



# THE REAL NEWS

## Louisiana

"A Community With a Voice Shall Be Heard" ®

**Publisher: Latorria Freeman**

### **Natchitoches Community Improvement Foundation**

"Footsteps in the Community"

The Natchitoches Community Improvement Foundation (NCIF) manages a \$600,000 settlement from Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, originally allocated to the Sibley Lake Community Fund, to support youth recreation, education, and scholarships in Natchitoches. As mandated by the Tenth Judicial District Court, the NCIF invests and distributes these funds as grants and scholarships for education, housing, recreation, and economic development.

## MISSION

- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
- RECREATION
- EDUCATION
- GRANT



Since 2003, the NCIF has faced challenges with public dissatisfaction over ineffective fund distribution, resulting in complaints and lawsuits. A pivotal lawsuit on October 2, 2023, enforced term limits, revitalizing the NCIF's mission under the motto "Footprints in the Community."

We spoke with some of the volunteer board members, including Chairman Harold Bayonne, Gwendolyn Rachal, Linda Frankline, Deacon Ernest Sawyer, and Secretary Earnestine Armstrong, who are dedicated to impactful community service, particularly through programs like the Steam Explorers Summer Camp.

***Continued next page...***



Pictured from left to right: Jaminson Davis, Linda Franklin, Gwendolyn Rachal, Earnestine Armstrong, Ernest Sawyer, Debra Roque, and Harold Bayonne

*Not all members were present...*





## Natchitoches Community Improvement Foundation “Footsteps in the Community”

Volunteer Jaminson Davis emphasizes guiding youth away from drugs and alcohol. He states that helping the kids also helps him. Bayonne shares that we will see incredible goodwill and charity. The plans are to make big footprints in the community for years and years. Board members emphasized that kids are our future. The NCIF now operates transparently, requiring written requests for assistance, which are reviewed and voted on by the board. The board is enthusiastic about future events and committed to delivering significant community benefits. For assistance, submit written requests to the NCIF for board consideration.

## NCIF Board Members

- Harold Bayonne, Chairman
- Jerry Walters, Vice Chairman
- Earnestine Armstrong, Secretary
- Linda Franklin, Recording Secretary
- Marvin Blake Jr., Treasurer
- Rene Porter, Chairman of the Governance Committee
- Kevin Stafford, Board Member
- Debra Roque, Board Member
- Ernest Sawyer, Board Member
- Gwendolyn Rachal, Board Member
- Brenda Milner, Board Member
- Evette Williams, Board Member

## Participating Members

- Takesha Barnum
- Tan’Keia Palmer
- Devin White



Pictured from left to right: Harold Bayonne, Chairman of the Board & Dr. Jerry Walters, Sr. Vice Chairman



Secretary Earnestine Armstrong



Pictured from left to right: Recording secretary Linda Franklin, Board member Gwendolyn Rachal, and Board member Ernest Sawyer



Pictured from left to right: Volunteer Jaminson Davis, Board member Debra Roque, Chairman of the board, Harold Bayonne, and Board member Ernest Sawyer



Volunteer Jaminson Davis (Thump)



## Natchitoches Community Improvement Foundation (NCIF) in action. “Footsteps in the Community”



NCIF was proud to donate to the LA Thunder traveling basketball team.



NCIF spearheaded efforts for the Steam Explorers Summer Camp



NCIF proudly sponsored the Natural Talent Basketball Development Team



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## Proud to be Purple!

*NSU encourages friends and supporters to show their NSU colors*

**NATCHITOCHES** – The Northwestern State University family is proud to be purple and invites you to join the Proud to be Purple movement sweeping the community.

“This initiative is all about boosting school spirit and strengthening community partnerships through visual displays of support for NSU,” said Amy Lee, director of Marketing and Branding. “Our goal is to turn Natchitoches and beyond purple and celebrate our Demon pride in a way that engages students, faculty, alumni, and the greater community.”

NSU has developed a variety of branded flags, window decals, yard signs, and more that will be distributed to local businesses. Students, student-athletes and volunteers will distribute the items Wednesday, July 30 and hold giveaways through social media.

To sign up and view a message from NSU President James Genovese, visit [www.nsu.la/purple](http://www.nsu.la/purple).

Northwestern State Move-In Day is Saturday, Aug. 16, with classes starting Monday, Aug. 18. Administrators hope to see the city of Natchitoches decked out in purple to welcome students and their families back to Natchitoches for the semester.

Information on Northwestern State is available at [www.nsula.edu](http://www.nsula.edu). Information on NSU Athletics is available at <https://nsudemons.com/>.





# HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS 2025

## Secretary of State's Office Hurricane Season Checklist

- ✓ Geaux Vote emergency voting units
- ✓ Backup power for polling stations
- ✓ Alternate polling locations on standby
- ✓ Review records preservation practices
- ✓ Coordinate contingency plans with parish Registrar of Voters Offices



## Household Hurricane Season Checklist

- ✓ 3 day supply of non-perishable food + water per person
- ✓ Battery operated radio, flashlights, and extra batteries
- ✓ Evacuation route
- ✓ First aid kit + medications
- ✓ Important documents stored in a dry, protected place
- ✓ Multiple methods of receiving emergency notifications



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## Natchitoches Native Willie Robinson Sworn in as Ascension Parish School Board Member

Natchitoches native Willie Robinson was recently elected as the District 2 School Board Member in Ascension Parish, taking office after the Oath of Office was administered by Ascension Parish Clerk of Court Bridget Hanna. Robinson's election brings a strong commitment to education and community unity as the new voice for District 2. He stated, "This means everything. Every day, I want to be a blessing to others. That is how I will cast my vote on the Ascension Parish School Board, thinking about the teachers, the staff, the students, and the community. Together, we are better!" Robinson aims to support educators, students, and staff by focusing on collaboration to address challenges like classroom resources and student opportunities. The Ascension Parish School Board anticipates Robinson's perspective as it navigates educational priorities. Community members are encouraged to engage with Robinson at upcoming board meetings and share input on local schools. More information is available on the Ascension Parish Schools website.



**CHARGED WITH A CRIMINAL OFFENSE?  
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[assistant@howardcondaylaw.com](mailto:assistant@howardcondaylaw.com)



## BOM Gives Back

### NATCHITOCHES:



#### Congratulations Reagan Cunningham

BOM Bank is pleased to congratulate Reagan Cunningham on his promotion to Loan Participation Specialist! Reagan graduated from the University of Louisiana at Monroe with a degree in Business Administration, focusing on entrepreneurship, with a minor in Management. He also graduated from LA Tech's banking school. In his free time, Reagan enjoys playing golf as much as he can. He has been with BOM for 3 years, where he previously worked as a Credit Analyst. Reagan stated, "I'm grateful to be part of a team filled with hardworking and dedicated individuals who make BOM such a great place to grow and serve every day. I am truly honored and grateful for this new opportunity."

Congratulations, Reagan.



**BOM**

### RAPIDES:

BOM Bank was proud to sponsor the Cruising for Kindness Car Show, a fantastic event with a meaningful mission! The funds raised will go toward supporting underprivileged children in the local community, helping to make a lasting difference in their lives. Pictured: BOM's Titan Marler and Quaneshia Poul.



### SABINE:

BOM Bank was proud to support MidSouth Forestry at their Grand Opening!

Pictured are BOM's Linda Guay, General Manager Patrick Fluitt, Owner Jon Bierbaum, and BOM's Lance Rivers.



### CADD0/BOSSIER:

BOM is a proud supporter of the Houghton Lady Bucs softball program. Pictured left to right: Summer Keith and BOM's Melinda Williams.

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\*Annual Percentage Yield

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## Enrollment open for NSU Music Academy

**NATCHITOCHES** — The NSU Music Academy is accepting students for the Fall 2025 semester.

The NSU Music Academy provides private lessons in piano, guitar, percussion, and voice for students ages six and up on the campus of Northwestern State University. Directed by NSU faculty Dr. Francis Yang and Dr. John Price, the academy features dedicated instructors who are current graduate and undergraduate music students at Northwestern.

Last spring, students showcased their progress in an end-of-semester recital held in Magale Recital Hall. Students also participated in the annual NSU Music Festival, performing for adjudicators and earning spots in an honors recital. This fall, students will have opportunities to perform in an ensemble concert and a Christmas recital.

Academy students have taken part in the National Federation of Music Clubs Festival, the Central Music Teachers' Association Sonatina Festival, and the Louisiana Music Teachers Association Upper Elementary Auditions.

Fall lessons start Monday, Aug. 25. To enroll or learn more, visit <https://www.nsula.edu/musicacademy/>



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## Scenes from the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Coach De's Closet Back to School Bash

Photo Credits: Erick Wilson, RTSS Photography





## Scenes from the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Coach De's Closet Back to School Bash

Photo Credits: Erick Wilson, RTSS Photography





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SCAN ME





## Scenes from the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Coach De's Closet Back to School Bash

Photo Credits: Erick Wilson, RTSS Photography



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SCAN ME



## Winners Announced for 17th Annual NSU Louisiana High School Essay Contest

By: Dr. Shane Rasmussen

NATCHITOCHES – Lalani Williams of Southside High School in Youngsville has been named the first-place winner of the 2025 Northwestern State University Louisiana High School Essay Contest. Williams won the honor for her play “Bayou Secrets.” Ashlyn Underwood of West Monroe High School won second place for her performance of “Cabaret,” and Liss Gabriella Navarro Hernandez of Chalmette High School won third place for her play “The Haunting.” Two students received Honorable Mention: Ellise Bryant of C.E. Byrd High School for her play “Ghosts” and E’Mantyi Mosby of Airline High School for her essay “Desire’s Baleful Cradle: A Streetcar Named Desire.”

Writing on the 2025 contest theme “Louisiana Dramas,” entrants wrote a literary analysis addressing a play or dramatic musical, performed a performance of a song from a dramatic musical or a monologue from a play, or wrote a short one act play set in Louisiana.

“It’s a privilege to be able to spend time with work by young writers from all over the state each year,” said Dr. Rebecca Macijeski, associate professor of English and coordinator of the Creative Writing Program at NSU. “The range of creativity, research, and expression is always inspiring. If I get to work with writers like these in the Creative Writing Program at NSU, I will be one lucky individual.”

