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# THE CURRENT SAUCE

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA

## President Genovese lays out plans for increasing NSU's prominence

BY NINA OVALLE



Photo by Lia Portillo. President James Genovese sat down with The Current Sauce and NSU-TV shared his plans to put all of Northwestern State University of Louisiana programs back to prominence.

Now a month into his term, Northwestern State University of Louisiana's 21st President James Genovese plans to bring prominence to NSU.

President Genovese began to execute his plans by working with the athletic program and renovating NSU's physical plant. Beyond NSU, President Genovese wants to utilize the relationship between Natchitoches and NSU to improve the campus environment.

"You ask me about the future and what I plan to do, it's a one word response: exposure," President Genovese said.

For the president, exposure is about garnering publicity for NSU by getting out there on the streets, he said. He describes exposure as an umbrella term for enrollment, marketing and finance. To emphasize its importance, he compares NSU to a great product which all students, faculty and staff alike must sell to the public.

"We are not selling this bill of goods that we have here," President Genovese

said. "We've got a great university here and if I could just get to the parents, the coaches, the teachers, the principals - if I could just get them, I can get these kids to come back to school again."

Enrollment is a focal point of President Genovese's initiative to "sell" NSU during his first semester as president. He addresses the enrollment decline, saying all universities across the nation have experienced the decline and NSU has only experienced a marginal decline.

"Our numbers this year are very close to last year, and in some areas we're actually gaining, so I'm focused on that," President Genovese said.

President Genovese shared he is pleased with NSU's recruiting efforts, and he plans to utilize these efforts to bring more money to campus.

"We have to run this university as a business and that's what I intend to do. We cannot just rest on traditionalism," President Genovese said. "This campus needs money. You cannot refurbish buildings without money, you cannot develop an athletic program

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without money, it is very important that we get our budget up to date."

President Genovese directly correlates increasing the NSU budget to increasing enrollment.

"We need money, right? We need students, right? Students are money," President Genovese said. "The students - bring 'em on campus - that's money, and this campus needs money. It's a pure economic thing."

Athletics, infrastructure and marketing

There are two key areas which President Genovese plans to improve as he works toward increased enrollment and positive exposure for NSU

First, he wants to address the NSU athletic program as he recognizes that the death of Ronnie Caldwell Jr. in Oct. 2023 tragically impacted the NSU football team. He understands that NSU is still recovering from the tragedy.

"We have been able to come in and patch that and try to make the best of a bad situation, perhaps take those lemons and make lemonade out of it, and pick ourselves up because it was quite damaging to the university," President Genovese said.

Blaine McCorkle, head football coach of NSU, was hired in Nov. 2023 just after Caldwell's death. President Genovese expresses full confidence that McCorkle will be able to positively boost the NSU football team in the upcoming season. With this, he hopes the football team will reflect the university's improving atmosphere and show alumni and visitors what NSU has to offer.

"People are gonna come on board cause everybody loves a winner, but when you have a losing football program that hasn't had a winning season in 16 years, that sucks," President Genovese said. "We're gonna fix that.

It's not gonna happen overnight, we're not gonna win the national championship but we're coming back."

The second area President Genovese plans to improve is the NSU Physical Plant, which provides services for student life and improves the University's overall physical environment, according to nsula.edu.

"We have some old buildings on this campus that need refurbishment, some perhaps may need a bulldozer for demolition, but we're gonna cut and paste the scratch and claw," President Genovese said. "I'm making sure that we proceed with making the older buildings palatable, workable and that's with all deliberate speed because we have to get the physical plant in order."

President Genovese is confident that NSU will have positive media coverage to publish if he can successfully complete these improvements.

"We turn the athletic programs - the football program - around, we spruce up these buildings a little bit, spread the word and we're going back up to the top again," President Genovese said.

He refers to the construction of Robert Alost Hall, intended to be a state-of-the-art academic building for nursing, math, social work, psychology and English departments, as an asset toward gaining publicity for the campus.

"The setting is going to be so good for all the students to be able to relax, study, eat and enjoy the college experience and that's what it's all about," President Genovese said.

Natchitoches and NSU

With the upcoming completion of Alost Hall, construction of David and Sherry Morgan Health and Performance Center, renovations to NSU's baseball and softball fields and new coaching staff,

## NEWS

**President James Genovese is a 1971 NSU graduate from Opelousas, La.**



Genovese believes these improvements will bring in new students to NSU and residents to Natchitoches.

