

## **Weekly Update, April 7 - 13, 2019**

The 2019 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature began this week. As always, we will be actively involved in monitoring events in our state capitol and strongly advocating for strategic reinvestment in higher education.

After months of disagreement, the Louisiana Revenue Estimating Conference reached a unanimous vote this week to recognize additional revenues and increase this year's state general fund forecast by \$110 million and next year's forecast by \$119 million. Included in Gov. Edwards' proposal for utilizing the additional revenue is fully funding the TOPS scholarship program, adding money to higher education and additional support to the Department of Child and Family Services.

On Wednesday, more than 1,200 students, faculty, staff and alumni from the nine ULS institutions gathered on the State Capitol Lawn for UL System Day at the Capitol to advocate for higher education. For the third consecutive year, NSU provided the largest turnout with approximately 300 faculty, staff and students in attendance. Twenty-seven NSU students were paired with regional legislators and spent the morning with them discussing NSU and University of Louisiana System priorities for the legislative session. Resolutions commending NSU student-athlete Jasmyn Steels on winning the long jump event in the 2019 NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships, NSU's chapter of Alpha Lambda Delta Freshman Honor Society on receiving the Order of the Torch award, and NSU's School of Creative and Performing Arts on its 30th anniversary were presented during sessions of the Senate and House of Representatives.

Northwestern SGA President Jacob Ellis was selected from his peers to testify during the House Appropriations Committee meeting Wednesday morning and did an outstanding job presenting NSU and state higher education priorities. Also, NSU Management and Leadership Institute representatives Dr. Fran Lemoine and Kim Gallow presented a report from that group to the ULS Board of Supervisors and were commended for their participation in that important program.

Thanks to all who represented NSU for highlighting our academic and student programming to state leaders this week. They witnessed first-hand NSU's continuing impact on Louisiana's future.

### **My Week:**

Monday through Thursday, I participated in a SACSCOC on-site reaffirmation committee visit out-of-state. I found the experience professionally rewarding, and spending time through the process of evaluating another institution reaffirmed to me the progress we have made in our assessment processes at NSU.

Friday morning, I met with a prospective student-athlete and visited afterwards with a prospective faculty member. I then spent time at the LitCon event at the Orville Hanchey Gallery. I want to thank our faculty for hosting this event celebrating the humanities with two days of presentations and workshops. Afterwards, I met with another prospective faculty member.

At noon, I spent time watching our track and field and tennis student-athletes compete during home athletic competitions.

Friday evening, I attended the Dallas-Fort Worth Area NSU Alumni Crawfish Boil at the beautiful home of NSU alumna Jill Morrison. During the event, Coach Brad Laird, Mae Jaworski and I updated approximately 80 DFW alumni on the great things happening at NSU. We also recognized the DFW Alumni Chapter for its exemplary work in alumni outreach and fundraising initiatives.

Saturday morning, I provided an NSU welcome at the Dragon Boat races on the Cane River. This year, the annual event was hosted by our Office of First Year Experience. I want to thank Van Erikson for leading this effort and the many faculty, staff and students who assisted with the event.

Afterwards, I stopped by Destination Registration, our transfer student registration day, at Watson Library. I want to thank Melanie McBride for coordinating and the many faculty and staff who were on hand to advise and register these transfer students. Later, I met with three outstanding prospective student-athletes and their families.

Saturday evening, Jennifer and I attended the United States Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps' 69th Demon Battalion Military Ball hosted by the NSU Department of Military Science and the Northwestern Demon Regiment. Brigadier General Vincent B. Barker, Deputy Commanding General of the 377th Theater Sustainment Command, delivered the keynote address, and the event highlighted many accomplishments of our NSU ROTC cadets. I want to thank LTC Wendell Bender and his administrative team for their outstanding leadership of our ROTC program.

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

Fork 'em Demons,

Chris