Contest winners have been invited to attend the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Louisiana Studies Conference on Saturday, Sept. 13, to read their essays to the Conference participants prior to having their work published in the Louisiana Folklife Journal, which is published by the Louisiana Folklife Center. The Louisiana Studies Conference will be held on NSU’s Natchitoches campus. This year’s conference theme is “Louisiana Dramas.” Attendance at the conference is free and open to the public.

The first, second, and third prize winners will each receive a \$200 per-semester NSU scholarship with a value up to \$1,600 for four years. All of the contest winners will receive a cash prize in honor of their accomplishment. The essay contest is open to all Louisiana students in grades 9–12, regardless of the type of school institution, including students in all types of private educational environments, as well as home-schooled students.

This year’s essay contest judges were Jason Church, chief of Technical Services at the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training; Daniel Gordy, assistant professor of criminal justice and English at NSU; Shea Montgomery, instructor of English at NSU; Dr. Shane Rasmussen, director of the Louisiana Folklife Center, and professor of English at NSU; and Macijeski.

The contest was sponsored by the Louisiana Folklife Center, the Department of English, Languages and Cultural Studies, the Office of Financial Aid and the Office of Recruiting at NSU. The contest is annual, with a new theme to be announced in early Spring 2026.

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## August 11th City Council Agenda

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Any Citizen that wishes to observe the City Council meeting live may do so at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6SIW7rZvyKYWd8HpNw2fhg>

Recordings for all city meeting videos will be posted to the City's website. To watch the video, the user can subscribe to the City's YouTube Channel @CityofNatchitoches LA or visit the city's website link <https://www.natchitochesla.gov/content/meeting-videos>

Natchitoches City Council will have a pre-council meeting beginning at 5:00 p.m. and ending at 5:30 p.m. to discuss non-agenda items. The City Council meeting will begin promptly at 5:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday of each month and will be reserved to only items on the Agenda. The public is invited to both the pre-council meetings and council meetings with the understanding that items not on the agenda will not be discussed at the scheduled council meetings, but the public is welcome to discuss any topic at the pre-council meetings. The City Council Meetings are held at the Natchitoches City Council Chambers located at 716 Second Street, Natchitoches, Louisiana.

### NATCHITOCHES CITY COUNCIL MEETING August 11, 2025 5:30 P.M. A G E N D A

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **INVOCATION**
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
4. **READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JULY 28, 2025.**
5. **SPECIAL GUEST:** Blaine McCorkle, NSU Head Football Coach
6. **SPECIAL RECOGNITION:** LMA Honorable Mention for Improvements to Richardson Park
7. **MAYORAL UPDATE:** Power Contract with LEAP

8. **ORDINANCES - FINAL:**  
**#027 Harrington** Ordinance Authorizing The Mayor Of The City Of Natchitoches To Award The Bid For Equipment Replacement, **Sludge Thickner No.1**, City Of Natchitoches Wastewater Treatment Plant (**Bid No. 0674**)

9. **ORDINANCES - INTRODUCTION:**  
**#028 Smith** Ordinance Authorizing The Mayor Of The City Of Natchitoches, Louisiana, To Enter Into A Memorandum Of Understanding With The Natchitoches Community Alliance Foundation D/B/A Natchitoches Economic Development Alliance (**NEDA**), Which Said Memorandum Provides For Services To Be Provided By The Natchitoches Economic Development Alliance., Providing For A One Year Term, Providing For Advertising, Further Providing For Severability, And

Further Providing For A Repealer And Effective Date Of Ordinance.

- #029 Harrington** Ordinance Authorizing And Approving **Power Supply Agreements** For Sale Of Power And Energy Between The City Of Natchitoches, Louisiana And Certain Contract Service Customers

10. **RESOLUTIONS:**  
**#064 Petite** Resolution Designating Friday, August 29, 2025 As An Official **Holiday For The Employees** Of The City Of Natchitoches For The Year 2025.

- #065 Nielsen** Resolution Approving The Execution Of The Contract By And Between The State Of Louisiana, Division Of Administration, Office Of Community Development, And The City Of Natchitoches For **The Fy '2024-2025' Local Government Assistance Program (LGAP)** For The Amount Of \$50,000.00 For Renovations To Essential Governmental Buildings And Police Protection.

- #066 Elie** Resolution Approving A **Temporary Site License** With New **Cingular Wireless** PCS And Authorizing The Mayor Of The City Of Natchitoches, Ronnie Williams, Jr., To Execute Same On Behalf Of The City Of Natchitoches, Louisiana

11. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
  - The next scheduled City Council meeting will be **August 25, 2025.**

12. **ADJOURNMENT:**

### NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (318) 352-2772 describing the assistance that is necessary. If you wish to address the Council, please complete the "[Request to Address City Council](#)" form located on the entrance table.

## Nominations Open for 2025 Natchitoches Treasures

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR 2025 NATCHITOCHES TREASURES

NATCHITOCHES – The City of Natchitoches is now accepting nominations for the 2025 Natchitoches Treasures. This distinguished recognition honors residents of retirement age who have made a lasting impact on the community through their generosity, service, volunteerism, and community spirit.

Since 2008, Natchitoches Treasures have been celebrated annually for their dedication and contributions. The 2024 honorees were Roy Ceaser, Robert Gaillan, Harlan Guidry, Gayle Howell, Syll-Young Olson, and Jack & Brenda Ingram.

