



Creole Heritage Center

NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Our Vision

To revitalize, mobilize, and empower, for global recognition, Creole people and their contributions.

Our Mission

To preserve, educate, and advocate the value and significance of the vibrant Louisiana Creole people and their culture.

Current Happenings

So far in 2024 the Center has prioritized beginning the work to achieve goals within two of our "Programs & Services" thematic areas from our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan: Education and Resource Services.

Some of you may remember the Teacher's Creole Resource CD and workshop produced by the Center almost 15 years ago. Much has changed since then, but the lesson plans in this resource are still a great starting point for developing additional and up-to-date materials for engaging K-12 students on Louisiana Creole people, all parts of their culture, and their contributions to our world. Gail Jones of the Cane River Creole community has been helping the Center with this project, which has already included meeting with a number of current and former K-12 educators and other partners like the National Park Service to make sure we design a resource that teachers and parents will find useful and accessible. We are grateful to have Ms. Jones on this project due to her 25+ years' experience in a variety of student and youth-focused positions at NSU and the City of Natchitoches, as well as involvement in St. Augustine (Isle Brevelle) Catholic Church, the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches, and many other groups.

The Center has also welcomed back former staff member Rhonda Gautier to help organize and catalog everything in the Center's Resource Library and our program and financial files. It has been a joy to her and Center staff to review all the Center has accomplished as she has made her way through the Center's 25 years of files. By making past publications, events, and financial information more easily available, her work improves the Center's accountability to our supporters and success in future projects. Our fingers are crossed that we receive upgrades in technology soon that will make the resources of the Center more quickly accessible to staff, supporters, and researchers.

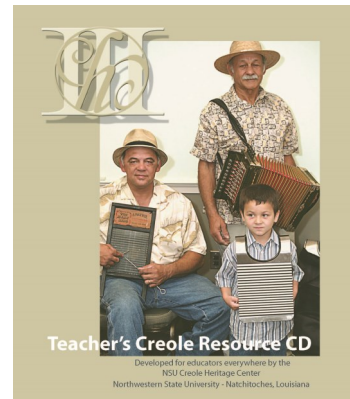
Finally, the Center has prioritized (re)connecting with other Louisiana Creole-focused organizations as part of our advocacy efforts to promote and support all who bring recognition to Louisiana Creoles and their culture. For example, in November the Louisiana Creole Research Association (LA Creole) graciously welcomed Dr. Peacock to present on the Center at their annual conference and over the last six months staff has attended C.R.E.O.L.E., Inc. meetings. At this time the Center is lucky to be able to financially support other groups with complimentary missions, too. Beyond those already mentioned, the Center has renewed memberships with the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches and the Mobile Creole Cultural and Historical Preservation Society.

To see all the goals of our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, visit our website at www.nsula.edu/creole.

April 2024

Creole Heritage Center Staff

- Dr. Kent W. Peacock, Director
Assistant Professor of History
- Markita Hamilton-Small, Clerk
- Judy Rachal, Clerk
- Erin Whitten, Graduate Assistant
- Dr. Hiram "Pete" Gregory, Academic Advisor



Part of the Center's Resource Library in strong need of re-organizing!

Advisory Council Update



Throwback to the June 11, 2023
Advisory Council Meeting!

Our Advisory Council held a jovial and productive meeting in January. Dr. Peacock provided Council members who joined us in person on NSU’s campus and virtually from afar the usual updates on finances, past events, and upcoming priorities. Then, Council members brought forth ideas for new programs and events the Center should be present at so we are more visible to all who support our mission, such as the Houston Rodeo & BBQ Cook off and Festivals Acadiens et Créoles.

Council members also committed themselves to a new challenge so they can better support the Center’s staff and supporters like you. They pledged to establish and become active participants on committees and teams, such as the Education Team or Fund Development Committee, which will assist in making the goals of the Center’s 2023-2026 Strategic Plan happen and grow the Center’s resources and capabilities that our supporters want! Council members and staff look forward to gathering again this month and hearing the goals each committee and team has set for themselves.

2024 Membership Drive Updates

In January we mailed out our January newsletter and 2024 membership forms and our mailbox has been consistently busy ever since! So far 135 individuals and families have become members this year and we cannot thank them enough for their financial support. All who donate to the Center receive a receipt and membership card in the mail; please contact the Center if you have not received any acknowledgment of your 2024 membership.

Our memberships exist on a calendar year basis, but it is not too late to become a member for 2024! Help us reach our goal of 200 memberships by the end of April by scanning the QR code to the right to access our online donation form or visit the “Support the CHC” tab on our website (www.nsula.edu/creole) to download a paper donation form!



