

# THE CURRENT SAUCE



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## SGA unanimously votes Nilah Pollard as interim treasurer

By Lia Portillo  
Editor-in-Chief



After opening nominations to seven eligible members, Nilah Pollard was voted unanimously as interim treasurer for the Student Government Association at Northwestern State University of Louisiana.

On Monday, SGA heard nominations to fill the treasurer vacancy and decided through an in-house vote. Lyndsay Brown, a senator and academic affairs commissioner for SGA, nominated Pollard because of her commitment to SGA.

“Not only have I seen Sen. Pollard be so very dedicated to SGA, but according to our eligibility law she was one of the ones that stepped up and had a true vision for her plans of being treasurer,” Brown said. “So I felt that it was only correct to nominate her and give her the opportunity to show her leadership skills.”

Although senators Christian James and Ja’Naya Woodard were also nominated, both declined due to scheduling conflicts. As SGA treasurer, the person in the position must attend meetings for the Organizational Relief Fund to fulfill this role.

Other treasurer duties include updating SGA on the expenditure and the funds in the speaker budget, Hannah Davis said.

“As the treasurer of SGA, you deal with all the internal funds and you work

alongside our adviser Mary-Katherine Maggio who does all of our fiscal affairs,” Davis, vice president for SGA, said.

During her nomination speech, Pollard addressed her intent to fill the position. “It feels so unreal to say that I have been a part of SGA since my freshman year, which has given me the distinct privilege to witness its growth to what it is today,” Pollard said. “If elected to serve as your interim treasurer, I will first be proactive in ensuring that SGA funds are allocated appropriately and effectively to meet our organization’s needs.”

Pollard shared her ideas of educating Recognized Student Organizations on the ORF grants and reaching out to local speakers to support speakers in the area and cut costs.

“The first step is educating ourselves on local speakers within the Ark-La-Tex region,” Pollard said. “By identifying experts based on the topics we need, we can make informed decisions that maximize resources, reducing reliance on costly speakers from out of state while supporting our local community.”

Pollard is also working with Sen. Cecilia Warren on a project in collaboration with the Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts to design two community mailboxes for students to write messages to express their opinions. “We are working with CAPA to design and con-

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struct these mailboxes, ensuring they are both functional and engaging,” she said.

By assuming the role of interim treasurer, Pollard becomes part of SGA’s cabinet and leaves her previous position as senator-at-large and a vacancy in the senate.

“Although it was unexpected, I am grateful to serve SGA and the student body in this capacity. I am committed to providing service rooted in humility, integrity

and excellence, always realizing that service is a privilege, especially service to the NSU community,” she said.

At SGA’s meeting, Woodard also announced a vacancy for a senator in the College of Education and Human Development. Interested students can reach out to any SGA member. To view the full minutes of the meeting check out SGA’s profile on Purple Portal.



Submitted photo. Nilah Pollard was unanimously voted by SGA senators as the student body interim treasurer.



# StoryBrew Coffee Cafe showcases community talent monthly through its Open Mic Nights

By Isabel Juarez Rubio  
Arts and Living Editor

As coffee orders are being shouted, people rush to find a seat and wait for the event to begin. StoryBrew Coffee Cafe's Open Mic Night is hosted once every month to showcase the talented poets, singers, musicians and performers in the community.

From book excerpts to poetry readings and guitarists to singers, this is a night for the community to gather with a warm cup of coffee and enjoy the performances.

On Feb. 13, the second Open Mic Night of the year featured Julie Kane, an American poet and scholar.

Kane read some pieces of her new book titled "Naked Ladies."

"This is my sixth book of poetry. It's new and selected, which means that it selects some of the best poems from my five previous books, and then it's got a section of new poems at the end," Kane said.

Her inspiration behind the name "Naked Ladies" is the nickname given to the Spider Lily flower. She explained that she was also influenced by American wom-

en confessional poets like Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton.

"I think of them as naked ladies because they were never afraid to really tell you about their lives, even the embarrassing things. So in that sense, I think of them as naked, nakedly honest," Kane said.

Her new book can be found online along with some of her past work.

Along with poetry, songs were also performed that night. A student from Northwestern State University of Louisiana sang one of her very own songs "Family Dollar" which caused the audience to have a chuckle and be delighted by her musical talent.

Phillip Voorhees, a freshman vocal performance major, shared that StoryBrew Coffee Cafe was the first business to offer him an opportunity to promote his song. His artist name is PJ Voorhees.

"The song 'Family Dollar' is one I wrote two years ago. I was traveling around the United States and I noticed there were so many Family Dollars and thought, well there's some poor souls that have to work there," Voorhees said. "And so

I came up with the story in my head about somebody who's working at the Family Dollar because it's just the best option and they needed some money to pay for college."

This is a song that is relatable to every college student struggling to pay for college. If you want to check it out click here.

Closing off the night was Mary Striegel, the organizer of the Open Mic Nights and added that this was one of the biggest nights they've had since they started three years ago.

Striegel's poem "This Isn't a Pretty Poem" is one of her protest pieces.

