

ATHLETICS

- The Statesmen football team made its ninth appearance in the NCAA Division II Football Championship Playoff.
- Delta State football coach Todd Cooley turned in another banner performance, finishing 9-4 in 2017 while returning to the NCAA Division II Championship Playoff. The Statesmen defeated Bowie State, 45-35, in the first round for DSU's first postseason victory since 2011. Senior running back Chris Robinson tied the school's career rushing touchdown record before signing with the Indianapolis Colts as an undrafted free agent.
- Delta State University's baseball legend Coach David "Boo" Ferriss was honored by the Mississippi legislature through an official senate resolution.
- Coach Doug Pinkerton and the Lady Statesmen Cross Country team returned to NCAA postseason play, finishing 15th at the NCAA South/Southeast Regional Meet in Lakeland, Florida. Freshman Rikita Saunders became just the second Lady Statesmen to earn All-Region honors with a 23rd place individual finish.
- In Easton Key's first season as head coach, Statesman golf roared back into national prominence with an 11th place finish at the NCAA Division II National Championship. Redshirt sophomore Zach Zediker, a finalist for the prestigious Jack Nicholas Award, claimed the Gulf South Conference's Individual Championship while leading the Statesmen to a second place team finish.
- Delta State Swimming and Diving returned to the NCAA Division II National Championships, qualifying 10 swimmers and six divers for the competition. The Statesmen claimed an impressive ninth place finish while the Lady Statesmen came in 26th. Giulio Brunoni, a freshman from Perugia, Italy, earned the NSISC Swimmer of the Year Award after leading the Statesmen back to the New South Intercollegiate Swim Conference Championship.
- Delta State baseball spent most of 2018 ranked in the nation's top five while finishing the campaign with a region-best 42-11 record. The Statesmen made the 39th trip to the NCAA Division II Baseball Championship Tournament, finishing fourth at the South Region Tournament.
- Mike Kinnison, who was named Gulf South Conference Coach of the Year, claimed his 900th career victory as

DSU's head coach during the season. Senior Finance major, Juwan Burney, a star member of Delta State's baseball team, and chair of the Division II National Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, has been appointed by the NCAA as a member of the Division II National Student-Athlete Advisory Committee representing the Gulf South Conference.

- Delta State senior Zack Shannon, the first NCAA Division II player to be named a semifinalist for USA Baseball's Golden Spikes Award, established a new school and state of Mississippi collegiate home run record with 31, breaking the previous mark of 29 held by Mississippi State All-Americans Rafael Palmeiro (1984) and Bruce Castoria (1981). The Cincinnati, Ohio native was named the NCAA Division II Baseball National Player of the Year for a second consecutive season and was a unanimous selection for All-America honors. He finished the 2018 season hitting .406 with 31 home runs and 93 RBIs. He was a 15th round draft pick by the Arizona Cardinals in the Major League Baseball Amateur Draft.

CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS

- The university saved a total of \$163,724 for the months of May through August, 2017, as a result of the university's summer utility savings program.
- Members of the Delta State campus gathered for a special celebration on September 29 to introduce the remodeled and upgraded Academic Support Lab, the home of the new Student-Athlete Academic Support Services program, which operates in partnership with the Mississippi Department of Human Services.
- Delta State entered into a partnership with Entergy that is refunding 50% of the cost of replacing exterior lights on campus with more efficient LED lights. The lights are 60% more efficient than the previous lights, and the entire cost of the project will be recouped within six months through energy savings and rebates.
- Considerable progress has been made on several campus construction projects, including the renovation of Zeigel Hall and Young-Mauldin Dining Hall, as well as the building of Statesmen Boulevard. Each project is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2018

William N. LaForge

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2017-18 HIGHLIGHTS

LEADERSHIP

- Delta State University President William N. LaForge, a member of the NCAA Division II President's Council, was appointed to the prestigious NCAA Division II Planning and Finance Committee. In the role, LaForge will take part in the division's central planning, as well as the financial aspects of the organization.
- Delta State announced two new programs to promote academic excellence and student success at the university. These initiatives include the Capstone Project and the Writing Skills Initiative Project. Both projects aim to increase academic excellence at the University. The Capstone Project will increase student learning by providing a Capstone experience for every student in every degree program.
- Delta State launched the Local Government Leadership Institute in partnership with the John C. Stennis Institute of Government and Community Development at Mississippi State University and the Mississippi Municipal League.
- Mr. Rick Munroe was hired as the new Vice President for University Advancement and External Relations. Munroe comes to Delta State with an impressive background in institutional advancement with more than 30 years of experience in administration, management, public relations, marketing, and fundraising.
- President William N. LaForge and First Lady Nancy LaForge helped to launch "Music Across Campus" by providing funds for the installation of 28 speakers placed around campus to feed music, programming, and announcements from the university's radio station, WDSW-LP 88.1 FM, and help cement Delta State's identity as a music-centric university.
- The Gertrude C. Ford Foundation, based in Jackson, Mississippi, pledged \$3 million to support the Center for Teaching and Learning at Delta State, making it one of the largest gifts in the university's history.

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2017-18 HIGHLIGHTS *continued*

LEADERSHIP (CON'D)

- For the second time in three years, the President’s Cabinet was able to provide a salary increase to employees for the 2018-19 year. Also, Delta State was able to reach its goal of raising the salaries of all employees making less than the living wage average of \$22,000 annually, up to the living wage.
- In February, Delta State announced PepsiCo as its new beverage vendor of choice for the next five years. PepsiCo will provide a large array of services and benefits, including an extensive line of beverages, a significant increase of revenue from commissions, a special partnership with Gatorade for athletic programs, card reader machines, and a number of student engagement events and promotional programs on campus.

