

NORTHLAND CHRISTIAN Connection

One Faith, One Family, One Legacy

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT - Dr. Jim Drachenberg (Class of 2000)



Dr. Drachenberg is another Northland "long runner" and has gone on to pursue a career in Advanced Physics and higher education. Jim began attending Northland at a very young age when his mom, Paula Drachenberg, became the music teacher on campus. The Drachenberg family gave from the heart and left a lasting impact on many Cougars.

during their time at Northland. It is a blessing to see that Jim's foundation here helped him springboard into a successful future.

After receiving his Northland diploma in 2000, Jim completed his degree in Physics from ACU as a member of the Wildcat class of 2004. He went on to pursue his doctorate in Physics from Texas A&M in 2012 studying nuclear physics (exploring what the inside of a proton looks like). As a grad student, Jim joined an atom smasher experiment called "STAR" at Brookhaven National Laboratory. This experiment is currently taking the last of its data and its conclusions will be fascinating. STAR is an international collaboration of ~700 scientists and an exciting program in which to be included.

Over the next three years, Jim did a postdoc at Valparaiso University. He was able to serve in some leadership capacities on STAR over that time, including deputy spokesperson, from 2015-2018. In 2015, Jim received his first tenure-track position at Lamar University, and in 2018 he was able to return to ACU.

Jim has kept up his STAR research and, over the last 2-3 years, he's worked with the NEXT Lab at ACU studying molten salt nuclear reactor technology. Jim has worked with the monitors and controls team (measuring how the salt is flowing in the system, controlling the level, etc.) and in technology for nonproliferation (how to keep nuclear material away from the bad guys). Jim has been excited to be able to share some of his research with recent Northland grad and current ACU freshman, Jake McCathran, who has a strong interest in science related careers.

Most importantly, Jim is married with a couple of kiddos and serves as a deacon at the Oldham Lane church of Christ. He is proud to serve as a leader at the congregation where his family has attended since arriving in Abilene. Jim is a fantastic representative of Northland Christian and we are proud to claim him as a member of the class of 2000!

*Jim is pictured above with Mrs. Graves and Mrs. Sherwin when they visited his congregation in Abilene last year.

ELEMENTARY

Taste of Texas Field Trip

The fourth graders had the opportunity to visit the Taste of Texas for a field trip earlier this month. Our students learned several interesting facts about the history of our great state! We also got to see many amazing historical artifacts that the owners of the restaurant have collected over the years, including original signatures from Sam Houston and Davy Crockett! Our very own, Maryn Ingram, got to dress up and play the part of Susannah Dickinson, one of the few survivors of the Alamo. Students got to tour the kitchen of the restaurant and even experienced the chill of their freezer. We were hungry after all that learning, which was a good thing, because the Taste of Texas treated us to a yummy lunch of chicken fingers and steak fries! It was a great outing!





Spelling Bee Stars

On January 15, 2026, the elementary school had their annual Spelling Bee. One student representative from each 1st-5th grade class stood on the stage, and in front of the entire school, spelled words they had studied over the last month! We are so proud of our students who participated, as well as the alternates, who were ready to step in, if needed! Ultimately, our winner was 5th grader Annie Nguyen, and our runner-up was 5th grader Emme Bekker.





SECONDARY

NCS Theatre Recognized with Tommy Tune Nominations

Our fall musical, *James and the Giant Peach*, was evaluated by local theatre professionals in connection with Theatre Under the Stars (TUTS) for the Tommy Tune Awards. Congratulations to the following cast members for receiving nominations:

Outstanding Lead Actor:

Loghan McDonald
Matthew Forbes
Abi Chacon
Hallie Bowles

Outstanding Supporting Actor:

Cydney Reddix
Christina Xiu

*Each year, Theatre Under The Stars honors the outstanding achievements of high school musical theatre students through the **Tommy Tune Awards**. In 2025 alone, more than 6,000 students from 72 schools participated — culminating in a dazzling ceremony at the Hobby Center where more than 600 students performed live on stage.*

The Tommy Tune Awards recognize excellence both onstage and behind the scenes, inspiring students to pursue their artistic dreams, providing professional-level feedback, and strengthening Houston's cultural community.

