

LSU Council of Faculty Advisors Report

October 24, 2025

Assembled by Daniel C. Tirone, Chair

LSU AgCenter

- **National Seafood Month: The LSU AgCenter** contributes critical research and outreach to the Louisiana Seafood industry. The Louisiana economic value of **Marine Fisheries** is **\$529 million** and **Aquaculture** is **\$668.61 million**.
- The LSU AgCenter grants awarded in **September** totaled **\$2,812,076**.
- **Dr. Denise Holston** in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences was awarded an **\$804,000** grant for the **Healthy Access, Behaviors and Communities program** from **US Department of Health and Human Sciences** and the **CDC**.
- **Dr. Michael Stout**, Entomology Department was awarded **\$473,620** from the **USDA Agricultural Service (ARS)** for **Tech Transfer of IPM Strategies for Varroa through Breeding and Miticide Resistance Management**.
- The **LSU AgCenter Extension Service EXCITE Health Agents** were awarded a **\$210,000 CDC/NIFA/EXCITE grant** for the **“Healthy Families: EFNEP Immunization Awareness Project.”** (EXCITE is the acronym for **Extension Collaboration on Immunization Teaching and Engagement**)

LSU Alexandria

LSUA continues to grow and impact the CENLA region. We currently have around 8,000 students, with 691 first time freshman. Online enrollment is up 38%, and on-campus enrollment is up 12%. The response has been overwhelmingly positive on campus and in the community. Currently, there are 287 Summer graduates and 659 approved Fall applications. It is anticipated that more than 950 graduates will be invited to participate in the ceremony. Strategic efforts to enhance alumni relations in collaboration with the Foundation are underway.

Administrative roles at university are now fully staffed with department chairs, providing strong leadership across all academic areas. Jeff Langston was recently promoted to Vice Chancellor for Operations and Chief Operating Officer from Dean of the College of Health & Human Services, where he served since 2023. He also served as Interim Dean of the College of Business. Jeff will continue serving as Dean of H&HS until a new dean is appointed. This shift in structure was necessary to address the demands that resulted from the increase in employees.

Groundbreaking for the new apartments was well attended by community partners, business leaders, and government officials. The official name of the complex will be University Pointe. These apartments will address, in part, the shortage of student campus housing.

With athletics and student organization activities in full swing, Student Services recently held a two- hour Hazing Prevention Seminar that was well attended.

While LSUA focus remains primarily on undergraduate student teaching, faculty has been intentional about increasing research engagement. Recent publications and presentations include:

- **Whitmore, J. L., & Keeler, J. B.** (2025). Dare to share: A path analysis and social exchange investigation of workplace social courage and safety knowledge sharing. *Safety Science, 191*, 106973.
- Keeler, J. B., Andrieux, P. W., Adeniji, S., Snowden, W. J., **Whitmore, J. L.** (In Press). Generative AI-enhanced stimuli in organizational behavior research: a scoping review. *Organization Management Journal*.
- Bernard Gallagher moderated a session at the NSU Louisiana Studies Conference, and presented a series of original poems (Sept. 19).
- Cole Franklin will be presenting on the topic: “Leading Through Change: Addressing Today's Challenges in Higher Education” at the National Communication Association annual convention in Denver, CO on November 23, 2025.
- Dr. Adena LeJeune recently completed her CFF credential. The CFF credential, issued by the AICPA, validates expertise in forensic accounting areas like fraud detection, valuations, and financial misrepresentation.

Faculty has also increased student engagement in research. The LSUA Scholar Day Fall Showcase, celebrating student scholarship and creativity across campus, will be held Date: Wednesday, December 3, 2025 Time: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Lastly, Eamon Halpern took the Aviation student organization, Flying Generals, to Hammond, Louisiana, to attend the Hammond Northshore Regional Airshow on October 18th.