“If this university fails, then that city is gonna fail too,” President Genovese said. “We are joined at the hip with the city of Natchitoches, it’s not only the alumni, it’s not only the donors. We’ve got to have the city of Natchitoches get out there and provide a great environment for a good college experience cause if we lose they lose, we win they win.”

Ronnie Williams, mayor of the city of Natchitoches, elaborates on President Genovese’s concept of collaboration between the university and the city. He says that NSU and Natchitoches share a symbiotic relationship.

“NSU is a catalyst for economic growth, cultural enrichment, and community development,” Mayor Williams said. “We’re always delighted when students matriculate through NSU, my alma mater, and decide to make Natchitoches their home.”

At the same time, Mayor Williams says NSU gives a home and a connection to students.

“Natchitoches has so much to offer anyone who lives, works, or visits. We are proud to be a picturesque, thriving backdrop for the Northwestern State University,” Mayor Williams said.

From La Supreme Court Justice to NSU President

As President Genovese works to put his plans for NSU and Natchitoches into action, he wants to utilize his 50 years of experience in law during his presidency.

Going into the selection process for president of NSU, President Genovese was recommended for the position by his network of NSU alumni. He said that his lack of higher education initially made him feel unqualified, but he shared that his institutional knowledge and experience will lead NSU into the future.

“Going from the Supreme Court to

here, a lot of mixed emotions. Really, I thought long and hard about it because 90 days ago this wasn’t even on the radar screen,” President Genovese said. “I said, ‘I’m not qualified to be the president of the university.’ I said, ‘I’m happy to be on the law side of things.’ But then they started talking to me about it and telling me about it and I knew we were suffering here.”

Now that he is officially in his role as president, President Genovese has left a vacancy in the Louisiana Supreme Court. He resigned the last two years of his 10-year term.

Robert Gunn, Deputy Judicial Administrator and Community Relations for the Louisiana Supreme Court, specified that the Justices of the Supreme Court will appoint a judge to temporarily fill the vacancy made by President Genovese. This is in accordance with Louisiana Constitution Article V, Section 22(B). The court has now appointed Justice Jeanette Theriot Knoll to replace President Genovese’s Third District vacancy, according to the Louisiana Supreme Court website. “Regarding an election to fill the

vacancy, once the Governor is notified of the existence of the vacancy, he will call a special election to fill the unexpired term (in this case through Dec. 31, 2026),” Gunn said. “A subsequent election will be held in 2026 for a full 10-year term representing that Supreme Court district which will run Jan. 1, 2027 - Dec. 31, 2036.”

President Genovese’s background with NSU ultimately pushed him to run for presidency, despite his position in the Supreme Court.

“I was just a plain old kid, normal intelligence from Opelousas and I come up here and they’ve been wonderful to me and this is the foundation that I have,” President Genovese said. “I wouldn’t be where I am without Northwestern.”

As an alumnus of NSU, he only hopes that his plans for campus improvement will make a positive impact just as his alma mater has done for him. “I thought what a wonderful thing it would be if we could come up here to Northwestern and turn this program around and help them as they helped me and put Humpty Dumpty back together again,” President Genovese said. “This is too beautiful a place, too good a place not to be at the top of the heap.”

Since being on campus in his official presidency, President Genovese has traveled to NSU Shreveport campus, the North Rapides Business and Industry Alliance, the Rapides Parish School Board, Grambling State University, Baton Rouge and the University of Louisiana System board meeting to speak about his plans for NSU. He said NSU has received a wonderful response from people all across Louisiana.

“People are yearning to unite and help put Northwestern back on the map again every place that I go,” President Genovese said. “If I’m behind that desk then I’m not working. I’m not here to be behind the desk, I’m here to get out in that street and sell this bill of goods.”

President Genovese assures he’s invested in the university and wants to leave a legacy of success.

“My heart is in it. I wanna go to my grave knowing, with a smile on my face, that I did something good for Northwestern and that I helped them get back on track again,” President Genovese said.



**Photo by Chris Reich**  
President Genovese accepts the NSU regalia during his July 23 press conference in NSU’s ballroom.