Members of the community are encouraged to nominate deserving individuals. Nomination forms are available at City Hall, 700 Second Street, or online at Natchitoches Treasures Nomination -City of Natchitoches, Louisiana. Completed nominations must be submitted to City Hall or online no later than Thursday, September 4, 2025, at 4:30 p.m.

A special ceremony honoring the 2025 Natchitoches Treasures will be held on Friday, October 10, 2025, at the Natchitoches Events Center.

For more information, please contact City Hall at 318-352-2772





### The spray ground in downtown Shreveport reopens.

After being closed for seven years due to flooding in 2018, the downtown spray ground in Shreveport, Louisiana, has reopened with a grand celebration on Tuesday, August 5, 2025.

A \$1 million renovation was undertaken to repair damage from the Red River flood and make the spray ground more resilient to future flooding. Upgrades included enhanced electrical systems, new valves, and improved lighting.

The spray ground is now open year-round from Tuesday through Sunday, 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. It is located in Riverview Park at 601 Clyde Fant Parkway, Shreveport, LA 71101. In addition to the downtown spray ground, Shreveport Public Assembly and Recreation (SPAR) operates seven other splash pads throughout the city. These splash pads are open daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. from May 1st to October 1st.

### Dollar Mania Ignites Back-to-School Excitement in Shreveport with Generous Giveaway

As the new school year approaches, Dollar Mania, led by the big-hearted owner Rami Musa, is spreading joy and support across Shreveport! In a heartwarming display of community spirit, Musa handed out 250 vouchers to kids in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Program, ensuring they step into the classroom with confidence. Each voucher gifted students with two pairs of pants and two shirts—stylish essentials to kick off the school year right! With a grateful heart, Musa thanked the Shreveport community for empowering him to make a difference, saying, “I’m so thankful for the chance to give back!” Mayor Tom Arceneaux joined the chorus of appreciation, cheering, “Mr. Musa, your commitment to our community is truly inspiring!” This vibrant initiative from Dollar Mania is lighting up young faces and strengthening the bonds of Shreveport’s tight-knit community.



Photo Credits: Dollar Mania La



## Back to School Bash “Pick Up Your books and Put Your boots on the Ground”

Hosted by: Sharron Morrow, Ralph Wilson, and Jaylon Raymond





# OPINION

## A Survivor's Review of The Documentary of Hurricane Katrina: Race Against Time

By: Ava Black



**Through My Eyes:** How Hurricane Katrina: Race Against Time Brought Me Back to the Storm. I was there when the levees broke, when the water swallowed my neighborhood in the 9th Ward, when New Orleans became a nightmare, we couldn't wake up from. Twenty years later, watching National Geographic's Hurricane Katrina: Race Against Time (2025) is like stepping back into those dark days. This documentary is just a series; it's a mirror to my memories, a raw reminder of what we endured and what we're still fighting to overcome. It's almost like reliving the chaos. The first time I saw my own story reflected in the series, my hands shook. The grainy, shaky footage—shot by folks like me, trapped in attics or wading through chest-high water—brought back the smell of the flood, the panic in my neighbors' voices. The series doesn't sugarcoat it. It shows the truth: the storm was bad, but it was the broken levees, the years of neglected wetlands, and the government's slow response that turned Katrina into a man-made disaster. As Gazettely Scott Clark put it, this is an "autopsy of American failure," and I felt that in my bones. Every frame of families climbing onto rooftops or waiting at the Superdome echoed my own scramble to survive. The series centers on people like us—folks from the 9th Ward, Tremé, and other neighborhoods that bore the worst of it. Our voices, our home videos, our pain are the heartbeat of the story.

The Hollywood Reporter called it "straightforward and passionate," and that's exactly right. It doesn't try to outdo Spike Lee's *When the Levees Broke* or uncover some grand new truth. Instead, it lets us speak; our footage tells the world what it was like when the water kept rising and help didn't come. The pain of being misunderstood hit me hardest when the series tackled the lies. Back then, the news called us "looters" for grabbing food to survive, painted us as criminals when we were just trying to live. *Race Against Time* calls that out, showing how the media twisted our story, especially for Black folks like me. The Guardian described it as a "devastatingly precise illustration" of systemic failure, and I nodded along, remembering how it felt to be dehumanized while the world watched. The series doesn't shy away from the ugly truth of systemic racism or the arrogance of leaders who cut corners on levees to save a buck. The Wall Street Journal praised its "irresistibly absorbing" editing, and I get why—every cut from our old camcorder clips to today's interviews feels like a bridge between then and now, showing how those failures still haunt us. *A Mirror and a Warning*. Watching this, I saw my own resilience reflected back. We survived. We rebuilt. But the series also reminded me how little has changed. The Peach Review called it "ground-breaking" for its raw honesty, and I agree—it's a gut punch that forces you to face the truth. Hurricanes keep coming, and the systems that failed us in 2005 aren't much better today.

**Continued next page...**





**OPINION****A Survivor's Review of The Documentary of Hurricane Katrina:  
Race Against Time**  
By: Ava Black

The series doesn't hammer you with big-name interviews or point fingers at folks like FEMA's Michael Brown. Some might wish it did, like The Hollywood Reporter noted, but for me, that's not the point. It's about us, the survivors, and our truth. Gazettely mentioned wishing for more socioeconomic context upfront, but I didn't need it—the footage alone took me right back to the moment my world changed.