LSU Eunice

Faculty.Features

LSUE nursing and Ochsner Health partnered to present a symposium through Louisiana department of health HERO funding to support the growth of the nursing program and faculty retention. Featured speakers include Bruce Greenstein, Sec for Louisiana department of health and Senator Brach Meyers (Dist. 23).

General.Program.and.Campus.Achievements

Student presentations for the 2025 Undergraduate Research Summer Institute (URSI) Symposium serves as the capstone event for students participating in hands-on research across scientific and health disciplines. Student led projects included “*Aluna Breath Easier Smart Spirometer*” by Ana David and Catherine LeDoux, exploring a gamified device to help children manage asthma; “*Determination of Iron Content in Over-the-Counter Iron Supplements*” by Cami Cortez, analyzing supplement accuracy; and “*Human Blood Glucose Response to Potato and Louisiana Rice Stored at Different Temperatures*” by Olivia Hensgens and Titilope Tinubu, which examines how food storage methods affect blood sugar levels. Students Chloe Colwart and Claire Durapau will also present “*Exploring Where No Man Has Gone Before Through da Vinci Robotic-assisted Bronchoscopy*,” highlighting how robotic-assisted technology is advancing early lung cancer detection. This event underscores LSU Eunice’s ongoing commitment to fostering undergraduate research opportunities that prepare students for success in their academic and professional pursuits.

LSU Eunice continues its impressive trend with a third straight fall semester of breaking enrollment records on campus. Fall 2025 semester features record breaking enrollment of 3,938 students and a 7.3% increase in total credit hours representing a five-year trend of growth as enrollment has grown 26% since the Fall 2021 semester and increased its credit hours by 21% in that same time span.

LSUE and VieMed Healthcare held a dedication ceremony in September for the newly named VieMed Respiratory Care Laboratory inside the Health Technology Building of the LSUE campus. The partnership was made possible through a \$100,000 investment from Lafayette-based VieMed Healthcare to provide renovation and equipment upgrade funding, including a new medical air-gas system.

On September 25, LSU Eunice officially launched a new conversation series, “Let’s Talk,” designed to foster dialogue and reflection on timely issues. The inaugural event welcomed featured guests, Louisiana Speaker of the House Rep. Phillip DeVillier (District 41) and Rep. Dustin Miller (District 40) to engage in a discussion entitled “Communicating and Collaborating with Others Who Don’t Always Agree.” The legislators represent different political parties and perspectives spoke with Q&A from students, faculty, and staff.

Donnie Thibodeaux is the new Dean of Enrollment Management. Thibodeaux has been a fixture within the LSUE community, working in different capacities on campus since 2004.

LSU Health New Orleans

School.of.Medicine.Updates

- Accreditors from the LCME completed their 3-day Survey Visit on Wednesday. This is a very rigorous review and the school spent 18 months preparing the required documents and prepared for the actual survey visit over the last three months. We will receive preliminary results in mid-November and will receive our final results in February. We expect to do very well and to receive the maximum 8-year term of reaccreditation (as we have done for the last three cycles since 2001-02).
- The school was recently awarded two large grants. Dr. Patricia Molina was awarded \$7.2 million grant from the NIH to continue research in the Comprehensive Alcohol-HIV Research Center. Sunyoung Kim was awarded a \$7.5 million grant from the NSF to create a Center for Adaptive Nanomotor Development. Dr. Kim and her team will investigate how nanomotor particles (which operate at the subcellular level) impact multiple processes that are important to neurologic disease, cancer, and cancer therapies.
- Dr. Harvey Chim is one of several high-profile faculty we have recruited in the past several months. Dr. Chim is a highly accomplished plastic surgeon who will lead our Division of Plastic Surgery. He has world renown expertise in hand reconstruction and peripheral nerve reattachment. He will develop state-of-the art programs at University Medical Center and Manning Family Children's Hospital, continue groundbreaking research in nerve regeneration, and lead our training programs in plastic surgery. He was recruited from University of Florida School of Medicine in Gainesville.