"Times are changing and I'm not sure that people are going to get what they thought they were going to get. We have government leaders that are not always what they appear to be," Stiegel said.

Attending Open Mic Nights can allow you to forget about the outside world for a moment with your favorite brew and listen to many talented individuals. Stay up-to-date on events by following StoryBrew's Facebook and Instagram profiles.



Photo by Isabel Juarez Rubio.  
Julie Kane reads from her new book "Naked Ladies."

## The Current Sauce Staff

The Current Sauce is the official student-run newspaper for Northwestern State University. The content and stories within the paper may not necessarily reflect the views of administration, faculty and staff.

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## DOSE OF SAUCE Newsletter Sign up

Join 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!





# NSU cheer earns back-to-back national titles

By Anja Moore  
Reporter

Northwestern State University of Louisiana's cheer team made the podium in January at the Cheerleaders Association College Nationals. The team traveled to Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida and performed before judges in the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex competing with universities nationwide.

The cheer team placed higher than ever before in several of their routines. The team finished second place in Coed Game Day and fifth place in Traditional in Division 1.

The team was also named the University World Cup Cheerleading Champions for the third year in a row, while obtaining the highest ranking Game Day routine in the UWCC.

Honor Camus, senior sports and recreation major, explained that the team performed their game day routine with no mistakes and gave the best performance they have ever done for the traditional division.

Camus shared that her favorite part of nationals was competing in Game Day finals. The team went into finals in third place.

"There's something about being the underdog that makes our team fight that

much harder, and I had so much fun on the mat," Camus said. "The team was feeling so confident and pumped up, and that really made the difference this year."

Kelsei Spears, sophomore health and exercise science major and one of the flyer's for the cheer team, is excited about the team's growth from learning the routines to performing them at nationals.

"Everything was like night and day," Spears said. "The team was so focused and confident throughout the whole time of us being there."

Jorian Dodd, skills coach for the cheer team, expressed pride for the team's ability to support each other in his last year as an athlete, especially with several new members.

"A lot of the rookies have never even competed before," Dodd said. "So stepping up for the team was a lot of responsibility, and they were able to go out and execute."

While the national competition is over, NSU cheer continues to bring school spirit to the remaining basketball games of the season and prepares for next year's recruitment. For more information regarding the team and their upcoming events, visit this link.



Submitted by Kelsei Spears. NSU Cheer at Universal Cheerleaders Association Nationals.



Submitted by Kelsei Spears. The team finished second place in Coed Game Day and fifth place in Traditional in Division 1.

# Ben Kaszeta named head volleyball coach for the Lady Demons



Photo by Tyra Jones. Ben Kaszeta has 30 years of coaching experience.

By Heidi Gauthier  
Reporter

New coaching transitions are in action for Northwestern State University of Louisiana's volleyball program. Ben Kaszeta accepted the role of head coach for the Lady Demons Volleyball team in January 2025.

Athletic Director Kevin Bostian hired Kaszeta because he was looking for a coach with ties to South Louisiana, a region that produces volleyball talent. With prior experience working in both Lafayette and Lake Charles, Bostian is confident that Kaszeta can recruit skilled players from South Louisiana.

"The vision for all of the athletic programs at NSU is to place in the top third of each program's conference. I believe that Coach Kaszeta can take the volleyball team there," Bostian said.

Bostian shared that Kaszeta was enthusiastic about the position throughout the whole process and was recommended to the Athletics Department by successful individuals in the coaching field.

After 30 years of coaching experience, Kaszeta explained that he became the coach he is today by learning from different mentors and coaches throughout his career. He has worked at the high school, collegiate and club levels as an assistant coach, trainer and head coach.

Kaszeta traveled to numerous states to coach for institutions like Lamar University, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Mott Community College, Jacksonville State University, McNeese State University and the Cajun Elite Club.

He explained that the team is currently in an assessing phase. He is using this time to analyze his players' skills and personalities. This phase is essential in the transitional phase of the program.

"Transition points are hard. Right now the team has to be open to change and open to something new," Kaszeta said.

As head coach, Kaszeta is devoted to creating an environment where hard work, honesty and grit – the core values of his volleyball programs – are deeply rooted

in his athletes. By instilling these values in the Lady Demons, he hopes to foster a stronger team mentally and physically.

Cara MacFarland, second-year assistant coach and former graduate assistant, is excited about the new coaching transition and the energy Kaszeta brings to the court.

"The team has responded positively to the coaching change. Kaszeta has done a great job of leadership so far and putting in the extra effort with the team. Making the girls feel wanted and appreciated," MacFarland said.

MacFarland discussed that as head and assistant coach they challenge each other every day because of the differences and similarities they have, but ultimately their partnership makes a stronger team.

As Kaszeta takes on the role of head coach with the support of players, coaches and athletic faculty, the Lady Demons look forward to the 2025 season that starts in the fall.



Photo by Tyra Jones. New volleyball head coach Ben Kaszeta is excited to coach the Lady Demons this year.



