://mailchi.mp/c3b2a23160e2/updated-uls-capitol-updates-week-6?e=ad23cb0a62>.

My Week:

Sunday morning, I attended the First United Methodist Church Men's Breakfast. Former NSU head football coach Sam Goodwin addressed the group, and they presented three students with scholarships to Northwestern State University. I want to thank the FUMC for their generous support of NSU.

Monday morning, Marcus Jones, Ron Wright, Jennifer Kelly and I met to review IT plans and proposals for University Columns, University Place and Varnado Hall. Currently, our housing partner contracts out IT services for our residence halls. We feel that we can provide optimal service for our students if NSU provides IT services in the residence halls. I believe our partners agree as well, but now we must work out the legal, financial and contractual details to make this happen.

Afterwards, I met with Doug Ireland and Cole Gentry as we planned a proposal that we will be presenting to the Louisiana High School Athletic Association next week in Baton Rouge. We have a truly gifted team of writers and marketing professionals on staff at NSU.

Monday afternoon, Jennifer and I drove to Houston and joined NSU Foundation staff members Jill Bankston and Brittany McNeely and Head Women's Basketball Coach Jordan Dupuy for a dinner with NSU

benefactors Joe and Milo Dow. As many of you know, Mr. and Mrs. Dow own Dow Pipe and Fence, an international company based in Houston. They have given generously to NSU over the years. Most noticeably, you see their gifts in the front gates of our campus and the beautiful fencing around our athletic facilities. We thanked them for their commitment to NSU, shared with them our progress and asked for continued support.

Tuesday morning, I met with Natchitoches native and engineer Victor Winston before heading to a meeting with Dr. Marcus Jones, Dr. Darlene Williams and Daphne Sampite on potential partnerships. I then travelled to Dallas for the Southland Conference meetings.

Tuesday evening, Athletic Director Greg Burke, Associate Director Dr. Haley Taitano and Athletics Faculty Representative Jody Biscoe and I attended the Southland Conference Awards banquet. During the ceremony, NSU Track Coach Emeritus Leon Johnson was inducted into the Southland Conference Hall of Honor, recognizing his 30-plus years of service to NSU, the conference and the track and field community, <http://www.nsudemons.com/news/2017/5/23/demon-track-and-field-nsu-icon-coach-leon-johnson-enters-southland-conference-hall-of-honor.aspx>.

Wednesday morning, I participated in the Southland Conference Board of Directors meeting. After the meeting and before driving home, I had an engaging lunch with Adrian Howard and Nicole Gray, two of our alumni leaders in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

Thursday morning, I joined our wonderful student leaders, faculty and staff to welcome over 400 incoming freshmen students at the first Freshman Connection Session. Afterwards, Tatum Everett of KTBS-TV and NSU Sports Information Director Doug Ireland stopped by to film a segment on Coach Johnson's Hall of Honor induction.

Later that morning, we hosted the staff from the North Louisiana Economic Partnership. NLEP President Scott Martinez and five senior staff members huddled with approximately 20 NSU administrators, faculty and staff to collaborate on economic development in North Louisiana, <http://news.nsula.edu/home/nsu-nlep-discuss-workforce-development/>. I was so proud as our team briefed the NLEP contingent on our academic programming, services and expertise that we contribute to advance economic development in our region. In fact, because of this initial meeting, Computer Information Systems Coordinator Curtis Penrod will be meeting further and participating in presenting our offerings to a company looking to potentially locate in our region.

Thursday afternoon, our senior leadership team and I met to review our budget, progress of the legislative session, personnel and other matters. Afterwards, Dr. Marcus Jones, Jennifer Kelly and I met at length with Campus Living Villages Vice President of Capital Projects Rob Archibald to negotiate IT services in our residence halls, review our ground lease and other matters pertaining to our housing agreement.

That evening, Jennifer and I joined several from the NSU family to visit with parents of our incoming freshmen at a fish fry hosted by our NSU Alumni Association and Campus Living Villages at the Collins Pavilion on campus.

Friday morning, I met with Tommy Whitehead and then headed over to Magale Recital Hall to address the incoming freshmen before they began registering for their fall classes. **Afterwards, Frank Hall and Roni Biscoe led a very informative Strategic Planning Team meeting.**

Later that morning, Vickie Gentry and I met with a prospective candidate for a faculty position in Social Work and afterwards, I had a great meeting with NSU alumnus Greg O'Quin.

Friday afternoon, Natchitoches Mayor Lee Posey, Natchitoches Parish Convention and Visitors Bureau Executive Director Arlene Gould, Jerry Pierce, Cole Gentry, Greg Burke, Doug Ireland and I met to finalize our bid presentation to host the LHSAA State Cross Country Championships. We will head to Baton Rouge next Wednesday for the formal presentation. Afterwards, Dr. Vickie Gentry and I met on some personnel actions.

Please let me know if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.

Fork 'em Demons,

Chris