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## DOSE OF SAUCE Newsletter Sign up

**J**oin The Current Sauce’s weekly newsletter: Dose of Sauce. Each Friday at 1 p.m., the newsletter will feature the stories posted in the past week and highlight photos and things happening around campus. Use the link below to sign up or use the link on our Instagram bio!

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/EsULucF/currentsauce>

# Stressing about first week outfits? I got you

BY MADELYN MURPHY

**W**hen it comes to the first week of classes, there's a list of things to worry about.

Where is my class? Do I need my textbook already? What if I fail? And what do I wear? For some, deciding on an outfit may be at the top of that list. In case you're one of those people, let me help ease your worries.

On the very first day of a class, dress in clothing you would wear to meet your partner's mom at her house. Something casual but nice, obviously. By doing this, you aren't outdoing your professor's attire too much, but you also aren't dressed so laid back that you seem careless.

If you know your professor, think about how they typically dress for class. If they dress in business attire, you should consider dressing up your outfit by tucking in your shirt or adding a

sweater over it. If they dress in athletic wear, dress however you feel like; show up in that hoodie and basketball shorts.

For freshmen or those who do not know their professors yet, think of it like this: first impressions are not solely based on your appearance. A professor is going to think more highly of a casually dressed student who shows up early and shakes their hand than a student who shows up late in a business casual outfit.

At the end of each day, we attend classes to learn and to benefit from our future careers, so we should wear what allows us to do so. This being said, I think everyone should wear what makes them feel like the best version of themselves. The more comfortable you feel in your outfit, the more happy you will feel and the more productive you will be.



Photo Illustration by Madelyn Murphy. Whether it's a hoodie with sweatpants or a dress with heels, wear what makes you feel like your best self.

*First Week*

## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Interested in going Greek? Here's a breakdown of recruitment

BY ISABEL JUAREZ RUBIO

When starting college, first-time students are thrown into a completely new environment, surrounded by strangers. This can lead to overwhelming feelings, especially if they don't know where they belong yet.

Northwestern State University of Louisiana offers various programs and Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) to help students through this time. Greek Life is one of which many students show interest in.

NSU houses 16 unique chapters in the Greek Community including three sororities, six fraternal organizations and the Divine Nine, which includes seven of the nine historically African American fraternities and sororities.

"Go Greek; you will not regret it," Savannah Struppeck, a senior with a major in hospitality management and tourism who is the recruitment director for Phi Mu, said. "Even if you don't think it is something for you, I would just go through the recruitment process to challenge yourself and get yourself out of your comfort zone."

Phi Mu Fraternity, Alpha Omicron Pi Fraternity and Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority, make up the three official sororities of NSU. Joining one of these three sororities means you are also a member of the NSU's College Panhellenic Council (CPC), according to the NSU Greek Life page. This council serves as the governing body for the three sororities.

The Interfraternity Council (IFC) is the governing body of the six fraternities. It helps the member fraternities with recruitment, financial and educational programming, academics, service, public relations and risk management, according to the NSU Greek Life page.

Recruitment for sororities and fraternities starts at the beginning of each semester. The process to join varies for each sorority and fraternity and their respective councils. This allows students to make an informed decision on what chapter they want to be a part of, according to the NSU Greek Life page.

Forming a part of Greek Life is a responsibility that requires time, commitment, fees and academic attainment, according to the NSU Greek Life page. A GPA of at least 2.5 is one of the requirements to join Greek Life, with the exception of Phi

Mu with a GPA requirement of 2.7.

If someone is interested in participating in CPC recruitment this fall, they must go through formal recruitment. This process will consist of rounds where one visits each chapter and is later matched with the one that best fits them, considering they meet all the requirements and pay the registration fee. For those who may be unsure about this process, recruitment is more relaxed during the spring semester. However, sororities can only take a limited number of new members.

"So, between all three of the chapters here on campus, it is pretty much the same. Each chapter holds two events at their house," Struppeck said. "Then there's two required days we call that a formal round, that's your philanthropy round or your preference round, that's where you'll come in groups and it's timed and you're there for a certain amount of time and then you are walked in and walked out and you talk to certain people and your matched."

Joining Greek Life builds and secures connections, which is an opportunity for new students to be introduced to people and possibly make lifelong friendships, Zachary Wilkinson said.

This sophomore nursing major who is the treasurer of Kappa

Alpha Order explained the impact Greek life has on his life.

