



President Moon's State of the University Address (Fall 2025)
Noon-1 p.m. • Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025 • Rick Case Arena

Students, faculty, fellow administrators, alumni, friends, and community leaders...thank you for coming together on this beautiful South Florida afternoon to reflect on where we're going and how far we've come.

And welcome to all of you across the state...and the country...who are watching us on livestream.

Wow, that video shows what an adventure we've all been on over these past nine months ...

I've enjoyed it and I hope you have as well. What a community we have here in our Shark family! That video is about all of us.

It's good to pause now and then to reflect on our plans, our progress, and our shared path because all of us at Nova Southeastern University are standing at the cusp of a new era of opportunity and success.

We are not the same university we were years ago or even months ago.

You saw in the video as you came in a bit of a then and now timeline.

What started out 60 years ago on Las Olas Boulevard in a humble storefront with 17 students studying social and physical sciences has now grown into the largest private research university in Florida.

By following a North Star set by leaders and visionaries who came before us, we are now a university offering more than 150 professional, doctoral, graduate, and undergraduate degree programs.

We serve more than 21,000 students, including those in a model pre-kindergarten through 12th grade private preparatory school. Our campus locations have grown to eight cities across Florida, as well as in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in Denver, Colorado, and soon in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the U-S Virgin Islands.

We are on a strong upward trajectory in enrollment. This fall, we welcomed a record 41 percent of out-of-state freshman class, with the highest GPA in five years. Graduate and professional programs also continue to attract students nationwide.

As the international and domestic online education market approaches \$203 billion, NSU is well-positioned to lead in this rapidly expanding space.

And speaking of leadership here we are today in one of our Halls of Champions, athletic champions. NSU has earned a total of 15 national NCAA Division II championships.

And on top of that our NSU Sharks earn the highest GPA in Division II. That is an accomplishment to be proud of.

The progress and growth we've achieved, combined with the work ahead of us, are part of an ambitious vision to become Florida's leading private research university and a national leader in healthcare and innovation ... as well as being a champion contributor to the ocean economy.

Today, that North Star is in sight and we are well on our way to navigating by it.

Nine months ago, when I had the honor of becoming NSU's seventh president, I made you some promises and set some goals, and I am here today to re-affirm those promises and report our progress in pursuing those goals.

Let's look at this video that summarizes our plan for the future and our plan to seek partners to fuel that future.

I strongly believe in what I said in that video...that NSU is a university worth investing in.

We are ready to bring in more investors and supporters who can see how NSU will help them make an impact on the challenges and opportunities they believe in most.

We remain committed to those five must-win areas for NSU, areas that will define excellence and position us as the top private research university in Florida.

First and foremost: We will attract even more of the best and brightest students who will be enriched through our world-class education that focuses first on professional and graduate education fed by strategic undergraduate and kindergarten-through-12th-grade pipelines.

Second, we are creating an even stronger, value-driven education model, including accelerated degree offerings, clear pathways to high-demand, high-reward professions, and innovative ways to deliver value and reduce debt for students and graduates.

Third, we are building and delivering on our status as a leading research university by increasing our human health clinical trials, fostering the ocean economy and climate readiness, and generating much-needed innovations and breakthroughs that benefit society.

Fourth, we will create an academic medical center and healthcare network that integrates education, research, and high-quality patient care and makes south Florida a top healthcare destination and innovator.

And finally, we are forging stronger partnerships with business, government, and our community on our path to becoming a university with a one-billion-dollar endowment.

The courage, the commitment and passion demonstrated by so many in our Shark family are the reasons why our university is stronger than ever.

The proof is all around us.

Let's start with our primary purpose...the mission that drives all we do.

It starts with our students. This past year, more than 6,000 NSU students graduated, joining more than 215,000 alumni who preceded them.

That's a talent pool that educates our children and future leaders, makes breakthrough discoveries in science, business, healthcare, oceanography, technology, and more, empowers business and our economy, and improves the health and well-being of millions.

