

Weekly Update, February 24 - March 2, 2019

As you know, one of our five strategic focus areas at Northwestern State University is community enrichment. Each of you enrich our community in so many ways. Every week, I attend and hear about numerous performances, athletic contests, academic outreach programs, cultural events, service-learning initiatives and other community activities involving NSU faculty, staff and students.

In early February, we released an economic impact report showing that in 2017 – 2018 NSU had a \$428.2 million impact on our region based on a study by a multi-nation research company that has conducted 1,800 economic development surveys for universities. The study is significant because it underscores Northwestern's substantial return on investments to students, taxpayers and society as a whole in Louisiana.

I think equally important is the educational and cultural impact that we have on our region. Several activities this week exemplified a "typical week" for NSU in making an impact in this area. Although it is not an exhaustive list, we hosted eight athletic events, four concerts, three recruiting receptions, two high school academic conferences and a major regional leadership conference. Also, our students, faculty and staff volunteered in several local elementary schools working with young students on academic and cultural initiatives.

Clearly, Northwestern's economic impact on our region is important, but to see your passion in making our region a better place to live through your community enrichment initiatives is what truly makes Northwestern State University a special place to work.

My Week:

I spent a beautiful Sunday afternoon watching our baseball team defeat Southern University at Brown-Stroud Field and our Lady Demon softball team defeat the University of Arkansas – Pine Bluff.

Monday, Drake Owens, Curtis Penrod and I met about sponsorship opportunities for our Computer Information Systems program. Afterwards, I met with Pearson Account Executive for Strategic Partnerships LaMetrious Firven about reduced cost options for textbooks.

Monday afternoon, Reatha Cox, Alan Pasch, Ron Wright and I met to review space utilization options for the Friedman Student Union.

Monday evening, Jennifer and I joined a group for dinner with Louisiana Commissioner of Administration Jay Dardenne and his wife.

Tuesday morning, we hosted Commissioner Dardenne on campus. We briefed him on our recent accomplishments and shared with him the results of our new economic impact study. We highlighted our capital outlay requests and other strategic initiatives.

Later that morning, LTC Wendell Bender and I signed on behalf of NSU a letter of support with the Department of Defense, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. ESGR representatives, Dr. Bob Gillan and Eddie Wise joined us at the ceremony.

At noon, I attended the Unity & Community Black History Month luncheon at the Natchitoches Regional Medical Center. National speaker Cathy Harris did a great job in her presentation to civic, church and business leaders at the event.

Tuesday afternoon, Jennifer and I walked with the “Krewe of NSU” elementary students in the L.P. Vaughn Elementary School Mardi Gras Parade. Later, Drake Owens and I met to review a donor proposal, and I met with an amazing young man on his campus tour.

Tuesday evening, I had the honor of being inducted into NSU’s chapter of Order of Omega Honor Society and afterwards watched our NSU baseball team soundly defeat the University of Louisiana – Monroe.

Wednesday morning, I welcomed approximately 50 high school students on campus for Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Healthcare Career Exploration Day. I want to thank our Recruiting Office for coordinating the event and our faculty for hosting the educational sessions. Afterwards, I met with a prospective faculty member and then with a prospective student.

Later, I was interviewed by a local radio station at a live remote at the NSU Marketplace. There is a lot of energy surrounding this new venture on campus.

Wednesday evening, I watched our NSU men’s basketball team defeat University of the Incarnate Word.

Thursday morning, I joined our football coaches and players at Weaver Elementary School for Chris Waddell Day. Fifteen years ago, we tragically lost Chris, who was a first-year football player at NSU. Annually, every member of our football team visits a local elementary school to share the impact that Chris had on so many. This year we were blessed to have Chris’ mother, Celeste, be a part of the program.

Afterwards, I traveled to Shreveport to take part in the Ribbon Cutting ceremony for Southland Printing’s new Commercial Printing Division. Southland is owned by NSU alumnus and generous benefactor John Manno, Jr. and his wife Lynne.

Thursday afternoon, I took part in a SACSCOC conference call. In early April, I will participate in an on-campus reaffirmation visit.

Thursday evening, Jennifer and I, along with the Recruiting team, hosted the Natchitoches Area Recruiting reception at the President’s Residence. Students and parents from five parishes joined us to learn more about our academic and extra-curricular offerings.

Friday morning, we hosted several high school students on campus. First, I joined our School of Biological and Physical Sciences faculty as we hosted several hundred students at the Science Showcase. Later, I provided an NSU welcome at the regional 4-H Conference in the Friedman Student Union. Five hundred students from north and central Louisiana took part in 4-H activities on campus.

Afterwards, Dr. Vickie Gentry and I met on several academic matters and later, I met with Super 1 General Manager Rodney Brown. At noon, I had lunch with Winn Community Health Center Chief Executive Officer Deano Thornton and Chief Operating Officer David Adams.

Friday evening, I watched our baseball team defeat the University of Arkansas-Little Rock on a chilly evening at Brown-Stroud Field.

Saturday afternoon, I watched our baseball team continue their winning ways with another victory over UALR.

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

Fork 'em Demons,

Chris



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