**Why It Matters: Hurricane Katrina: Race Against Time** isn't just a documentary; it's a testament to our strength and a warning for the future. I hope everyone watches it. Not just to see what we went through, but to understand what's at stake now. Climate disasters are hitting harder, and the lessons we learned in New Orleans are still being ignored. This series, with its focus on our voices and our footage, makes sure we're not forgotten. It's a call to remember, to learn, to do better. For me, it's a way to honor the neighbors I lost and the community that kept me going. As I watched the final episode, I cried—not just for the past, but for the fight we're still in. This series gave me a chance to see my story, our story, told right. And that's something I'll carry with me, just like I carry Katrina.





# 2026 UPCOMING ELECTIONS

**OPEN CONGRESSIONAL  
GENERAL AND OPEN  
PRIMARY**  
**November 3, 2026**

**GENERAL ELECTION**  
**December 12, 2026**

**QUALIFYING PERIOD**  
**July 29-31, 2026**

OFFICE TITLES	YEARS OF TERM	BEGINNING OF TERM	EXPIRATION OF TERM	DISTRICTS
<b>OPEN GENERAL</b>				
U.S. Senator*	6	1/3/2027	1/3/2033	—
U.S. Representative*	2	1/3/2027	1/3/2029	6
Associate Justice, Supreme Court*	10	1/1/2027	12/31/2036	3
Public Service Commissioner*	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	5
<b>OPEN PRIMARY</b>				
				3-1-B
Court of Appeal Judges*	10	1/1/2027	12/31/2036	3-1-C
District Judges	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	10th JDC
District Attorney	6	1/11/2027	1/9/2033	10th JDC
School Board Members	4	1/1/2027	12/31/2030	all
Justices of the Peace	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	all
Constables (Justice of the Peace Courts)	6	1/1/2027	12/31/2032	all

- Candidates qualify with Secretary of State.
- All other candidates qualify with Clerk of Court.

## QUALIFYING PERIOD

# JULY 29-31, 2026



# 2026 UPCOMING ELECTIONS

## Important Dates

### QUALIFYING PERIOD

**July 29-31, 2026**

- District Judges
- District Attorney
- School Board Members
- Justice of the Peace
- Constables
- City Court Marshal
- City Court Judge- Ward 1

### ELECTION

**April 2026**

Village of Natchez

- Mayor
- Chief of Police
- Aldermen

### QUALIFYING PERIOD

**July 29-31, 2026**

Mayors of  
Natchitoches' Towns  
and Villages through  
the Parish

### CLOSED PARTY RACE

**April 2026**

- US Senator
- U.S. Representative
- Associate Justice of the Supreme Court
- Public Service Commissioner





# LAKEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL

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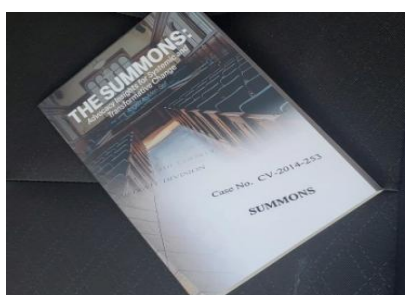
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## In 'The Summons,' Angela Allen-Bell arms a new generation for legal reform in Louisiana and beyond

By Jozef Syndicate

From [jury reform](#) to freeing [men wrongfully incarcerated](#), internationally recognized race and justice scholar **Angela Allen-Bell** has charted a path toward a justice system grounded in healing, not punishment. In her latest book, [The Summons: Advocacy Insights for Systemic and Transformative Change](#), she compiles anecdotes from more than a decade of restorative lawyering and advocacy into a practical guide for lawyers and citizens. *The Summons* is the final book of her three-part series on Louisiana's legal system. It follows, "[Under Indictment: Race, Juries and Justice in Louisiana](#) and [Diversity in the Jury Box and Beyond](#)."



While *The Summons* blends strategy and compassion, Allen-Bell also offers striking tools that ordinary citizens can use to inspire change and dismantle harmful systems. Because *The Summons* is a blueprint, calling a new generation to nonviolent legal advocacy and systemic change, it is an August must-read.

The Jozef Syndicate reached attorney Allen-Bell at the [Justice Center](#) in Hammond, Louisiana, to learn more about *The Summons*.

**How has Louisiana informed your approach to advocacy and justice, especially in [The Summons: Advocacy Insights for Systemic and Transformative Change](#)?**

*In the 2025 rankings of the most corrupt states, Louisiana claimed first place. Louisiana also has alarmingly high rates of prosecutorial misconduct and wrongful convictions, and Louisiana outpaces the civilized world in rates of incarceration.*



Angela Allen Bell

*The population of activist lawyers in Louisiana is very small. In a place like this, the skill to advocate is the distance between you and a system that harms or an official player eager to engage in structural or cultural violence. My approach to advocacy and justice is shaped by this reality.*

**Why now? What inspired you now to create a roadmap for change agents, bridging scholarship, legal reform, and real-world transformation?**

*I have achieved tremendous victories and accomplished unprecedented successes, but little of what I have done in realm of restorative and transitional justice was ever formally taught. This instructional void inspired this book. The pleas from mothers, fathers, children, siblings and loved ones whose family members have been snatched away by the state was another impetus for *The Summons*. These individuals were victimized by a player in the legal system or by one of its "processes" or "procedures." Because of an injustice suffered by one they love, they find themselves working to achieve a just outcome in a system that often repels justice. *The Summons* attempts to prepare this population for what I term the "underground railroad to justice." Stated differently, this book is also written for those who have involuntarily become advocates in and against a system that harms.*





## Chamber Breakfast Club | August 20, 2025

Join the third Chamber Breakfast Club (CBC) meeting of 2025 on Wednesday, August 20th!

