

STM, WCA-Opelousas bring back state titles

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Semifinalists for Louisiana Tech president's job chosen

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

University of Louisiana System President Rick Gallot is out after three years of leading the system on the same day the board named four semifinalists for the Louisiana Tech University president's job.

The University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors hired current Louisiana Schools Superintendent Cade Brumley to replace Gallot effective Dec. 1 as its Nov. 13 meeting continued into the afternoon.

Gallot's resignation comes a day after The Advocate reported he owes $350,000 in federal income taxes going back to 2019, according to a tax lien filed with the East Baton Rouge Parish Clerk of Court's office.

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NASA moved the core stage, or the largest section, of the SLS (Space Launch System) rocket that will launch the crewed Artemis III mission in 2027 on April 20 from the agency's Michoud Assembly Facility to the agency's Pegasus barge in New Orleans. The hardware will be shipped to the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. NASA/MICHAEL DEMOCKER

Louisiana makes formal pitch for U.S. Space Academy campus

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Louisiana has made its case to host the future U.S. Space Academy campus at LSU New Orleans, submitting its formal proposal to NASA this week.

"Louisiana has helped America reach the stars for generations, and we are ready to help lead the next era of American spaceflight," Gov. Jeff Landry said. "The United States Space Academy belongs in a state that builds the rockets, supports our nation's military and is now home to the world's largest spaceport (Space X).

"By bringing together our world-class assets and partners across Louisiana, we are offering President Trump and NASA a home where the next generation of American space leaders can learn, train and prepare to carry our nation further than ever before."

Trump issued an executive order in August calling for the establishment of the U.S. Space Academy to support his U.S. Space Force, similar to the military academies for the Army, Navy and Air Force.

Louisiana's proposal would allow the Space Academy campus on the LSU New Orleans lakefront to host its first class of 300 cadets in fall 2028, grow to 1,200 cadets by fall 2031 and eventually reach 4,000 or more.

Other states are also competing for the Space Academy. Among them are Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Ohio, Texas and West Virginia.

The Space Academy campus would be located less than 10 miles from NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans, which has been known as "America's Rocket Factory" for decades building rockets supporting missions from Apollo to

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Buc-ee's under construction on Nov. 5 in Ruston. The store, 2026 open as soon as April 2027. GREG HILBURN/USA TODAY NETWORK

Ruston Buc-ee's store now hiring

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Buc-ee's is hiring key management positions for its first Louisiana store ahead of its planned April 2027 opening off of Interstate 20 in Ruston.

The company has posted five management positions, among them the assistant general manager that pays $125,000 per year.

Other posted positions include assistant deli manager ($37 per hour), human resources field representative ($27 per hour), grocery manager ($33 per hour) and deli team leader ($28 per hour).

Buc-ee's is expected to post the majority of its 200 jobs about three months before the Ruston store opens. Those entry level jobs pay $20-$25 per hour.

Ruston Mayor Ronny Walker noted the company also provide benefits like medial insurance, 401k matching and paid time off.

"These are important jobs that provide both a living wage and benefits," Walker said in an interview with USA Today Network.

Buc-ee's, with its toothy Beaver mascot, has developed a devoted following among travelers who consider the centers tourism destinations rather than just giant convenience stores with specialty foods, endless rows of gas pumps and pristine bathrooms.

Every Buc-ee's has a wide variety of culinary delights like its famous brisket, fudge, jerky and signature Buc-ee's Beaver Nuggets, which are similar to caramel popcorn, as well as branded merchandise.

Walker expects as many as 15,000 vehicles a day will stop at the Ruston Buc-ee's.

"People will stop here in northern Louisiana at the Buc-ee's who have never stopped here before," Walker said.

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Thanksgiving wasn't celebrated in Louisiana until 1846

Presley Bo Tyler
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Thanksgiving has been a celebrated holiday since the first gathering in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621.

However, the tradition of celebrating Thanksgiving didn't catch on across the Southern United States until much later.

In fact, Thanksgiving wasn't celebrated in Louisiana until 1846.

Thanksgiving history in Louisiana

Southern states didn't celebrate Thanksgiving until later due to the holiday initially being recognized as a New England custom. However, the holiday celebration gained traction when it was declared to be a day set aside for thanks and prayers.

Governor Alexandre Mouton declared Louisiana's first official Thanksgiving on Jan. 15, 1846, according to Hermann-Grima + Gallier Historic Houses.

Historically, Thanksgiving meals in Louisiana were different than what they are today. Instead of turkey as the main entree, wild duck was served as the center of the meal, due to duck being more available. Additionally, early Cajun Thanksgiving meals consisted of duck, desserts, gumbo, stuffed pumpkins, winter squash and other dishes.

In addition to this, Cajun Thanksgiving varied depending on what families had available to eat. For instance, if a hunt or harvest wasn't successful, then families would have Thanksgiving on a different day.

There are also historic traditions regarding Cajun and Creole Thanksgiving. These traditions include a pig slaughter beginning on Thanksgiving morning, baklava and other desserts, poker after the meal, a prayer after everyone says what they're thankful for, and a duck hunt to conclude Thanksgiving.

Presley Bo Tyler is the Louisiana Deep South Connect Team reporter for USA Today Network. Find her on X @PresleyTyler02 and email at PTyler@USATodayCo.com

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