We graduate more physicians than any other institution in Florida—and are in the top five nationally. When you consider doctors of medicine, plus dental medicine, optometry, nursing, and pharmacy, we are the nation's number one producer of healthcare professionals.

We are one of only three universities with both allopathic, MD, and osteopathic, D.O., medical schools.

Looking more broadly at our professional and doctoral degrees awarded across our array of disciplines, including the Ed.D., J.D., Ph.D., and so on, we are the sixth highest producer nationwide.

Our leadership status was further affirmed last winter when we were designated a Carnegie R-1 research institution, placing us among the top 187 research universities out of more than 4,000 institutions nationwide.

Let's look at this video that showcases some of the people and projects making NSU's research excellence what it is today.

Along with this prestigious R-1 status, we were designated by Carnegie as an Opportunity University, recognizing that we make our education accessible and most importantly that our graduates are earning salaries significantly above the national average.

On this measure, we rate higher than the University of Florida.

Only 16 percent of U.S. colleges and universities have earned the Student Access and Higher Earnings or Opportunity classification.

Only 21 universities nationwide, and just two private universities, hold both R-1 and Opportunity designations. That puts NSU in rare company.

While NSU graduates are entering the job market with a comparative advantage, many students face financial challenges.

A major part of our vision is to accelerate the time to complete one's degree pathway. This semester, selected students began a track to receive their combined bachelor's to terminal medical or professional degree, compressing the time to complete and lowering the cost and potential debt burden to the student.

We are now offering a dozen or more programs to do the same across the breadth of our degrees in law, business, healthcare, computing, education, and more.

This is the wave of the future and NSU is clearly among the first to catch that wave.

We're pursuing excellence in everything we do and that includes our commitment to become a catalyst for Florida's and the world's ocean economy.

The blue or ocean economy supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and contributes billions of dollars in economic impact here in Florida. That includes everything from our fisheries and boating industries to tourism, transportation, property development, environmental safety, research, and so many other pursuits.

To see these connections, let's look at another video.

As a hub for education, research, coastal resilience, and workforce development, NSU Ocean is ideally positioned to deliver an immediate and lasting impact on Florida as it becomes the 10th largest economy in the world by 2030.

We're building on this initiative every month.

NSU's new Rising Seas Institute is helping us develop new and much-needed ways to contribute to climate readiness through scientific, educational, and blue technology innovations as we face the challenges of changing weather patterns, rising sea levels, and other forces that demand more and better strategies for resilience and adaptation.

NSU has begun to recruit an international consortium of universities, scientists, nonprofits, and innovators to help us create hubs for this vital work here in south Florida at our Ocean Campus as well as at a future location in Greenland.

As you may know, Greenland holds 10 percent of the world's ice sheet, and as changes occur there, Greenland has become ground zero for the study of the science behind sea-level rise. What happens there will affect us here in Florida. Having visited Greenland this summer on an NSU Ocean/Rising Seas fact-finding expedition, I can tell you it's a place that can inspire the insights, breakthroughs, and mindset that will advance coastal resiliency and climate preparedness for us in Florida and for others worldwide.

Let's take a look.

Not only are we all connected by our coastlines, but we see the powerful connections between planet health and human health.

Our newest M-S in Global Health and the NSU Ocean Health Initiative are seeking to bridge human and planetary health, preparing students for emerging careers at the forefront of environmental and public health, and helping researchers find powerful and innovative ways to leverage marine science for human, economical, and environmental benefits.

This leads us back to another piece of our fundamental mission and core strength...NSU Health and its three related objectives: To teach, to treat, and to discover.

Our R-1 research status, our exceptional clinical trials in such areas as ALS, long Covid and cancer, and our national reputation as a top producer in the quality, scale, and scope of health-related education and workforce development, position NSU as a change agent and powerful source of innovation and better patient care.

Our next step is the development of a partnership to open an academic medical center in Broward County, making NSU and our region a top healthcare destination. We are pursuing a partnership to turn this vision into reality in the near future.