Donations are processed through NSU Foundation, Inc. for the sole use of the Creole Heritage Center. Gifts made to the NSU Foundation are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. The NSU Foundation is exempt from tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Its Federal Identification Number is 72-6021495.

Why become a member?

Communications like this newsletter are only possible with continued financial support from individuals like you! While the Creole Heritage Center is a part of Northwestern State University of Louisiana, we rely on funding from grants, sponsorships, and individuals like you for the printing and postage of paper newsletters, increased and continued public access to our resources, mounting future programs, and our presence at community events.

Thank you Creole Champions!

Our Creole Champions Club recognizes all individuals who financially support the Center at the level of \$150 or more per calendar year. Our immense gratitude goes out to the following who have committed themselves to being Creole Champions in 2024!

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|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Anonymous (2) | Bervick & Cynthia Deculus | Thomas A. & Shirley M. Delphin |
| Wilfred Delphin | Kelly McCrone & Kevin Peacock | Paulette Metoyer |
| Stephen Metoyer | Frank Moran, Jr. III | Rev. Richard & Janis Peacock |
| Jamie Prudhomme Chilson | Joyce Rideau Metoyer | Freeman Wiley |

Welcome new staff!

Since the beginning of 2024, the Creole Heritage Center has enthusiastically welcomed Ms. Judy Monette Rachal as part of our staff. Beyond administrative tasks, one of Ms. Rachal's main responsibilities is helping the Center build relationships with Creole communities throughout the nation, as well as with other organizations who share similar missions as the Center. Her willingness to join meetings with C.R.E.O.L.E., Inc. and LA Creole already (even during the height of Mardi Gras season!) demonstrates how grateful we are to have her at the Center.

From Ms Judy:

I was born and raised in the Cloutierville/Derry area. My parents were Felix "T-Fra" Monette and Cecile Rachal Monette. I have four sisters and we continue to live within a three-hour drive from our childhood home place. I have three adult children and three grandsons. I retired from Northwestern State University in 2015 after 38 years of service at the university. I continue to reside in the Derry community and after some time off as a retired individual, I decided I needed a project to occupy my time. The Creole Heritage Center was a place I had been interested in for many years, but never took the time to get really involved in. I was extremely lucky to find that the Center had a job opening and I was chosen to become



a part of the Center's staff. Although I grew up in this area, I am excited to learn more about the culture of the Creole people. It's wonderful working in the Center, this doesn't feel like a job, it's a learning experience.

44th Annual Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival

Join the Creole Heritage Center in Natchitoches at the 44th Annual Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival on Saturday July 20th! The Louisiana Folklife Center at NSU produces this event, with a theme this year of "The Old Songs Live Forever." Sonny Gullage and the Blues Groovers, Johnny Earthquake and the Moondogs, the Forest Huval Cajun Band, and the Zion Harmonizers are just some of the music performances scheduled. There will also be folk foods, square dancing lessons with the Willie Stewart Bluegrass Band, a musical patriotic tribute by The Victory Belles, a special performance by Grupo de Danza Folklórica Mexicana Ketzaly, and the Louisiana State Fiddle Championship. Over 100 traditional crafts persons have been invited to participate.

Admission is \$10/person, with children 12 and under admitted free. Vive la Louisiane!!!

All details will be shared at www.nsula.edu/folklife as they become available.

Updates from our NSU partners

Proposals are now being solicited from scholars at all career stages for the 16th Annual Louisiana Studies Conference. Papers, creative work (film, lyric or instrumental music compositions, short fiction, poetry), and short performances (dance, music, or theater) that address ANY aspect of Louisiana studies are welcome. Work that directly deal with this year's theme of Lyrical Louisiana are especially desired. Presentations should last no more than 15 minutes. The deadline for submissions is June 1, 2024. The conference is co-sponsored by the



Louisiana Folklife Center, the Department of English, Languages, and Cultural Studies, and the Northwestern State University College of Arts and Sciences, and will be held on September 14, 2024 on NSU's campus in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

For all details on submitting a proposal and the conference itself, visit www.nsula.edu/folklife.

NSU's Williamson Museum has a new logo and a dedicated website! The museum seeks to inform the public and the NSU community about the pre- and post-contact history and present cultures of Louisiana. Located on the homelands of the Caddo and their neighboring tribes, the museum has a special obligation to Native American communities. It helps to preserve culture and seeks to aid Native American communities in informing people about their presence and their contributions to Louisiana and North America.



Visit www.nsula.edu/williamsonmuseum to learn more!



Creole Heritage Center

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The CHC is a proud component of NSU's School of Social Sciences and Applied Programs.

www.nsula.edu/ssap

Your business or organization can sponsor the Creole Heritage Center, too!
Visit the "Support the CHC" page on our website or contact our office for more information!