

## **Weekly Update, February 9 - 15, 2020**

It is with a sense of both sadness and celebration that I officially inform you today that Dr. Marcus Jones will be leaving the university at the end of this month.

As some of you have already heard, he will join the University of Louisiana System office in Baton Rouge on March 1 as Executive Vice-President of Operations.

Marcus has provided extensive stability and the impetus for extraordinary advancements at Northwestern in recent years as Executive Vice-President for University and Business Affairs and has been an outstanding faculty member in the School of Business for more than two decades.

So we sincerely regret his departure and the loss of his leadership but also extend our warmest congratulations on his promotion to this prominent position in higher education in Louisiana. He will be a valuable asset to the University of Louisiana System and will complement the excellent personnel and programs in the UL System office headed by former NSU president Dr. Jim Henderson.

In this interim period as we review the structure of the university and the scope of Dr. Jones' responsibilities and consider options and alignments for the future, the duties of the Executive Vice-President position have been temporarily assigned to other personnel.

Pat Jones will supervise Business Affairs; Dr. Darlene Williams will direct activities in the Physical Plant, Grounds, Custodial Services and Environmental Health and Safety; Frances Conine will assume responsibility for University Police, and Dr. Greg Handel will direct International Recruiting. Dr. Jones will continue to assist the university in legal matters in his position at the UL System office.

I know all of you join me in wishing Marcus well in his new position and in expressing appreciation for his years of dedicated, effective service to the university.

Also, this week, I met with the Strategic Planning Team where the Director of Institutional Effectiveness led a review of the planning calendar to update the team on the submission of mid-year assessment reports and the mid-year brief. Each college then presented its mission, roles, and priorities based on their internal mission analysis. Each took an inclusive approach, focused on nesting with the University mission while capturing the unique aspects of each unit.

We then talked through how the University Strategic Plan will be modified to better align with the University of Louisiana System and Board of Regents Strategic Planning Framework and Master Plan. We discussed taking a crawl, walk, run approach to developing the University's SACSCOC Fifth-Year Report. It will be a continuous process spanning the next two years and serve as a learning experience that builds a bench of experienced leaders to carry the process into the future.

Finally, the Strategic Planning Team approved the criteria for SACSCOC Core Requirement 8.1, Student Achievement. The approved criteria are enrollment, retention rates, graduation rates, completers, licensure, and student placement rates. We are working to determine how to best increase graduating student participation in taking the First Destination survey. It serves as the primary data collection method for student placement post-graduation for employment, continuing education, military service, and volunteerism. I appreciate your help in ensuring all graduates participate in this important survey.

## **My Week:**

Monday morning, Dawn Eubanks and I met to review NSU policies and internal audit matters. Afterwards, Dr. Marcus Jones and I met to review the Division of University and Business Affairs organizational structure and to discuss a transitional plan.

At noon, Kelly Krouse and I were guests at the weekly Natchitoches Lion's Club luncheon. We updated the club members on happenings at NSU and discussed the importance of external support to the university.

Later that afternoon, Dr. Greg Handel, Jennifer Kelly, Tracy Brown, Davey Antilley, Chris Brumley, Dr. Masahito Kuroda, Julie Powell, Cory LaCaze, Christie Price and I met to review logistics and prepare for the upcoming ULS Board Meeting and Retreat that will be held on our campus.

Monday evening, Greg Burke and I traveled to Bossier City to attend the visitation services for NSU alumnus and former football player Wade Williams.

Tuesday morning, I met with Van Erikson, Reatha Cox, Katarina Haymon, and Drake Owens to discuss the upcoming ULS Day at the Capitol. Afterwards, Drake Owens, Dr. Marcus Jones and I met with Mayor Lee Posey to discuss the Grady Erwin Nature Area.

Tuesday afternoon, I spent time in personnel, policy and audit meetings. Tuesday evening, I joined our recruiting team in Haughton for our Bossier Parish recruiting reception.

Wednesday morning, Kirk Cordell and Andy Ferrell with the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training stopped by to introduce Simeon Warren, NCPTT's new Chief of Architecture and Engineering. Afterwards, Tom Whitehead and I visited with the NCPTT leadership on our current partnership and future projects. Afterwards, Dr. Darlene Williams and I met on technology, innovation and economic development matters.

At noon, I attended the Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce Luncheon at Lasyone's where Dr. James Meza, Executive Director of the Louisiana Superintendent's Academy, was the guest speaker.

Wednesday afternoon, I met with the Strategic Planning Team.

That evening, I joined our recruiting team in Shreveport for our Caddo Parish recruiting reception that was very well attended by prospective students and families. Afterwards, I made it back to Prather Coliseum to watch the final few minutes of our men's basketball team's victory over the University of Incarnate Word.

Thursday morning, Dr. Greg Handel, Jennifer Kelly, Christie Price and I had a conference call with University of Louisiana System Vice President Dr. Jeannine Kahn to finalize the agenda for the upcoming ULS board meeting and retreat. Afterwards, I greeted high student students, teachers and sponsors at the Louisiana Office of Financial Assistance financial literacy program held at Magale Recital Hall.

At noon, Drake Owens and I joined our CENLA campus leadership on our Alexandria campus for a legislative update luncheon with Louisiana Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin and area legislators.

Upon returning to campus, I met with Frances Conine to discuss Student Experience matters and later attended opening ceremonies of Parc Natchitoches.

Friday morning, I joined the other University of Louisiana System presidents for a conference call with Dr. Jim Henderson, University of Louisiana System President. Afterwards, I spent most of the day in personnel meeting and briefings.

Friday evening, I attended the visitation services for NSU alumnus Louis Lowrey and later watched our home baseball opener against Wichita State University at Brown-Stroud Field.

Saturday, I hopped between our women's tennis, women's softball, women's and men's basketball and men's baseball home athletic events. I want to commend our athletic support staff for their outstanding work in hosting twelve athletic events in one weekend. I heard several comments on how great our facilities looked and the positive atmosphere at the competitions.

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

Fork 'em Demons,

Chris



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