

The Week:

This week marked the 12th consecutive year that Northwestern State University has hosted the Louisiana Boys and Louisiana Girls State programs on our campus. These summer leadership and citizenship programs are sponsored by the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary for high school students between their junior and senior year. More than 1,000 students, along with approximately 100 counselors and dozens of Legion and Auxiliary staff members, participated in the programs.

Students from schools and communities across Louisiana have come to Natchitoches over the years for these activities that are considered the state's premier leadership training programs for high school students. Boys State and Girls State have become synonymous with our university, and hosting these events create a close positive connection between Northwestern and these high school leaders.

Many people work extremely hard to make the students' experiences at NSU positive and enjoyable. I want to recognize and thank our core host team for their efforts: Alan Pasch, Director of Student Life, Donna Motter and Elizabeth Dupuy with NSU Police, Jason Stelly, NSU WRAC, Steven Kauf and Sodexo food services, Stephanie Dyjack and the housing team and many faculty/staff members who allow the programs to utilize their facilities and resources. Thank you so much for your warm hospitality to these outstanding student leaders!

It was a week of change for our Department of Military Science. Lt. Col. Katherine Carlson ended her tour of duty at NSU and is bound for Fort Knox, Ky. There, she will serve as the G2 (Senior Intelligence Officer) for the Army Reserve Aviation Command. We wish her and her family well as we welcome the new Professor of Military Science, Lt. Col. Wendell Bender.

With 33 years of military service, LTC Bender is a Logistician who transferred to US Army Cadet Command and NSU from Kaiserslautern, Germany. He served as an Assistant PMS for Alabama A&M, so he comes to us with great ideas for cadet recruiting and retention. We join the ROTC staff, the Demon Battalion and the Demon Regiment in welcoming LTC Bender and his wife Davinna. Thank you for joining the NSU Family!

My Week:

Sunday afternoon, I welcomed the Boys State delegates to campus at their Opening Session in A.A. Fredericks Auditorium. Later that evening, I addressed the Girls State delegates at their Opening Convocation.

Monday, I met with Dr. Marcus Jones and Gil Gilson on our deferred maintenance budget and projects. Later, I had lunch with the Boys and Girls State delegates at Iberville Dining Hall. Monday afternoon, Dr. Vickie Gentry and I met for personnel discussions.

That evening, I attended a meeting with Central Louisiana Technical Community College Chancellor Jimmy Sawtelle and CLTCC Natchitoches Campus Dean Laurie Morrow.

Tuesday morning, I attended a ceremony and reception in Bossier City celebrating the Bossier Educational Excellence Fund, or BEEF. In 1985, Bossier City set aside \$500,000 in tax revenue from Louisiana Downs to fund a perpetual endowment for Bossier Parish schools and created the Bossier

Weekly Update, June 24 - 30, 2018

Educational Excellence Fund. This initial investment has grown to \$50 million. To date, Bossier Parish Schools have been awarded \$7 million in BEEF grants for computers for students, art education, after-school tutoring and other projects. At the event, former governor Edwin Edwards and Public Service Commissioner Foster Campbell reviewed the history of the program and projects it has funded.

Afterwards, Jennifer and I had a wonderful lunch in Shreveport with former NSU First-Lady Brenda Webb. That evening, I spent time at Boys and Girls State activities.

On Wednesday, Frank Hall, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, updated the University Strategic Planning Team on the University's progress in the AY 2017-2018 Assessment Cycle. I can report that we are fully committed to this integrated assessment process. It allows us to assess at every level, starting with our strategic plan and each of its focus areas, our critically important administrative and student service support units and each of our academic degree programs, which are the cornerstone of our mission. I understand this is a difficult task requiring a significant amount of your time and intellectual energy. We must remain focused on the process, leverage the data, and maximize the lessons learned to sustain a perpetual cycle of improvement. Please know the results are worth our best effort. Our accreditation is the tangible evidence that we are doing things the right way. Because of our unmatched progress across so many areas, I am routinely asked, "How does Northwestern keep setting the example for so many things that are right and positive about higher education in our region?" My reply is simple. It's because we have the very best people. I very much appreciate your work in pursuit of excellence.

Wednesday evening, I spent time with Boys and Girls State personnel.

Thursday, Marcus Jones, Gil Gilson, Dale Woeletz and I met about capital projects and campus enhancements. Later, Dr. Vickie Gentry, Dr. Greg Handel and I met on academic matters. At noon, I had lunch with American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary representatives on campus for Boys and Girls State.

Thursday afternoon, I met Dr. Darlene Williams and Jason Parks at our Alexandria campus. We toured the facilities and reviewed progress on campus facility upgrades. Afterwards, we attended the England Authority Board of Commissioners meeting where we received unanimous approval to execute a lease to house our Northwestern State University Central Louisiana campus.

Thursday evening, I attended the welcome reception to kick off the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame induction weekend, and later I attended Boys and Girls State activities on campus.

Friday morning, I met with Dr. Vickie Gentry, Carl Jones, Dr. Greg Handel, Dr. Marcus Jones, Jennifer Kelly, Roxanne Freeman and Dustin Eubanks about billing logistics for course materials for our Pilot Math program. That afternoon, I met on campus with Deputy Secretary for the Louisiana lieutenant governor's office, Richard Hartley.

Friday evening, I attended the Joint Convocation for Louisiana Boys and Girls State at Prather Coliseum where Governor John Bel Edwards was the keynote speaker. I took the time to thank him and his staff for prioritizing higher education and the TOPS program in his executive budget and for working with the legislature to ensure adequate funding for both. Later, I attended the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Rockin' River Fest in historic downtown Natchitoches.

Weekly Update, June 24 - 30, 2018

Saturday, I spent the afternoon and evening at the Sports Hall of Fame Induction events. First, I participated in the tennis clinic at the NSU Recreation Complex and that evening attended the Induction reception, dinner and ceremony.

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

Fork 'em Demons,

Chris