School.of.Allied.Health.Updates

2 Awards Received:

- 1) 2025 ASAHP Award for Innovation and Excellence in Clinical Education. Improving Student-Clinician Experiences in Clinical Training: A Program Improvement Project for Doctor of Audiology Programs Informed by Stakeholder Feedback (Erica Cardosi)
- 2) Program of Merit for the 2025 ASAHP Award for Innovation and Excellence in Clinical Education. Microbiology Thought Challenger: Expanding Clinical Education Beyond the Bench (Lyndsey Gisclair).
- 3) Gayle Arnold Award was given to Dr. Noelle Moreau for her presentation at the Academy.

Legislative.Committee.Meeting

We hosted The House Committee on Education meeting and highlighted our new facilities and several programs. The LSUHSCNO Burn Center made a presentation to the House Education Committee. The presentation included the extraordinary new treatment of burn wounds.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center

- **NIDDK Clinical Methods for Nutrition and Obesity Research Course:** From Oct. 6-9, Pennington Biomedical Research Center hosted the NIDDK Clinical Methods for Nutrition and Obesity Research Course, an intensive four-day training program designed to equip postdoctoral fellows, advanced doctoral students, and early career investigators with hands-on expertise in state-of-the-art methods for clinical research in obesity, metabolism and nutrition. Sponsored by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, or NIDDK, the course and the Pennington-Louisiana Nutrition Obesity Research Center, or NORC, welcomed a cohort of bright, emerging scientists from across the country. Through lectures, interactive workshops, laboratory demonstrations, and networking events, participants deepened their skills in gold-standard methodologies that are crucial for advancing clinical and translational research in metabolism, obesity, and related chronic diseases. Participants joined Pennington Biomedical from 17 different institutions across North America, including Harvard University, Columbia University, Case Western Reserve University, Vanderbilt University and University of Toronto, to name a few.
- **Childhood Obesity Conference:** The 2025 Childhood Obesity Conference, "Be the Reason Kids Greaux Healthy," was held on Oct. 2 and 3, at the C.B. Pennington Jr. Conference Center. Presented by Greaux Healthy, the event welcomed more than 100 health care professionals, educators, advocates and community leaders to the campus to hear from leading local researchers on the latest developments, topics and research trends in childhood obesity prevention. Pennington Biomedical held the first Childhood Obesity Conference in 2008, attracting physicians and health care professionals to share knowledge on preventing and treating childhood obesity. This year's conference, 'Be the Reason Kids Greaux Healthy,' aimed to advance Louisiana's efforts to combat childhood obesity through education, community engagement and health promotion.
- **Precision Medicine:** A new report led by researchers at Pennington Biomedical Research Center underscores the growing potential of precision medicine to transform how obesity is prevented, diagnosed and treated, while also illuminating key gaps and challenges that must be addressed. Published in September in *Obesity*, the study synthesizes the proceedings of a recent Pennington-Louisiana Nutrition Obesity Research Center scientific workshop that was convened to review current evidence on tailoring obesity interventions to individual biology, environment, behavior and social factors. Key findings included that obesity is not a one-size-fits-all condition. The authors emphasize how numerous factors – genetics, epigenetics, metabolic phenotypes, microbiome characteristics and environmental exposures – interact to influence individual differences in weight gain, weight loss and response to therapy. Improved diagnostic tools – for example, biomarkers and imaging – are critical for accurately classifying obesity subtypes and risk, which in turn can guide more personalized prevention and treatment. The review highlights emerging data that suggests modifying diet, exercise, pharmacotherapy and behavioral interventions to individual risk profiles may produce more effective and sustainable outcomes. More research is needed to solidify best

practices. Despite enthusiasm, significant obstacles remain, including limited large-scale clinical trials of precision strategies, lack of diversity in study populations, underdeveloped cost-effectiveness data, and challenges in integrating precision tools into routine clinical settings.