This month, we're diving into NIL (Name, Image, and Likeness) opportunities and how local businesses can partner with Northwestern State University student athletes to elevate both their brand and our community.

### Here's why you should attend:

- **Learn About NIL Sponsorships** - Understand what NIL is, how it works, and how your business, large or small, can legally and ethically work with student athletes.
- **Build Strategic Partnerships** - Hear real-life examples of businesses successfully using NIL deals to connect with local audiences and support student success.
- **Reach New Audiences** - Explore how tapping into the influence of student athletes can help you promote your products or services in new, engaging ways.
- **Strengthen Your NSU Connection** - Discover how investing in NIL builds community support, brand recognition, and pride—while keeping your marketing dollars local.

### What is the Cost

\$25 for members and \$30 for non-members. Just to remind you, members at the Grow (Preferred) level or higher have tickets included with their membership. You may use your member login to register and use your included tickets or email Morgan at [Morgan@GoNatchitoches.com](mailto:Morgan@GoNatchitoches.com). No-shows will be billed.

A graphic with a blue background and white text. At the top is the Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce logo. Below it, the text "JOIN TODAY" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. Underneath that, "FOR AS LITTLE AS" is written in a smaller font. The largest text is "\$25" in a very bold, sans-serif font. Below that, "A MONTH" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text "Contact Morgan Green" and "morgan@gonatchitoches.com" is displayed. A QR code is in the bottom right corner.

A flyer for the Chamber Breakfast Club. It has a teal header with the text "Chamber Breakfast Club" and "Quarterly Member Breakfast". Below this, the title "Business &amp; Branding Through NIL Partnerships with NSU Athletics" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The date "August 20, 2025" and time "8:15 am - 9:30 am" are listed. The location "NRMC - Listach Room, 501 Keyser Avenue, Natchitoches" is provided. A registration link "Register now at GoNatchitoches.com/CBC/Q3" is at the bottom. Logos for "ATHLETICS" and "INFLCR" are on the left, and the Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce logo is on the right.



**Mu Omega Zeta, Xi Epsilon, and Zeta Amicae held their annual retreat to begin their 2025-2026 sorority year—theme: The Power of The P's.**





**Mu Omega Zeta, Xi Epsilon, and Zeta Amicae held their annual retreat to begin their 2025-2026 sorority year—theme: The Power of The P's.**



**ZΦB**  
1920





## Northwestern State Drives \$497 million in economic growth across the region

**NATCHITOCHES** — Northwestern State University added nearly half a billion dollars to the economy in northwest and central Louisiana during the 2023 to 2024 fiscal year, according to a new study.

A new economic impact report shows how Northwestern State University continues to strengthen the region through jobs, student success and support for local businesses. Conducted by labor market analytics firm Lightcast, the study highlights a total economic impact of \$497.1 million and more than 7,000 jobs supported across NSU's 10-parish service area.

The university's spending, research and daily operations created meaningful financial value. NSU generated \$76.3 million in operating expenses and \$65.1 million through businesses that formed because of its programs. Visitors contributed \$11 million and students added another \$9.3 million through local spending. Volunteer service led by the university was valued at \$2.2 million. The biggest contributor came from alumni, whose careers added \$333.2 million in regional income.

"NSU promotes economic growth in northwest and central Louisiana through its direct expenditures and the resulting expenditures of visitors, students and regional businesses," said NSU President Dr. James T. Genovese. "The university serves as an employer and buyer of goods and services for its day-to-day operations. Numerous spin-off companies have formed because of programs and knowledge at NSU. The university's reputation and activities attract visitors and students from outside northwest and central Louisiana whose expenditures benefit regional vendors."

The report also shows that NSU supports one in every 58 jobs in the region. These jobs span across healthcare, retail, hospitality and government sectors. Healthcare and social assistance lead the list with 1,286 jobs supported, followed by retail with 590 and food service with 441.

Students benefit directly from their education. On average, a bachelor's degree from NSU leads to \$21,900 more in yearly earnings compared to those with only a high school diploma in Louisiana. That increase adds up over a lifetime and supports long-term financial stability.

Taxpayers also see a positive return. For every dollar invested in the university, taxpayers receive \$1.60 in public value over the careers of graduates. Looking at the broader impact, society gains \$8.30 in value for every dollar spent on the university. These benefits include stronger incomes; improved health outcomes and fewer costs tied to the justice system or public assistance programs.

NSU also builds stronger communities by encouraging service. Through volunteering and partnerships, students and employees help local organizations grow. The university provides a steady pipeline of trained professionals ready to work in fields that matter most to the region.