## NSU students weigh in on Valentine's Day expectations

By Nina Ovalle  
Viewpoints Editor



**Ty Gary**  
Junior  
Hospitality Management and Tourism



**Katriane Creel**  
Senior  
Hospitality Management and Tourism



**Nhan Ngo**  
Junior  
Hospitality Management and Tourism



**Dominic Saldivar**  
Junior  
Music Education

### Question: Do you think Valentine's Day is materialistic or adorable?

**Dominic:** "I think it's adorable and romantic. The idea of gifting each other gifts and knowing what your partner likes, it's something special that can really bond you together. It shows how much you listen to them and to their wants and interests."

**Katriane:** "I think it's materialistic because if my man gets me some flowers and he's like 'Happy Valentine's,' I'd be like 'Thank you,' but is he doing it just because he was told to and that's a societal expectation? I feel like it would be more meaningful if my man just showed up and gave me flowers - that would mean way more to me - I just kind of expect him to be a good boyfriend no matter what day it is."

**Ty:** "Valentine's Day can be very materialistic, but if not, there's still, like, romantic gestures- just out with your significant other, I think it's a good day to just be with somebody- and if you're single then you're just kind of bummed about it."

**Nahn:** "I think it's more romantic, but it can be materialistic because if your love language is gift giving, then yes it can be materialistic, but it's always going to be more on the romantic side because you have to like that person in order to give them that stuff."

### Question: If you're in a relationship, do you have to ask your partner to be your Valentine?

**Dominic:** "You don't have to but I think

it's kind of cute to ask them. I mean the obvious answer is like yeah obviously, but it reinvigorates the love in the relationship and makes it a little more cute-sy. Even though sometimes it may feel less exciting, I think a day like Valentine's Day can make that a lot more fun."

**Katriane:** "I think that's cute, but I also feel like that's a juvenile thing. I feel like that's something you have in high school relationships and you're trying to ask someone to go out on Valentine's Day with you. I feel like with more mature relationships, you're with each other so much, that what's the point of asking because who else are you gonna go out with?"

### Question: Do you think the expectations and/or obligations associated with Valentine's Day take away the romance?

**Ty:** "It doesn't matter if the obligation is there or not, the idea of something being romantic doesn't stem from the idea of someone having an obligation to do it, because it's romantic regardless because he's doing it for you."

### Question: If the materialistic aspect of Valentine's weren't there, would it still serve as a romantic holiday?

**Nahn:** "I don't think people have to necessarily own up to that standard where they have to go all out for Valentine's Day, even though it's like a romantic holiday. Different couples may either go all out or have another form of romance going on, like they could be intimate instead of going all out and just focus on the intimacy."

## Valentine's Day: Should we love or hate this materialistically adorable holiday?

By Nina Ovalle  
Viewpoints Editor

Valentine's Day, the day of love and romance or corporate America's favorite day of gaslighting the people? (i.e. materialism at its finest).

Personally, I find that as we follow the evolution of Valentine's Day through history, it only became more commercialized and materialistic as time and people did.

According to Britannica, Valentine's Day originated from the Roman festival of Lupercalia, which celebrated the coming of spring and included fertility rites and the pairing off of women with men by lottery. At the end of the fifth century, the celebration of Lupercalia was forbidden by Pope Gelasius and was replaced with a holiday of Christian influence: St. Valentine's Day.

However, Valentine's Day was not celebrated in a romantic context until the 14th century when literature and poetry began to describe the holiday romantically throughout the 15th century.

Then, with the rise of industrialization and mass production in the 19th century, it was only natural that Valentine's Day fell prey to the power of corporations. By the 20th century, companies like Hallmark and Russel Stover began profiting off mass-produced Valentine's Day cards and chocolates that ultimately turned the holiday into the consumer-driven occasion we know and love today.

As corporations began to grow in what was offered for the holiday, more expensive flowers or larger teddy bears, the expectation of what to give grew with it. Therefore, continually pushing the idea that products symbolize love and the more money spent on a gift, the more meaningful the gesture.

This is how expectations and high standards for Valentine's Day arose. This is how the holiday became commercialized and materialistic. But I ask, is it materialistic to fall prey to the expectations set out of your control?

While it is undoubtedly materialistic in the sense of buying and consuming mass amounts of product, does this take out any romance behind Valentine's Day gestures?

I'd argue that Valentine's Day has only become a deeply commercialized day because we are deeply commercialized people. And deeply commercialized people can still feel and express love, can they not? Just because I like a good shopping spree and receiving some expensive gifts can I not accept romance? Can I not show romance? See how silly that sounds?

Therefore, Valentine's Day can not be only one: materialistic or romantic. As most things are, it is to the eye of the beholder.

So when celebrating Valentine's Day with a significant other, it is important that you understand the expectations of your partner rather than that of corporate America and the standards set around you.

In the end, it is someone's choice to celebrate Valentine's Day with their significant other. Therefore, to make the choice to buy or do anything is romantic in itself.



Photo by Madelyn Murphy.  
Nina Ovalle finds Valentine's Day to be both materialistic and romantic.



# Photo Gallery

**UPG**  
**Galentine's**

Photos by Katie Grace Rion

