

Week of July 20

According to the latest update from Brendan Marshall in Institutional Research, we are currently trending ahead of last year's enrollment by about 3.6%. That is good news. We have significant work ahead of us in enrolling the remaining accepted applicants and re-engaging existing students who have not registered, but we should feel good about where we are. In the coming years, 3.6% growth will seem anemic, but it's a good start to a long-term trend.

This past week, a group of faculty worked at a retreat in Many on a new competency-based approach to augment our traditional offerings. I cannot thank Lisa Abney and Darlene Williams enough for their leadership in this effort. The expertise and creativity displayed by all involved are precisely the characteristics that will enable us to realize our vision. Additional information is forthcoming.

Also this week, under the leadership of Wendi Palermo in Leesville, a group met with civic leaders in DeRidder to explore opportunities for NSU to contribute to workforce development and educational attainment efforts there. The welcome our group received is indicative of the want for our services (if you will excuse the Les Miles phrasing) in communities across Louisiana.

The Week

Monday morning, Haley Blount and Ben Rushing met with me to discuss a budgeting initiative. While details remain to be fleshed out, I think we are on the cusp of creating a strategic budgeting initiative that will transform the way we finance our operations. An effort of this sort requires a lot of minds and voices to be successful, and it takes time. We will proceed accordingly.

Monday afternoon, NSU Volleyball Coach Sean Kiracofe dropped in for an introductory meeting. Sean comes to us from SMU and brings extensive experience in program architecture and talent development. Anyone who has been around campus lately has noticed our volleyball players engaging

in community events (they kind of stand out...). With the coaching and playing talent we have, I am confident this already strong program will continue to be a source of pride for us.

Monday evening, Tonia and Reagan joined me for the trip to Winnfield for the first stop of the 2015 Victory Tour. After listening to Coach Thomas, all three of us were ready to suit up and take the field. We had a great turnout of supporters, and Greg Burke's team did their typical first-class job.

Tuesday, I was delighted to participate in a website development roundtable for Central Louisiana Technical Community College. As many of you know, Jimmy Sawtelle was recently named the permanent Chancellor of the college. Jimmy and I have worked closely over the past decade, so I can tell you with confidence CLTCC is poised for tremendous growth and development. Hopefully we will develop a partnership with them on a par with our still growing, still expanding partnership with BPC.

Tuesday evening, Tonia and Reagan joined me in Many for the second leg of the Victory Tour at Julian Foy Motors. Though we had a couple of Tech grads and a proud grandfather sporting a UL hat, the event was a great follow up to the Winnfield stop. We did manage to correct the hat situation...

Wednesday morning, Steve Horton and Roni Biscoe updated me on the initial results of a compensation study. While we remain very constrained financially, we have to begin thinking about what it will take to achieve our goals. One foundational element is an appropriate, well-conceived compensation structure. It will take us a while to attain that, but the planning starts now. As we develop a plan in this regard, we will be very open about our approach and transparent about our limitations.

Later Wednesday, Steve Horton, Lillie Bell, and Donna Jones stopped by to inform me about concerns with the public dynamic schedule of classes on the website. A vacationing Ron Wright and team made the corrections, and all parties are absolutely delighted to be working with each other... I remember a meeting I attended at my prior place of employment. Student Services/Admissions and Academic Affairs leadership had significant

concerns with issues related to the Banner conversion (imagine that). After a one-hour meeting with me and the IT Director, the IT director told me he had just attended the most productive meeting of his career. I think it was the first time I ever saw him smile. Shortly after he left my office, the other participants came in to tell me they hope to never sit through a meeting like that again. Please never forget personality and thinking diversity can be our strongest attribute if we are all focused on the same end goal, even though moments of friction are inevitable.

Friday, Carrie Greene, Kelee Grimes, Jodi Biscoe, Roxanne Freeman, Greg Burke, and I presented an update on the AASP grant to the NCAA in Atlanta. The committee seemed impressed with the tremendous work this team, et al, has put in to improving the academic success rate of our student athletes. Here is a link to the presentation. I know you will be as impressed as I am.

http://prezi.com/uc22uy8gi13j/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share

Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions, comments, or concerns.