CENTER FOR MUSIC & CULTURE

- The university’s signature Delta Music Institute (DMI) program was mentioned in an Architect Magazine article about GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi (GMM). The article credits the Delta Music Institute for having the most unique audio recording facilities in the South.
- Fighting Okra Records, a student-run record label housed in the DMI Entertainment Industry Program,, released its third compilation CD project in 2017, “Fighting Okra: Round 3,” featuring 17 tracks of original music either written, produced or recorded by DMI students.
- The Delta Music Institute offered a “Meet the Beatles!” course in the Spring 2018 semester. The class is an overview of the Beatles, both individually and collectively, as well as a study of their music and influence on the society of the 1960s.
- Delta State University hosted Civil Rides on April 5-6 in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil Rides was a three-day group bicycle ride from the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee to the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in Jackson, Mississippi. The trek followed the civil rights footsteps of King in an effort to raise awareness around persistent rural poverty in America, just as King did with the Poor People’s Campaign.
- The National Humanities Alliance recognized The Delta Center for Culture and Learning’s “Most Southern Place on Earth” Institute as one of a select group of high-impact programs funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

- The Delta Center for Culture and Learning and the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area recently received a 2016 National Park Service Centennial Award. Delta State was the only higher education institution and the MDNHA was the only National Heritage Area to receive a NPS Centennial Award this year.

SIGNATURE CONFERENCES

- The Delta State University Colloquia Distinguished Speakers Lecture Series featured Dr. Rod Paige, former United States Secretary of Education, in October 2017, and Mr. Fred Smith, founder and CEO of FedEx, in March 2018.
- The 4th annual International Conference on the Blues was held Oct. 1-3, 2017. It celebrated the centennial of John Lee Hooker’s birth, as well as the legacy of ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax, and his fieldwork in Mississippi.
- The Department of Commercial Aviation hosted President and CEO of the Memphis International Airport, Scott A. Brockman, for a Lunch and Learn event in November.
- The university’s award-winning race relations conference, Winning the Race, held its fifth annual event on March 26-27, featuring Kevin Powell, a political activist, poet, writer, and entrepreneur.

SERVICE & OUTREACH

- In June 2017, the College of Education and Human Sciences kicked off its 13th Literacy Across the Curriculum Institute (LACI) for teachers of grades 6-12.
- Delta State University welcomed Teach For America back to campus as the organization kicked off its ninth year of training hosted by the university.
- The Geospatial Information Technologies Center (GIT) produced detailed maps of the areas most affected by Hurricane Harvey in 2017 for first responders in Houston.
- Talbot Brooks, the director of the GIT Center, traveled to Nepal in 2017 to take part in a United Nations mission to evaluate the use of satellite information in disaster management and emergency response in the country.
- Delta State University received a \$1.15 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education for the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program to provide funding to increase the number of advanced and doctoral degrees in typically underrepresented groups and from disadvantaged backgrounds.



RANKINGS & HONORS

- Delta State was one of just 14 institutions nationwide recognized for its commitment to great teaching and student success. Delta State and the 13 other institutions recognized have adopted the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) as a scalable solution to train faculty in effective teaching.
- Delta State installed a new chapter of Phi Lambda Upsilon, a chemistry honor society. Charter members included 10 students (nine from Mississippi) and five faculty members.
- Delta State’s online programs continue to rank high nationally: The College of Education and Human Sciences ranked first in special education, second in teaching degrees and 11th in education. The Robert E. Smith School of Nursing was ranked as the No. 1 value for the online Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.
- SR Education Group recently named Delta State as the 18th most affordable online college in the country.
- Dr. Clifton Wingard, chair of the Department of Mathematics at Delta State, was named Teacher of the Year at the college level by the Mississippi Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM).
- The Delta State University Precision Flight Team took home second place honors at the Region IV Safecon Flight Team Competition in Waco, Texas.
- Delta State University earned 2018 Military Friendly® School designation.
- Delta State University student Paxton Stratton was recently selected as a 2018 Congressional Fellow for U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran of Mississippi.
- Delta State’s Department of Commercial Aviation received a \$25,000 grant from the American

- Airlines Pilot Recruiting and Development Program. Delta State was one of only 10 organizations in the country to be awarded one of these grants.
- Ms. Lynn Byrd, instructor of computer information systems at Delta State, was named the Mississippian of the Year by the Association of Information Technology Professionals chapter in Jackson.
- Delta State received the prestigious designation of being named to the Phi Theta Kappa 2018 Transfer Student Honor Roll. Delta State is one of just 112 institutions to receive this designation.
- Delta State’s Office of Admissions announced the distinguished class of 2018 Statesmen Scholars. All ten students will receive a “full ride” scholarship to the university.
- Delta State was approved for a Fulbright Scholar-in- Residence Program and was recommended for support funding. The first visiting Fulbright scholar will visit the campus in 2019.
- Dr. Dafang Faith Wang, a faculty member in the Department of Biological Sciences, received a \$50,000 Research Development Grant funded by Mississippi IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE). The grant is designed to support innovative basic or translational biomedical research.
- At its May Commencement Ceremony, Delta State bestowed an honorary doctorate on Mavis Staples, Rock and Roll Hall of Famer, GRAMMY Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Blues Hall of Fame inductee, Kennedy Center Honoree, and National Heritage Fellowship Award recipient.