"Recruitment helps grow the family. Personally, I live 4 and a half hours away, so having these guys gives me something to come back to and keep going," Wilkinson said. "Nursing school is hard, but these guys help me go through it."

The Interfraternity Council (IFC) recruitment opens during the fall and spring semesters. The IFC hosts events for men to meet members of the fraternities, as well as individual events hosted by each fraternity. Men who want to join have to attend every IFC event and at least one event hosted by each fraternity. Men must register for recruitment and there is no registration fee, according to the NSU Greek Life page.

The National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) is not facilitated through the council or office of Greek Life, but by each individual fraternity and sorority. These organizations determine their intake dates. NPHC President Caiden Matthews said to be a member of NPHC you must have at least 12-30 college credit hours, a minimum GPA of 2.5- 4.0 but can vary, must be a full time student at a college or university where there is an active chapter of the NPHC, must be active on campus and pay all the fees and dues.

Dates, times and costs vary, but they will all contain a pre-initiation orientation, an initiation ceremony

and an in-depth education program that is supervised by alumni advisors.

Matthews also explained that research is key when choosing an NPHC organization.

"NPHC organizations seek members who are committed to their values, such as scholarship, leadership, service, and brotherhood/sisterhood," he said.

For those unsure about Greek life, weighing personal goals and priorities can help assess one's decision.

Attending events hosted by the Greek councils can give students an idea of the culture for each organization, which is why doing personal research can help with those decisions.

Tallen Earl, a first-year student with a major in hospitality management and tourism, shared her thoughts after attending the Greek 101 event.

"It does seem fun, and having the opportunities to do things and meet new people is really exciting," Earl said.

Reaching out to students currently a part of these Greek organizations can also allow students to know if that organization best fits their personal values.

Ultimately, choosing to go Greek is a personal decision for each student.



Photos by Lalaina Wood.

(Top photo) Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is one of the three National Pan-Hellenic Council sororities on campus. (Bottom photo) New semester means new members as NSU's Greek life organizations get ready for recruitment season.

# Lady Demons Volleyball and Softball add new staff to their coaching roster

BY KALLIE BOURGEOIS

Over the summer, Northwestern State University of Louisiana athletics announced two new hires for both the volleyball and softball teams.

Cara MacFarland is now the assistant volleyball coach, and Jenny Fuller is now the softball head coach.

Cara MacFarland is the sixth assistant to work on the coaching staff, since head volleyball coach Sean Kiracofe took over the program in 2015. Kiracofe reaffirmed his decision to hire after feeling fortunate enough to work with previous talented assistant coaches.

"I had my first assistant Alicia Roth leave in June before the season to get a head coaching opportunity," Kiracofe said.

When Roth left, Kiracofe had to make a quick hire and brought in a friend, Ashley Hardee, who had to leave in the middle of the season due to his wife's diagnosis of breast cancer. Then, Stacey Aldredge, former graduate assistant coach for the team, stepped up. She was great, Kiracofe said, and it was easy for



Courtesy of NSU Athletics. Cara MacFarland was named assistant coach for the 2024 volleyball season.

him to then make her assistant. However, Kiracofe later found himself in the same situation again when Aldredge went on maternity leave. This was when MacFarland stepped up.

Initially, this was more of a training experience for MacFarland because Aldredge was going to come

back eventually. However, things changed when Aldredge got another opportunity and took a coaching job at St. Mary's High School.

"I had to make a quick decision, but I already had the ability to see what Cara was capable of doing," Kiracofe said. "I already knew what she was like as a person, so it made it very easy at that moment to bring her back."

Kiracofe shared MacFarland's unique skill set that he was looking for in a coach.

"I don't want to take this away from her own ability, but her father being a coach as well, I got to believe growing up around that helps how you just view different situations," Kiracofe said. "I think she sees the game well. She has good insights to the game and can give an idea and have some sort of justification for it; she can think through the process and just explain why."

Moving forward, he explained how MacFarland will improve the team's success as a coach and keep the Lady Demons' culture alive.

"She has already been able to communicate and connect with the players, so that they can trust that she has their best interest in mind," Kiracofe said. "I think that is a huge thing that assistants need to have to be able to be successful. I think she does a good job at balancing being a coach and being someone they can go to and talk to."

MacFarland took on her new role in the program after two years as graduate assistant while filling in for Aldredge.