"NSU encourages its students and employees to volunteer in the community helping businesses and organizations grow," the report states. "In addition, NSU is a primary source of higher education to northwest and central Louisiana residents and a supplier of trained workers to regional industries, enhancing overall productivity in the regional workforce."

The study was based on data from NSU's financial and academic reports for 2023 to 2024, along with employment and census data from national sources. The results reflect real contributions happening now throughout Louisiana.

### III | NORTHWESTERN STATE

**\$497.1 MILLION**  
TOTAL IMPACT

**7,001**  
JOBS SUPPORTED

**1 OUT OF EVERY 58 JOBS**  
IN NORTHWEST AND CENTRAL LOUISIANA IS SUPPORTED  
BY THE ACTIVITIES OF NSU AND ITS STUDENTS

*Northwestern State University continues to strengthen the region through jobs, student success, and support for local businesses.*



Lightcast  
2023-2024





# Listen to Your Bones



**NRMC**  
Cancer Center

## We've Added to Our Team Dr. Theodore Knatt - Orthopedic Specialist

NRMC is proud to welcome Dr. Theodore "Teddy" Knatt to NRMC Orthopedic Associates. Board Certified in both Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine, Dr. Knatt has extensive training and experience in diagnosing and treating a broad spectrum of conditions affecting the bones, joints and muscles and specializes in minimally invasive joint repair and replacement surgeries. As a former semi-professional athlete, he has a deep personal understanding of athletic performance and recovery, and is here to help get you back in the game of life.

We are excited to have Dr. Knatt joining Dr. Ted Jordan at NRMC Orthopedic Associates and look forward to the outstanding care he will provide to our community.

Teddy Knatt  
Orthopaedic

To schedule an appointment,  
please call 318.269.7919.

601 Keyser Avenue • Natchitoches  
[NRMChospital.org](http://NRMChospital.org)

Scan to learn  
more

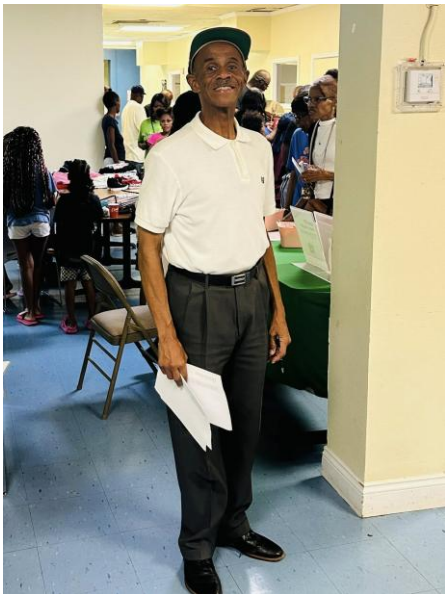


**NRMC**  
Orthopedic  
Associates



# Scenes from the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Back-to-School Expo

Photo Credits: Krewe of the 9, Ruby Johnson- Braxton



9TH ANNUAL BACK-TO-SCHOOL EXPO.  
**"GETTING THEM READY"**  
Sunday, August 3, 2025  
2 PM until 5:30 PM  
Ben D. Johnson Educational Center  
400 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive  
Natchitoches, LA.

FREE: HAIRCUTS, SCHOOL SUPPLIES (WHILE THEY LAST), HEALTH EXAMS, UNIFORMS, SNACKS/BEVERAGES, SCHOOL/COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND MUSIC/INFLATABLES.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL MARTHA E. DUMARS OUTSTANDING HUMANITARIAN AWARD.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

KREWE OF THE 9  
Ben D. Johnson Educational Center  
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.-Theta Delta Chapter  
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.-Rho Beta Omega Chapter  
Dumars Outreach Committee  
Foot and Ankle Specialists  
Raising Cane's Restaurant  
P.B. Wilson Memorial Scholarship/Education Fund  
National Park Service  
HOSA  
Cane River Food Pantry  
Greater Kingdom First Ministries  
Emanuel Temple Lodge #141  
T-Mobile Wireless  
Aetna  
Prep Fitness & Performance

FOR INFO.: (318) 663-6336, (618) 434-5293, OR (318) 332-8254



"Sly Tha Barber"  
& K Kreations and Friends



Free Shoes  
Amyri Robinson  
Samaritans' Feet



# Scenes from the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Back-to-School Expo

Photo Credits: Emmanuel Temple Lodge # 141



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"Sly Tha Barber" & K Kreations and Friends

