

## **The Week:**

I hope everyone enjoyed our short holiday week!

## **My Week:**

Monday morning, I joined Tedd Dumas, President of Baldrige Dumas Communications, for our monthly radio show on the BDC radio network. Afterwards, I spent most of the day reviewing documents and partnership agreements and some did some planning for the fall semester.

Tuesday, I enjoyed a wonderful Fourth of July with the family!

Wednesday morning, Jennifer and I met with Leslie Gruesbeck to discuss an idea to have student, faculty and alumni art showcased at the President's Residence. We are excited about the opportunity to use the residence as an area to exhibit the artistic works of our talented NSU faculty and students. We plan to host an annual Art Showcase. Afterward that meeting, Drake Owens, Jill Bankston and Erin Dupree updated me on some recent major gifts to the NSU Foundation, and we reviewed some internal procedures.

At lunch, at the invitation of Darryl Andrews, I spoke to the Alexandria Lions Club. The large group in attendance was extremely receptive to our NSU vision. Many commented afterwards that they look forward to visiting campus for creative and performing arts performances or athletic contests.

Immediately afterwards, I made it back to Natchitoches in time to receive a generous donation from Calvin Braxton, long-time NSU supporter and owner of Natchitoches Ford Lincoln Mercury. Upon returning to campus, I had the opportunity to visit with two outstanding groups of students touring NSU.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness with support from the University Strategic Planning Team and the University Assessment Committee briefed me on the academic year (AY) 2016 – 2017 Assessment Cycle – Key Findings Report. This comprehensive briefing signaled the conclusion of this year's assessment cycle and the beginning of AY 2017-2018. The briefing included a review of our strategic planning process, University mission, vision, and core values. Each Strategic Focus Area (SFA) was discussed individually to highlight areas of strength and areas we should place more effort. We also reviewed the key findings from the 116 academic program and unit assessments. Lastly, the briefing concluded with a review of the process moving forward. I am supportive of this process and want to thank each of you involved; it reflects a tremendous amount of work that will help guide our University forward.

I spent Thursday morning on our Shreveport campus for Freshman Connection. Our faculty and staff advised and registered approximately 40 incoming students who will take their classes solely on our College of Nursing and Allied Health campus. In addition, it was refreshing to see the construction progress of Café DeMon II that is scheduled to open in time for the Fall semester!

Thursday afternoon, I met with Dr. Darlene Williams, Frances Conine, Jana Lucky and Julie Longlois on our dual enrollment offerings. Afterwards Dr. Williams, Curtis Penrod and I joined a conference call with North Louisiana Economic Partnership staff to plan an upcoming site visit.

Later in the day, NSU Police Chiefs Jon Caliste and Craig Vercher stopped by, and we finalized a date prior to the fall semester for a Tabletop training exercise. Then, Kim Gallow, Brittany McConathy and Cole Gentry updated me on the status and marketing and promotion plan for *the Columns Fund* Annual Giving Campaign set to begin in September.

I finished the day with a great visit with Dr. Philip Cole, NSU alumnus and Chief Medical Officer for CHRISTUS Health.

Friday morning, Dr. Vickie Gentry, Dr. Greg Handel and I met with a prospective faculty member, and later Dr. Marcus Jones and Universidad Veracruzana visiting professor Francisco Diaz stopped by the office. We talked extensively about our current relationship and began discussions to expand future international opportunities for students from both universities.

Later that morning, several of us welcomed a large group from Bossier Parish Community College to negotiate and finalize a cross enrollment agreement between the two institutions. I know that I sound repetitive with my comments, but it is truly inspirational to work with so many outstanding professionals. During this session, I again witnessed our faculty and staff expertise and strong willingness to collaborate. Students will surely benefit from this hard work and alliance.

Saturday afternoon, I attended the Celebrating the Life services for Lillian Webb Basham Taylor. Ms. Taylor was an avid NSU supporter, and active with creative and performing arts performances and the Natchitoches/Northwestern Symphony.

Saturday evening, Jennifer and I had a wonderful time at the wedding of Christopher and Catherine Knotts. Chris is an NSU alumnus and his dad, Mike, is a member of our NSU Foundation Board of Directors.

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

Fork 'em Demons,

Chris