"Going from graduate assistant to assistant, I think I was always timid. When she left, I realized I needed to step up and show the team that I am here for them and I'm also here for Sean," MacFarland said. "I just want to fill in her shoes. I think Stacey was always the mom of the group and since she wasn't there I had to let them know that you guys can come to me and I can help you with anything."

The Norwalk, Ohio native spent four years playing at Middle Georgia State University in Macon, Ga., where she was a three-year captain and finished her career in the top five in the program's history in the five different statistical categories. She also had two seasons with more than 120 kills, 100 assists, 20 aces, 180 digs and 10 blocks.

In 2019, MacFarland was named to the Champions of Character team and was a member of the Middle Georgia State University Leadership

of Athletes. She also served as the head coach for Tsunami Volleyball Club and as assistant for TopVolley.

"I coached club while working on my undergrad, three years because of COVID. It was important to have confidence and know that I can come up with a rotation, come up with game plans and make sure the girls know where I stand on points," MacFarland said. "I was coaching 13- and 14-year-olds, so it's a little different now that I'm coaching 18 to 22. That's why it's still important to have Sean to lean on so if I have a question, I can ask it."

She received her sports administration master's degree from NSU while working as a graduate assistant coach for the Demons during the 2022 and 2023 seasons.

"I already had a feel for the culture and I was also in line with how Sean has stated on culture, so I felt like the job was in line with what I believed," MacFarland said. "I already had a relationship with half the team and nothing really changed other than I'm now full-time and out of grad school."

Taking on the new role, she has a few goals that she wants to accomplish in the upcoming season.

"I want to be open minded. Whether I've learned or not learned, I want to come out of this job knowing that Sean taught me something and that I can always ask questions," MacFarland said. "With volleyball, I see people get into the habit of running the same system or get relaxed in things, and I just want to learn every type of way I can."

Jenny Fuller decided to go for the head coach position at NSU after former head coach Lacy Prejean resigned after one season. Fuller said the new advancements in the program also contributed to her interest in becoming the new head coach.

"There are a lot of amazing things going on here with the new field, the lights, camera system, so I saw a lot of potential here to rebuild the program," Fuller said. "I'm coming from a Division II program, so I thought it would be a good opportunity to get into Division I. It also seemed like a good fit for my family as well, so we're excited to be here."

Prior to coaching, Fuller earned her associate degree in arts and business from McLennan Community College and a bachelor of science in education and masters of science in sports management from Baylor State University in Waco, Texas.

While playing for the Highlanders, she was named National Fastpitch Coaches Association First Team All-American and National Junior College Athletic Association Second Team All-American during her two seasons, then was named Region V Pitcher of the Year. All of these honors earned in her sophomore season. She then returned later to coach at her junior college alma mater, where she coached two first team all-conference pitchers and six other all-conference players. At Baylor, she was top 10 for single-

season winning percentage with an 11-3 record during 2008. Fuller also received the second highest career-winning percentage in program history at 0.813%.

Fuller was named the winner of the 2024 Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association Coach of the Year award, making her the thirteenth head softball coach in the NSU program's history.

During the nine seasons Fuller has been a collegiate head coach, she has produced a 249-171 (0.593) record and has had various stops at Cardinal Stritch University, Northern State

Courtesy of NSU Athletics. Jenny Fuller was named head coach for the 2024-2025 softball season.



University, Pittsburg State University, both her alma maters and many other institutions. She shared her goals and expectations of the coaching staff this season while she makes her presence known at NSU.

"It is somewhat of a rebuild; we have a very young team. I think the goals are eventually to build the program back to its championship caliber," Fuller said. "That goes into my coaching style and we're going to be a very positive coaching staff. We like to give our players a fun environment. Now we can do that but not at the expense of practicing hard with intent."

With this new role, Fuller is most excited about building a relationship with the team.

"I'm ready to meet the players and build those relationships, because I think that's my strong point as a coach," Fuller said. "I want to get to know the community, players and fans. I think that's the key to success."

The hiring of both Fuller and MacFarland bring new perspectives to their athletic programs as they build on their new teams.

# NSU Lady Demons soccer prepares for the upcoming season

BY CHRISTIAN ROBINSON

The Northwestern State University of Louisiana women's soccer team looks to improve from its previous 6-10-3 record by putting in offseason work and fundraising for the 2024-2025 season.