This partnership and its resulting medical center will become a new cornerstone for the university, our surrounding communities, and the state. This alliance will help expand access to quality, affordable care for tens of thousands in Florida.

It will help us increase our clinical trials from 20 to more than 100 in the next five years to strengthen the impact of our health-related research and innovation, and to help us address the state's shortage of healthcare professionals.

Students will have even more opportunities to learn, and the state will benefit from more qualified doctors and healthcare providers at a time of critical and growing need.

We stand now on a solid and promising financial foundation, but we must build upon it quickly and strategically.

Our university is strong. NSU contributes an estimated five billion dollars in annual economic impact to Florida.

We now have high bond ratings, putting us among an elite few.

But we cannot talk about the state of NSU in isolation without looking at the uncertain landscape around us.

We must also place our promising future in the context of the major challenges facing higher education today.

Higher education is experiencing dynamic funding challenges from government, challenges that will make our plans difficult to achieve without continued focus on financial efficiency, an educational experience that is valued, and the continuing investment of private individuals and organizations.

The priorities and initiatives I have outlined today are already well underway, and they set us apart from most in higher ed in terms of the return on investment in the education we deliver.

Our value proposition is founded on a high-quality graduate and professional education that will meet and exceed student demands and employers' needs in terms of time to degree, geographic and virtual options, and cost.

We integrate education with research, economic development, and patient care to exponentially increase the benefits to our students, our graduates, and their professions.

And in each of these areas...education, research, economic development, and patient and planet health...we are establishing new models for delivering excellence.

The model we have developed must be fueled by increasing our donor-supported and endowed scholarships, fellowships, and professorships, and by attracting greater investment in our research activities.

Some gifts truly are transformational, allowing us to have significant impact and supporting students, accelerating scientific breakthroughs, and translating that into better patient care all as part of one powerful package.

A case in point is the 41-million-dollar gift we received from David Husman to support NSU's Cathy J Husman ALS Center and the researchers, students and providers who are changing lives there every day.

Just like a great business, a great university is built on the belief, confidence, and commitment of its investors, people who contribute their time, resources, ideas, and energy into making our university the best it can be.

Getting there and reaching that next milestone to greatness will require the continued support and investment of everyone here today and the thousands of others whose lives and careers have been enhanced by our university.

In closing, you can see that the state of our university is strong and getting stronger every day.

Our vision to become Florida's top private research university is clearly in sight.

But as I've said before, this story of promise and progress is not about me or even about a presidency.

It's about all of us.

No one climbs Everest alone.

It takes a team, always working together to chart a course and scale new heights. As I look around this room...and think of those of you watching on livestream, I am reminded how fortunate we are to have each of you as part of this very worthwhile journey.

Let's bring up the house lights.

Trustees, partners, and donors, I thank you. There's more to come, my friends. We're counting on your leadership and support.

Thank you to my executive leadership team—the Cabinet and President's Council—who are moving these plans into implementation. As NSU's senior officers, deans, heads of schools, and vice presidents our shared strategic vision and dedication is strengthening, not only the colleges and divisions, but the university as a whole.

Thank you also to our faculty, healthcare providers, and researchers—the talent that makes this all possible.

And to the staff who support these teams and help make our campus communities the thriving places they are today.

A special shout out the Presidents 64 and student government leaders in the balcony ... thank you for your leadership and contributions to today's event.

And of course, most of all, thank you to our entire student body—here and at our regional locations.

You are the future. We want you to have all the tools you need to achieve your dreams and make your own impact on the world.

This impact is shared among the broader NSU alumni community. Thank you to all of the alumni here today or watching on the livestream.

Serving our students and our graduates is at the heart of our mission.

We are a community...a powerful community.

This...

All of you...

All of us...

This is what excellence looks like.

Thank you.

I am honored to be your president...and now let's get back to climbing!

Onward we go...and Fins Up!