



# Creole Heritage Center at Northwestern State University

## *Celebrating Our Silver Jubilee in 2023*

An update of activities at the CHC for January 2023

### 2022 in Review

Perhaps the biggest event for the CHC in 2022 was the hiring of our new Director, Dr. Kent W. Peacock. Dr. Peacock joined the CHC in July and is also an Assistant Professor of History at NSU. He comes to the CHC most recently from Tallahassee, FL, but grew up near Detroit, Michigan. He holds a PhD in history from Florida State University, and has over 6 years experience in non-profits and state government.

Ask staff at the CHC what the second most exciting happening was in 2022 and they will probably say new computers and monitors! We are grateful to NSU for these much-needed updates.

During the summer, over 500 of you participated in a "CHC Needs Assessment" online survey to help the CHC plan its future. 2022 was also a year to reconnect in person with our supporters and increase awareness of Louisiana Creoles and their culture. Some of our favorite opportunities to do this included:

- June – Creole Culture Day at Vermilionville (Lafayette, LA)
- July – Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival
- September – Louisiana Studies Conference at NSU
- October – N'Side View (NSU's Perspective Student Day); St. Augustine Catholic Church Creole Festival (Isle Brevelle, LA)
- November – St. John the Baptist Catholic Church Mini-Fair (Cloutierville, LA)
- December – Lunchtime Lagniappe at the LA Sports Hall of Fame and NW Louisiana History Museum (Natchitoches, LA)

### 2023: The CHC turns 25!

The fall of 2023 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CHC opening its doors at Northwestern State University. The story of the CHC starts earlier as Mr. Terrel Delphin, members of the Natchitoches Parish-based St. Augustine Historical Society, and other Creoles in Louisiana organized and advocated for giving a

voice to a culture that had previously been denied. Since 1998, the CHC has connected Louisiana Creoles from around the globe and made the world more aware of Louisiana Creoles and their culture through producing events, conducting research, and publishing resources.

We are currently planning multiple ways (in several mediums)

to celebrate our Silver Jubilee and those who made the CHC and its accomplishments a reality. We hope you will participate in these celebrations throughout the months to come!



### Why support the Creole Heritage Center?

- Get a membership card to show off your commitment to the preservation & promotion of Louisiana Creoles & culture!
- Guarantees you receive information about the CHC's resources & 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations!
- Donations are tax deductible!
- The CHC relies on your support to achieve its mission!

Make your donation on our new online donation page at <https://www.northwesternstatealumni.com/creole/>

### From the Director:

It is hard to believe over six months have passed since I began as the Director of the Creole Heritage Center at Northwestern State University. As for many of us, the last few years at the CHC have been filled with challenges and change. Both can cause fear, but also encourage reflection, new perspectives, and new ideas. Thus, as you read this newsletter, I hope you will feel a sense of rejuvenation and excitement for the future of the CHC and its commitment to promoting Louisiana Creoles and their culture. Lastly, I want to express the CHC's gratitude to Ms. Loletta Wynder who retired at the end of 2021 after devoting so much energy to the CHC over 18 years. She is one of the many leaders and supporters who enabled the CHC to make it to our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023 and whom we will honor in the year to come.

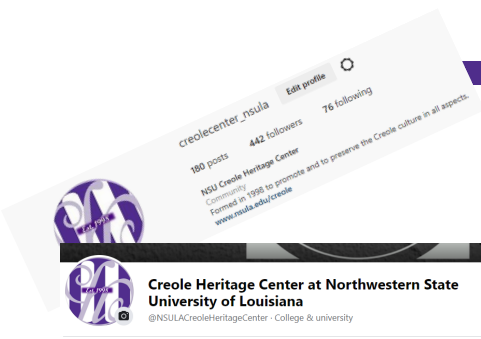
- Kent



CHC Staff Member Markita Small at the CHC's table for the 2022 Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival

### Advisory Council Update

The Advisory Council returned to in person meetings in 2022 and welcomed three new members in July, Michael Fontenot of Lake Charles, LA; Marcus Jones of The Woodlands, TX; and David Sigur of Alexandria, VA. Beyond participating in the search to fill the position of Director of the CHC, the Council has been active in mentoring its new members and Dr. Peacock on the history of the CHC and brainstorming the CHC's future. The Council has four open seats and members serve three-year terms. Anyone interested in serving can contact Dr. Peacock for more information!