Just before the start of the season, four of the Lady Demons were named preseason All-Southland Conference, including twin sisters Jessica and Taylor Spitzer, Caroline Hillard and Emily Senatore.

Jessica Spitzer, junior defender, explained how being recognized is very humbling and how her sister drives her to be better at the game.

"It's a good feeling because I know Taylor made All-First team her freshman or sophomore year, and I didn't," Jessica Spitzer said.

She went on to explain the pressure that comes with the title.

"Eyes are on you to make sure that you earned the vote and selection and to let it not go to waste," Jessica Spitzer said. "It can also be a motivator to improve, and have that extra push in every game on top of wanting to win."

When prepping for the soccer season, players must self-access and come up with goals they have for the team, aside from just personal goals.

"So a goal for the team is definitely on attacking and scoring more goals and winning a set amount of games on the road. Scoring will definitely help achieve that in winning our conference," Jessica Spitzer said.

Caroline Hillard, senior defender, talked about how intense the offseason workouts were.

"It's been difficult, but we definitely have been working hard," Hillard said.

Aside from the intensity of the offseason, the training allowed them to reflect and want more for the upcoming season. "It's been really difficult for everyone, but we can't wait for the season to kick off," Emily Senatore, sophomore midfielder, said.

Besides the training and new acquired titles, the team hosted a fundraiser to help purchase new uniforms and equipment.

Taylor Spitzer, junior forward, explained the process the team went through to get new upgrades to their sport's wardrobe.

"For the fundraiser, each player had to write 30 letters asking for support. We sent it to friends, family and NSU students and it was successful since we got new uniforms and new gear," Taylor Spitzer said.

With two games gone by, the Lady Demons sit at a 0-2 record after playing the top two power schools. The team lost 0-3 to Southern Methodist University on Aug. 15 and were also defeated by Mississippi State University 0-4 on Aug. 18 on the road.

"When you're playing top schools, it definitely can affect your mindset. I feel like we let them dictate our game and our pace," Jessica Spitzer said. "Instead of us playing at our pace, we need to work on playing at our rhythm."

While the team suffered two losses to the Mustangs and Lady Bulldogs early in the season, the players took on a positive perspective after both the games.

"One thing we can take away from these games is that our defense has improved," Jessica Spitzer said. "I know in the last game, Mississippi had to put their starters back in because we gained the momentum. When power schools do that, it's a very good sign we're making progress."

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## Introducing Zines

Argus is creating a new series! Each month, a mini magazine will be released that corresponds with the larger theme for the magazine. If you are interested in submitting, follow our social media theme announcements and send your submission to [argusnsu@gmail.com](mailto:argusnsu@gmail.com). The zines will be available for students to take on our bulletin board in Kyser as well as tabling events. Only a limited amount will be made, so make sure to keep up with our releases!

Questions? Email [argusnsu@gmail.com](mailto:argusnsu@gmail.com) or stop by the Argus Office Kyser 316G.



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## Sports Schedule



- 9/1

NSU Soccer vs. Abilene Christian  
@ 12 p.m.
- 9/3

NSU Volleyball vs. Jackson State  
@ 6 p.m.
- 9/6

NSU Soccer vs. Jackson State  
@ 6 p.m.
- 9/7

NSU Football vs Prairie View A&M  
@ 6 p.m.

Photo by Chris Reich, NSU Photographic Services

730 University Parkway

## SIGMA NU RUSH EVENTS

AUG 26TH

Basketball and Burgers  
@SNU house 5:00pm

AUG 27TH

Taco Tuesday  
@SNU house 6:00 pm

AUG 28TH

Football At the Presidents Field  
@Presidents Field 6:00 pm

AUG 29TH

ESPN Game Night  
@SNU house 6:00 pm

AUG 30TH

Q & A  
@SNU house 6:00 pm

SEP 3RD

Golf Tournament  
@Northwestern Hills 5:00pm



## Letter from the Editor: My last year leading The Current Sauce

BY LIA PORTILLO

**T**hink about the moment that made you who you are. You know, the phrase or person that made you work toward something that was bigger than yourself. Maybe, it was something like “you got this,” or “everything will be fine.” Maybe, you just needed to think about all the decisions and moments that led you to the point where you are now.