- **Cancer Screenings:** Pennington Biomedical researchers examined cancer screening data from more than 2 million study participants and found that that severe obesity is associated with a lower rate of cancer screenings. In a recent cross-sectional study, researchers from Pennington Biomedical Research Center found that severe obesity is associated with a lower rate of cancer screenings. In their paper published in JAMA Network Open, “Obesity Severity and Cancer Screening in US Adults,” the researchers analyzed de-identified data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System to reach these findings. While rates of cancer screenings varied among the various BMI groups and the various types of cancer screenings, screening rates for Papanicolaou testing, mammography, sigmoidoscopy and colonoscopy among those in the 50.0 or greater BMI group saw a significant reduction compared to the base groups.
- **Record clinical trials:** Pennington Biomedical’s Clinical Trials Unit has been operating at record numbers for active research trials. The clinic is running 74 active studies with another 54 in development. The unit is staffed with medical doctors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, registered dietitians, research specialists and other professionals spanning a variety of disciplines and is responsible for the oversight and coordination of all clinical trials performed at the center for both adult and pediatric studies.

LSU Health Shreveport

Research.Update

- LSU Health Shreveport has been awarded a five-year, **\$7.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) EPSCoR CREST program to establish a new Center for Post-Transcriptional Regulation (CPTR)**. Led by Oren Rom, PhD, RD, Senior Associate Dean for Basic and Translational Research, and Co-Director for the Metabolic and Liver Diseases Research Program, and Wayne Orr, PhD, Vice Chair for Pathology and Director of the Center for Cardiovascular Diseases and Sciences, this award represents the first, and largest, NSF-funded center grant in the history of LSUHS. The CPTR will focus on how cells regulate metabolism, the process by which the body uses and converts nutrients into energy. Researchers will study the role of RNA molecules and protein modifications in controlling these processes, using advanced technology like CRISPR gene editing, stem cell models, high-powered sequencing and metabolomics combined with machine learning. Data outcomes from the grant could open doors to new biotechnological advances and provide insights relevant to conditions such as diabetes, obesity and liver disease.
- Tousif Sultan, PHD, Assistant Professor of Cellular Biology and Anatomy, was awarded a new five-year **R01 grant from the NIH National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute totaling \$2,108,891** for his project "The Role of Cell-Specific PD-L1 in cardiac pathophysiology post Ischemic Injury and Cancer."

- Hind Lal, PHD, Professor and Chair of Cellular Biology and Anatomy, was awarded a new four-year **R01 grant from the NIH National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute totaling \$1,642,539** for his project "Novel Mechanisms of Cardiac Function and Dysfunction."
- Omar Franco Coronel, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, FWCC, was awarded a new four-year **R01 grant from the NIH National Cancer Institute totaling \$1,575,170** for his project "Differential activation of the triacylglycerol pathway in lipofibroblasts induces neurogenesis associated with prostate cancer progression."
- David Morgens, PhD, Assistant Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, who was awarded a new three-year **R00 grant from the NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases totaling \$745,855** for his project "Separating late gene transcription from viral DNA replication in KSHV."
- LSU Health Shreveport, Radiance Technologies and LA Tech have undergone a partnership to develop a whole-cell modelling and simulation capability for E.coli in a **\$5.85 million DARPA Contract**. The LSU Health Shreveport sub-project PI is Dr. Jason Comer, Associate Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, and Director, BSL-3 Research Facility.
- Arif Yurdagul, PhD, Associate Professor of Molecular and Cellular Physiology, and Co-Director for the Metabolic and Liver Diseases Research Program, was awarded a new five-year **R01 grant from the NIH National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute totaling \$2,603,264** for his project "Nutrient Sensing of Apoptotic Cells by Macrophages Resolves Inflammation, Drives Atherosclerosis Regression, and Promotes Features of Plaque Instability"