*The Tommy Tune Awards is the official regional program of the **National High School Musical Theatre Awards® (The Jimmy Awards®)**.*



Middle School Science Stars

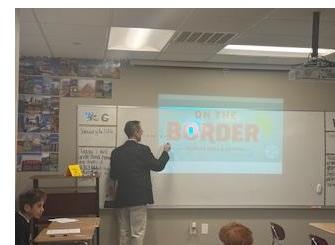
Middle School science students learned through hands-on activities and experimentation during the month of January. The 8th grade IPC (Physics) students were able to measure how friction affects the movement of objects. Using items of differing sizes, materials, and weights they were able to determine which of these were most affected by friction acting upon them.

Our 7th grade life science students have been studying protists and fungi. Using microscopes, they were able to get a close-up look at amoeba, paramecium, spirogyra, and euglena. After making observations and drawing each specimen each student researched how each moves, eats, and the method of reproduction. Students were excited when they were able to visually identify the method of movement in the specimens under each microscope.



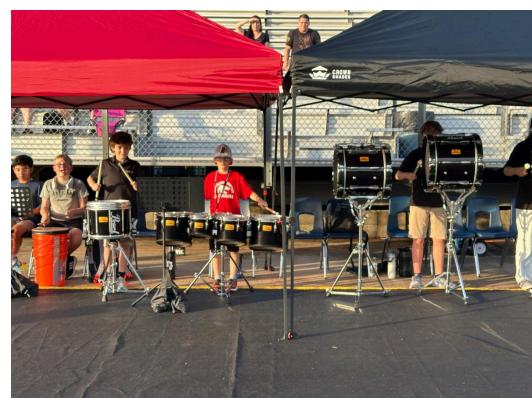
6th Grade Career Day

Mrs. Bazunu's 6th grade social studies classes have been studying careers in our area and ways that they affect our economy. These lessons culminated in a Career Day in which parents were invited to come and discuss their professions. What a fun day for all!



Northland Christian Drumline

The Northland Christian Drumline and Bucket Brigade "Sound of Spirit" is reaching out to High School, Middle School, and Elementary school students who would like to become members of this special group of students. No prior experience is necessary, only a desire to share your energy and school spirit at football games, basketball games, pep rallies, and special school events. Please contact Brother Patrick at bcallahan@northlandchristian.org



STUCO Blood Drive

The high school Student Council hosted our second blood drive of the year for the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center on Wednesday. We had 30 units given which saves 90 lives! Thank you to all the students, staff, and parents who gave blood to make it a success!



Debate Travels to Durham

Debaters traveled to North Carolina last weekend and had great results at the Cavalier Invitational hosted by Durham Academy. If a student wins an event at this tournament, they earn a replica sword as their trophy. NCS received five replica swords!

Congratulations to Aiden Buchanan, Margo Meaney, Kate VanWormer, Paige Bryant, and LaRya Prince for winning the World Schools Division. They also received their first bid to the Tournament of Champions hosted in Kentucky each year.

In Congress, Shepard Boyd was a semi-finalist. Because of his previous successes this season, he was invited to compete in the Cavalier Challenge. After competing against the top kids from the tournament, he placed 2nd!

In Lincoln Douglas, Liam was a quarter-finalist (placing in the top 8). Liam was also invited to the Cavalier Challenge in LD and placed 6th.

The team's next out of town tournament will take place at Harvard in February!





AMC 8 Math Competition

We are proud to recognize the nine 6th and 7th grade students who represented our school in this year's AMC 8 mathematics competition. The AMC 8 is designed to challenge students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and our participants rose to the occasion with focus, persistence, and intellectual courage. Their participation reflects a strong work ethic and a willingness to engage deeply with challenging mathematics—an accomplishment worth celebrating. Thank you, Mr. Bauer, for encouraging our students to take on this challenge!

We also celebrate with Mr. Bauer as he had two students from the AMC 12 score in the top 5% nationally. This is quite an accomplishment and speaks highly of our hard-working and talented students!