For me, the phrase that shaped me into the person that I am today was “maybe one day you can be Editor-in-Chief.”

I laughed a little. I thought: I still can’t even understand English grammar, how am I supposed to lead a newspaper?

But the more I became involved in The Current Sauce, the more I wanted to do more. I took the phrase and let it guide me. It became my goal to be the editor and to see where I could take the organization.

The past year I’ve had the honor to represent and lead The Current Sauce. We are the official student newspaper for Northwestern State University of Louisiana, and for those who don’t know, this is my second year as Editor-in-Chief.

If you would have asked 18-year-old Lia if she thought she’d be a leader, she would have looked at you crazy.

**I will be forever grateful to those members for making my first year as editor better than I could have imagined.**

Never in a million years would I have imagined myself as the editor, much less to be able to do it for two years.

This organization has done so much for me that saying, “thank you,” feels like a severe understatement. It taught me how to write, report, connect, build contacts and a home at NSU.

Being the editor of The Current Sauce has been a dream – sometimes stressful – but a dream.

I had the most amazing staff last year that made my first year as editor very successful. Because of those members, we won awards, increased our social media following on campus, started a newsletter, increased the number of editions we publish and created a whole new section on our website. They listened to me with every crazy or spur-of-the-moment idea I had and went along with it. I will be forever grateful to those members for making my first year as editor better than I could have imagined.

Of course, the year wasn’t perfect. We had missed deadlines, we didn’t write a lot of breaking news, had to move events around, we didn’t take all the photos we wanted, occasional spelling errors or simply didn’t get to write all the stories we wanted and should have. I’m not a perfect leader, and I’m still trying

to better myself, so the newspaper continues to get better. If at any moment you noticed these shortcomings, I want to say I’m sorry. I take all the responsibility, but unlike other editors I have a chance to make it better. Feel free to reach out to me by email (lportillo@cantata317865@nsula.edu) or come by my office in Kyser Hall room 227 and let me know what you’d like to see in the paper. I’d love to meet and listen to you.

This is the last year The Current Sauce has me. Writing that previous sentence was very emotional. I can’t imagine not being able to be a part of this organization anymore after next spring, and as corny as it sounds The Current Sauce is who I am.

Granted, by next semester I’ll probably be

This year I hope to bring more stories to The Current Sauce. I want to improve our look, increase our readership, include more advertisements and involve more submitted pieces into the newspaper. This newspaper is the platform for students and including as many different voices as we can is a goal I will prioritize this year.

But I can’t do it without your help.

Submit whatever story ideas you have or any news tips you have even if it’s anonymous. Do you want us to feature an organization? Let us know and we’d be happy to make time to write the story. Do you want to send a story? Feel free to send it to me or thecurrentsauce@gmail.com. Do you have an advertisement you’d like to share? Contact us and



**Photos by Samuel Bailey.**  
**Lia Portillo leads one of the first meetings of the Fall 2023 semester during her first year as editor.**

ready to graduate, but I truly am bonded and committed to this newspaper. (I’m fully aware I sound dramatic, just let me be dramatic for a second).

Student media has given me the opportunity to get to know the person I want to be. It has connected me to so many people around the state and allowed me to know NSU and Natchitoches more.

It has given me mentors like our Student Media Coordinator Matthew Craig – if it weren’t for him, I don’t know if I would have made it this far. Additionally, the Department of New Media, Journalism and Communication Arts has also constantly shown their support for The Current Sauce. Thank you to all the professors in the department who answered my questions or helped me with the newspaper. I’m truly lucky to have been taught by all of you.

To all the other faculty, staff, students or advisers on campus that have helped me, thank you.

we can discuss pricing for those in the Natchitoches community or we’ll share it for free if you’re a Recognized Student Organization. I want The Current Sauce to be your trusted news source. So, help me make you a part of our paper.

This is my last year as your editor, and I know whoever comes next will be even better than me.

For now, I want to make sure I get to prioritize you, the reader, before I leave. To my team members this fall and to those in the spring, I’m so excited to work with all of you and to make this my best year yet. I apologize in advance if I stress you out – I stress myself out – but your work and dedication will not go unnoticed.

Thank you for reading and I hope you continue to read our stories.

Here’s to my last year leading The Current Sauce.



# PHOTO GALLERY

Photos by Lalaina Wood. No Time for a Siesta, We're Having a Fiesta