School.of.Graduate.Studies

- We have formed a campus-wide AI working group to develop and implement strategies for incorporating AI into our teaching, learning, and research. We will also develop policies for ethical, secure, and legal uses of AI. This group positions us to respond to the recent executive order on AI and resolution by the Board of Regents.
- We have initiated redesign of 1st semester curriculum to better serve the students across our various disciplines.
- We have implemented the Shreveport Teacher Enhancement Program (STEP) to provide teacher development opportunities for students and postdocs. As part of this program, we have created and approved a new course in educational theory and practice in collaboration with the School of Health Professions and Sciences.
- The annual Biomedical Research and Industry Day (BRAID) was held October 17th, 2025. This provides an opportunity for students and postdocs around the region to share their research and learn about the array of career options. This activity is part of an ongoing effort in career exploration and preparation in the Graduate School.
- We have developed and approved an improved statistics curriculum focused on reproducible research and advanced analysis.
- We have achieved better integration of graduate students into pan-campus Interprofessional Education Activities (STRIPE), an integral part of SACS accreditation reaffirmation.

School.of.Health.Professions.and.Sciences

- Julie Schwertfeger, PT, PhD, MBA, CBIST, Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy, was recently selected as a participant in the very competitive and prestigious TIGRR (Training in

Grantsmanship for Rehabilitation Research) Program. This program, funded by NIH/NICHHD, brings together a nationally recognized group of mentors and scientists, including representatives of federal funding agencies, and boasts a significant improvement in grant success for participants. Dr. Schwertfeger is contributing to a team of basic and translational neuroscience researchers on our campus to improve the care for people following strokes and traumatic brain injuries.

- Our Children’s Center faculty, specializing in the assessment and diagnosis of autism and other spectrum-related disorders, were awarded a competitive grant for their Doctoral Internship Program in Pediatric Health Service Psychology in the amount of \$67,500.00 by the Community Foundation of North Louisiana.
- Our Cardiopulmonary Faculty and Students were recognized at the Louisiana Society for Respiratory Care: Ms. Lindsay Michel, was awarded the Terry Bourgeois Award for Excellence and Mrs. Jillian Danzy, the Terry Forrette Spirit of Education Award, while our students won first place in the Pelican Quiz Bowl Competition.

School.of.Medicine

- LSUHS faculty, staff, residents and medical students volunteered the Humility, Empathy, and Respect Training (HEART) program serving Caddo Parish middle schoolers. HEART is a pilot program through a collaboration between the Association of American Medical Colleges and LSUHS and utilizes the AAMC First Steps Career Skills Curriculum to introduce middle school students in Caddo Parish to core pre-med competencies and personal skills important for success in medical school and future healthcare careers.
- Dr. Qihui “Jim” Zhai was elected as the 39th president of the College of American Pathologists (CAP). CAP is the largest organization of board-certified pathologists in the world.
- Dr. Cherie Ann Nathan, Chair of Otolaryngology/ Head and Neck Cancer, was recognized as a LSU Presidential Laurel making her the first LSUHS faculty member to receive this honor.

LSU Shreveport

- As this Board well knows, History faculty member Dr. Alexander Mikaberidze became LSU in Shreveport's first-ever Boyd Professor, the highest academic honor in the LSU System. Alex has just returned from a Fulbright term in Europe. He is internationally considered to be among the top scholars of Napoleonic and 19th century European history and its global impact at the time and today.
- LSUS marketing faculty member Dr. Minseong Kim has been one of the top researchers in the world of Sport, Leisure and Tourism for the fourth straight year according to Stanford University's Top 2% Scientists List. Kim ranks No. 34 in that subfield and No. 6,065 in the main field of Economics and Business globally.
- LSUS herpetologist Dr. Stuart Nielsen and students Jonathan Eubanks and Hayden Hanna published research in the prestigious journal *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* that indicates biodiversity in Earth's driest hot desert in Chile (Atacama Desert) is more robust than previously thought. The trio studied a genus of gecko and found cryptic diversity, meaning that instead of 1-2 species in this area, there is likely more like 8-11 distinct species.
- LSUS leads the state in saving students money through open education resources, which come at no cost to the student. OER consists of free online resources and textbooks instead of the traditional physical copy. LSUS saved students **\$4.7 million** this past academic year.
- LSUS set a summer graduation record of 1,550 degrees conferred at its September graduation, the most of any university in the state.
- New Debate coach Lindsay Duede guided the Pilots to three top-three finishes in her first three tournaments including a number of individual champions. Duede has long dreamed of coaching LSUS after the national champion Drury University debater prepped with the Pilots despite at that time being a competitor.
- The heavy machinery is moving on the LSUS campus as the university celebrated the grand openings of the Davis Business Center and the Nonprofit Resource Center while breaking ground on a new road bridge that will connect student housing at Pilot Pointe Apartments to the heart of campus.
- The perfect LSUS baseball team made its visit to The White House this week to celebrate college baseball's first-ever undefeated season as the Pilots compiled a 59-0 record en route to an NAIA national championship. President Donald Trump greeted coach Brad Neffendorf and his Pilots in the ballroom and spoke about LSU in Shreveport as well as LSU's NCAA national champion accomplishments.