"Mystery Regions" in World Geography

Students are taking learning into their own hands in Mrs. Bazunu's freshman World Geography class! They were given 3 "Mystery" regions. Their objective was to use clues, geography knowledge, and maps to determine the possible region of study. Once the regions were

revealed, students used a digital voting poll to vote on the region they would like to study the most. The winner, Asia!



Junior Class Service Day

Our Junior Class spent the day serving at the Houston Food Bank, putting faith into action by helping sort and pack food for families in need across our city. Through teamwork, compassion, and hard work, our students experienced the joy of serving others and making a real impact in the Houston community.

We are so proud of our Juniors for living out Christ's call to serve and for representing Northland Christian School with servant hearts!





Northland Orchestra at TPSMEA

Congratulations to our students who participated in the **TPSMEA** All State Convention this past weekend. It was a wonderful weekend of learning, laughing, and incredible music making!

Greg Lincoln represented our orchestra, earning a spot in the Viola section for his 3rd year. He competed against students from across Texas and prepared audition music and then reauditioned with the concert music (Janacek's Suite for Strings and Dabke by Roustom). The students were so fortunate to work under the direction of Dr. Michelle Perrin Blair, a doctoral graduate of UH Moores School of Music and a TPSMEA member herself.

Congratulations students, teachers, parents, and all who have supported these students in their Fine Arts paths!





Cougar Choir at TPSMEA

Congratulations to Addi White on her admittance and participation in the TPSMEA all-state choir clinic and concert! The best choral students from all over the state of Texas gathered this past weekend to perform in Dallas under the inspired direction of Dr. Gary Seighman, Director of Choral Studies at Trinity University. Selection for the choir is a tremendous honor, and we are so proud of Addi! This is Addison's second year to be selected as a member of the All-State Choir.



ATHLETICS

Cougar Tennis

The Northland Tennis team had its first match and came away with a team victory. Peter Liang took first place in his division and Ian Jahnke also won first place. In the girls division, Paige Bryant took second place.



8th Grade Recognition

The middle school soccer and basketball teams both recognized their 8th graders as they are ending their middle school careers and transitioning into high school sports. Coach Jeliah was proud to recognize Charley, Sophia, and Evva who were all great leaders to the younger students this season. They finished the season with a hard-fought game against Legacy and celebrated their success over the season.

Our middle school soccer teams also recognized their 8th graders for the leadership they showed to the younger players over the course of the season. Coach Acosta and Coach Oscar were proud to recognize Casey, Itzy, Natalie, Rya, and Danielle. Coaches Ortega, Lewis, and Duke honored Ben, Julian, Paul, Jonny, Derrick, Sammy, and Barrett. The girls finished their season on a high note while the boys will continue into the playoffs. We are grateful to our 8th graders for helping lead Cougar soccer into the future!



Soccer Snapshots

The High School soccer teams are in the thick of their seasons and continue to show up strong! The ladies have been battling hard against their opponents as the men remain undefeated in district play. Keep it up and way to go, Cougars!



February Lunch Menu

FEBRUARY 2026

ELEMENTARY NCS

DAILY GRAB & GO

INCLUDES FRESH VEGETABLE AND SMALL FRUIT CUP

Sunbutter & Jelly on Wheat
Ham Sandwich on Wheat
Turkey Sandwich on Wheat

OTHER DAILY OPTIONS:
 BAKED POTATO BAR, SALADS,
 VEGETABLE ENTREE
 GLUTEN SENSITIVE MEALS
 NEW TO THE MENU:
 2 VEGETABLE OPTIONS DAILY
 FISH AVAILABLE ON FRIDAYS