Free Shoes  
Amyrl Robinson  
Samaritans' Feet



# Community Events

Kingdom Heart  
**KIDS  
AFTER CARE**



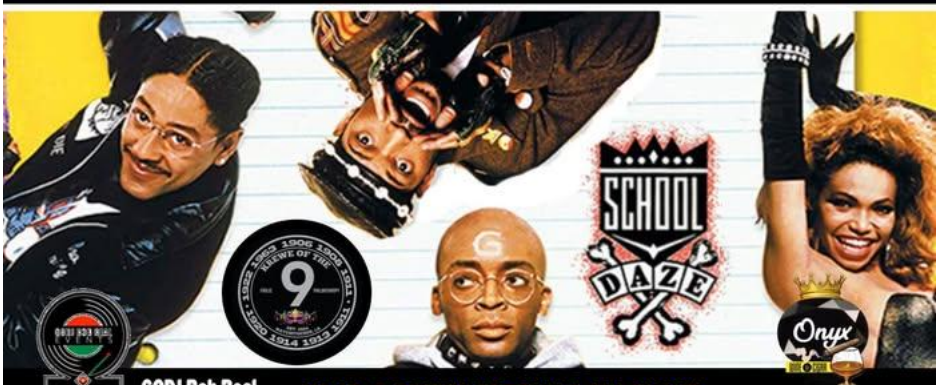
**\$60 A WEEK**

**REGISTRATION OPEN NOW**  
Snacks will be provided.  
Homework Assistance.  
Select school pick up available.

500 Royal street Natchitoches La, 71457  
Call 318-228-4112/318-703-9414 to register!

**Back to the 90s**  
A KREWE OF THE 9 JOINT  
**SEPT. 13** **DOORS OPEN AT 8 PM**

1906 1908 1911 1911 1913 1914 1920 1922 1963



GODJ Rob Real In the Mix **FOOD & DRINK SPECIALS ALL NIGHT** 312 Texas St.

**Rick Cabrera**  
**BASKETBALL**




**ELITE CAMP**

PRATHER COLISEUM  
NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

**AUGUST 30<sup>TH</sup> | 1 - 5PM | GRADES 9 - 12**

**\$85 PER CAMPER**

BRYCE FINK: [BFINK393390@NSULA.EDU](mailto:BFINK393390@NSULA.EDU)  
DANIELLE CABRERA - [RICKCABRERABASKETBALLCAMP@GMAIL.COM](mailto:RICKCABRERABASKETBALLCAMP@GMAIL.COM)




THE BEN JOHNSON EDUCATIONAL CENTER'S 2025

**"I TRIED"**  
*From Trying to Thriving*  
4TH ANNUAL AWARDS FUNDRAISER

**TICKETS ARE LIVE**

\$50 to change a future – and a great night out!



August 26, 2025 | 5PM  
Riverside Reserve  
[www.bdjcenter.org/i-trying](http://www.bdjcenter.org/i-trying)



# Community Events

NORTH STAR MISSIONARY BAPTIST  
CHURCH & PASTOR WILLIAM B. ROBERSON  
PRESENT

## 3RD ANNUAL LADY ROBERSON CELEBRATION



SEPTEMBER 7, 2025  
11:15 A.M.

ATTIRE: RED AND WHITE

JOIN US FOR A POWERFUL WORSHIP  
SERVICE AS WE HONOR THE HEART  
OF OUR HOUSE - OUR BELOVED ELECT  
LADY!

COME CELEBRATE HER DEDICATION  
TO GOD, THE CHURCH, AND THE  
COMMUNITY

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - NORTH STREET  
201 North Street | Natchitoches, LA 71457

## Second Pastoral ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Pastor & Wife  
*J. Rel & Crystal*  
**WEST**




SUNDAY, AUGUST 10, 2025 | 2:30 PM

Guest Speaker  
**Pastor Roger L. Green**  
Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church

**26<sup>th</sup> Cane River**

# ZYDECO FESTIVAL & POKER RUN

FOOD & BEVERAGE  
VENDORS

Food, Fun & Music

**Schedule:**

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 29—FREE ADMISSION**  
6:00-10:30 PM Gates Open  
Poker Run Registration  
Zydeco Dance Contest  
6:00-10:30 PM DJ Rob Real  
7:00-8:00 PM Line Dancing  
8:00-9:00 PM Swing Dancing

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 30  
ADMISSION \$20**  
9:00 AM—Poker Run Registration  
12:00 PM—Ride Begins  
2:00 PM—Gates Open  
4:00-6:30 PM—**MARCUS ARDOIN**  
& **DA ZYDECO LEGENDZ**  
7:00-9:30 PM—**LIL NATHAN**  
& **ZYDECO BIG TIMERS**  
9:30-10:30 PM DJ ROB REAL

**Ticket & Event Information:** Melvin Holmes 318-332-7455  
Billy Meziere 318-471-9920 & Sandra Williams Vendor Info: 318-527-6959

**Labor Day Weekend - Downtown Riverbank  
August 29—30, 2025  
Natchitoches, LA**

Thank you to our  
SPONSORS

Cane River Waterway Commission

CANE RIVER  
CHARITIES

H.D.D.C.  
Hatchers Developmental Center

HDBA  
Hatchers Developmental Center

BUD  
LIGHT

NATCHITOCHES  
LA

For more information  
800-259-1714

visit [www.natchitoches.com](http://www.natchitoches.com)

The Cane River Zydeco Festival began in 1999 by members of the Magnolia State Police Officers Association, Cane River Branch. The Magnolia State Police Officers Association is the state wide organization that started the Toys for Tots program. They also help the community through other various programs such as community service, Shop with a Cop, food baskets and preparing Thanksgiving dinners for underprivileged families. Proceeds from this event assist in funding various community functions around Natchitoches Parish.

## CONTACT US

Phone: (318) 354-7712

Email:

[support@therealnewslouisiana.com](mailto:support@therealnewslouisiana.com)

[www.therealnewslouisiana.com](http://www.therealnewslouisiana.com)

P.O. Box 1082 Natchitoches, La 71458