## Reaching the Louisiana Creole Diaspora!

Ms. Markita Small spends much of her time at the CHC searching for and sharing news, events, obituaries, and other information related to Louisiana Creoles to all our social media followers. She loves engaging with and spreading knowledge of Louisiana Creoles to our followers throughout Louisiana, the nation, and even the globe! Make sure to like and follow us on Facebook [@NSULACreoleHeritageCenter](https://www.facebook.com/NSULACreoleHeritageCenter) and on Instagram [@creolecenter\\_nsula](https://www.instagram.com/creolecenter_nsula)!

## Thank you CHC Staff!

The CHC could not have succeeded in 2022 without all of its staff, new and old. Ms. Shirley Dunn Chevalier and Ms. Markita Small have been with the CHC throughout much of its history. Ms. Dunn Chevalier works in our genealogy section and has found so much satisfaction knowing she can help others with their research. Ms. Small has a BA in Communications from NSU and began her time at the CHC as a student worker. She now helps with all the CHC's social media and enjoys genealogy and reading in her spare time. Ms. Karen Pichon performed a variety of administrative tasks for the CHC during the first half of 2022, but she now assists the CHC when needed from her new position with NSU's School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs.

Ms. Gail Jones joined the CHC this fall after a varied career of public service in education and non-profit organizations. Ms. Jones has been instrumental in (re)connecting the CHC to sup-

porters in the Natchitoches area and planning for upcoming 2023 and 2024 events. She earned a bachelor's degree in sociology and master's degree in Student Personnel Service/Administration from NSU. She is a member of the St. Augustine Historical Society, Vice President for the Association of Preservation of Historic Natchitoches, an organizing member for the Daughters of the American Revolution-Cane River Chapter and a member at St. Augustine Catholic Church on Isle Brevelle.

The CHC was also fortunate to have three student workers in the fall of 2022. Ms. Shannon Metoyer is from Alexandria, LA and a BFA in Dance and minor in Créole Studies candidate at NSU. She is the director and lead choreographer at Shannon's Nia Cheer Dance and Productions LLC, the Director of Magnolia Creole, and a member of the NAACP. Her studio and Magnolia Creole gives performers a platform to explore and create opportunities to express and find themselves through creative arts, building leaders in the community in the process. Ms. Erin Whitten is our Graduate Assistant, participating in NSU's accelerated bachelor's to master's program in Psy-

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chology. She loves sunflowers and her room is covered in them! Lastly, Cath Collette is a sophomore at the Louisiana School of Math, Science, and the Arts, and has been with the CHC as part of LSMSA's work service program. Before attending LSMSA, she was in a French immersion program for eight years, but she is now studying Latin. She also plays the viola.

Each member of the CHC staff brings a vibrancy and commitment to the CHC offices every week. The next time you contact the CHC I am sure you will feel this enthusiasm and passion, too!

## What's to Come in 2023???

Here are just some of the projects and events the CHC is working on for 2023!

- Updated Website
- Online access to CHC's Research Division Holdings
- Updated "How-to" Cane River Genealogy Book
- Online Exhibit: Honoring the CHC's Leaders & History
- Creole Artists Exhibit at NSU (September—October)
- Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival (with Louisiana Folklife Center in July)
- Louisiana Studies Conference (with Louisiana Folklife Center in September)
- 25th Anniversary Celebration Event (October)



Make sure the CHC has your correct contact information! Use the QR code below, visit our website, or call the CHC to confirm your information!

Creole Heritage Center at NSU  
Contact Information Update