2	3	4	5	6
	Alabama Grilled Chicken Bites Twice Baked Potatoes Sweet Peas or Mini Corn Dogs	Chicken or Pizza Enchiladas Spanish Rice Black Beans Cucumber & Tomato Salad	Carbonara Pasta Green Beans Alfredo or Marinara Sauce w/ Grilled Chicken Garlic Bread or Turkey Melt Slider	Waffles, Bacon, Eggs, & Fresh Fruit or Seafood Lasagna (Alfredo, Shrimp & Spinach)
9	10	11	12	13
	National Pizza Day Buffalo Chicken, Cheese, or Pepperoni Pizza House Salad Fresh Fruit	Chicken Nuggets Grilled or Crispy Red Bean, Jasmine Rice, Collard Greens w/ Watermelon Chow Chow	National Latte Day Pasta Bar Nut-Free Pesto or Marinara Sauce, Grilled Chicken or Italian Sausage, Broccoli, Honey Sage Bread	French Toast Turkey Sausage Miso Maple Carrots Mini Fresh Fruit Smoothie or Monte Cristo Sandwich
16	17	18	19	20
	No School	Crispy or Grilled Chicken Slider Potato Salad or Seasoned Red Potatoes Roasted Beets	Spaghetti & Meatballs Ground Chicken Meatballs Available Marinara Sauce Roasted Cauliflower Focaccia Bread	Blueberry or Plain Pancakes Bacon, Eggs, Fruit Salad
23	24	25	26	27
	National Banana Bread Day Chicken Nuggets Grilled or Crispy w/ Peruvian dipping sauce Scalloped Potatoes Buttered Corn Mini Slice of Banana Bread	Hamburger or Cheeseburger Greek Salad Baked Waffle Fries	Mac & Cheese Bar Grilled Chicken or Chopped Maple Bacon Zucchini Garlic Bread	Ham & Cheese Kelache Sautéed Red Cabbage Fresh Fruit or Jerk Chicken Sautéed Red Cabbage Rice & Peas

FEBRUARY 2026

SECONDARY NCS

DAILY GRAB & GO

Monday	Chicken Tenders
Tuesday	Shrimp Basket
Wednesday	Grilled or Crispy Chicken Sandwich
Thursday	Burger Day
Friday	Chicken Wings

OTHER DAILY OPTIONS:
 BAKED POTATO BAR, VEGETABLE ENTREE, SALADS &
 GLUTEN SENSITIVE MEALS
 NEW TO THE MENU:
 2 VEGETABLE OPTIONS DAILY
 FISH AVAILABLE ON FRIDAYS

2	3	4	5	6
	Alabama Grilled Chicken Bites Twice Baked Potatoes Sweet Peas or Mini Corn Dogs	Chicken or Pizza Enchiladas Spanish Rice Black Beans Cucumber & Tomato Salad	Carbonara Pasta Green Beans Alfredo or Marinara Sauce w/ Grilled Chicken Garlic Bread or Turkey Melt Slider	Waffles, Bacon, Eggs, & Fresh Fruit or Seafood Lasagna (Alfredo, Shrimp & Spinach)
9	10	11	12	13
	National Pizza Day Buffalo Chicken, Cheese, or Pepperoni Pizza House Salad Fresh Fruit	Southern Fried or Balsamic Grilled Chicken Red Beans, Jasmine Rice, Collard Greens w/ Watermelon Chow Chow	National Latte Day Pasta Bar Nut-Free Pesto or Marinara Sauce, Grilled Chicken or Italian Sausage, Broccoli, Honey Sage Bread	French Toast Turkey Sausage Miso Maple Carrots Mini Fresh Fruit Smoothie or Monte Cristo Sandwich
16	17	18	19	20
	No School	Chicken Philly Potato Salad or Seasoned Red Potatoes Roasted Beets	Spaghetti & Meatballs Ground Chicken Meatballs Available Marinara Sauce Roasted Cauliflower Focaccia Bread	Bourbon Chicken Jasmine Rice Vegetable Egg Roll Green Beans
23	24	25	26	27
	National Banana Bread Day Chicken Nuggets Grilled or Crispy w/ Peruvian dipping sauce Scalloped Potatoes Buttered Corn Mini Slice of Banana Bread	Chicken Gyros Greek Salad Baked Waffle Fries	Mac & Cheese Bar Grilled Chicken or Chopped Maple Bacon Zucchini Garlic Bread	Ham & Cheese Kelache Sautéed Red Cabbage Fresh Fruit or Jerk Chicken Sautéed Red Cabbage Rice & Peas

Connect with us



Northland Christian School | 4363 Sylvanfield Drive | Houston, TX 77014 US

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