LSU A&M

- LSU's Advanced Microscopy and Analytical Core ([AMAC](#)) facility gives Louisiana researchers access to 16 state-of-the-art instruments, including a new Spectra 300 Scanning Transmission Electron Microscope (S/TEM) for atomic-scale imaging and analysis. The new microscope—the most advanced in Louisiana—was installed with \$10 million in support from the U.S. Army. The microscope offers magnification up to 10 million times, powerful enough to enlarge a single grain of Mississippi River silt to the size of Tiger Stadium. The launch of the AMAC and S/TEM demonstrate LSU's increased investment in providing its faculty and partners with the best possible equipment for research and discovery, including for national defense, energy, and health.

- LSU leads two of the 10 teams selected as finalists for two \$20 million Gulf Futures Challenge awards, a national competition by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Gulf Research Program and Lever for Change, a nonprofit affiliate of the MacArthur Foundation. One team is helping the community in Lake Charles co-finance resilience infrastructure investments by developing tools to understand future savings on insurance and avoided losses, as well as future home and land values. The other team is developing a digital twin of Iberia Parish to help residents simulate the impacts of investing in green energy and wetland restoration projects, see what they would look like in the landscape, and practice how to build, install, and use these technologies.
- Derick Ostrenko and Jason Jamerson, faculty in the LSU College of Art & Design, along with engineering advisor David Ben Spry, are pioneering a new approach to industrial innovation using digital twins. The effort is supported by a \$217,403 use-inspired research and development (UIRD) award from Future Use of Energy in Louisiana (FUEL). Digital twins are highly detailed, virtual replicas of physical assets. The technology is used in engineering to enhance efficiency, safety, and training.

Finally, LSU staff and Presidential Search Committee member Olivia Phelps and the Council of Staff Advisors recently completed a survey across all eight LSU campuses seeking faculty and staff's opinions on the characteristics and qualifications for LSU's next President. The responses reflect a strong and unified message: LSU's greatest strength is its people, and the next president must be someone who listens, engages, and builds trust. Key themes that emerged include:

- **Academic Excellence & Research Distinction:** Support for innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and top-tier research goals; prioritization of academics over athletics; and investment in campus infrastructure.
- **Employee Recruitment & Retention:** Calls for fair compensation, professional development, and robust retention strategies to improve morale and reduce turnover.
- **Student Success & Support:** Emphasis on affordability, mental health resources, and academic support to improve retention and graduation rates.
- **Campus Safety & Modernization:** Need for capital investment, technology upgrades, and solutions for transportation and accessibility.
- **System-Wide Fairness & Communication:** Desire for transparency, mutual respect, and recognition of all LSU campuses.
- **Academic Freedom & Independent Leadership:** Protection of academic freedom, resistance to political pressure, and commitment to ethical, long-term leadership.

I would like to thank Ms. Phelps and the other members of the Council of Staff Advisors for undertaking this important effort, and I have copies of the results to share with anyone who is interested in learning more. Thank you for your attention.