



LSUS fishing team
reels in victories.
—Pg. 4

Professor
explores the
“dark side”

Malvia Chintakindi
STAFF WRITER

Dr. JohnVassar, interim provost, shared his experiences of being in the position in a lecture titled “Notes from the Dark Side: Reflections on Serving a Year as Interim Provost” last Friday in the Science Building during Common Hour.



Photo by Malvia Chintakindi
Dr. John Vassar, interim provost, offered a no-holds-barred discussion about his time in that office.

Vassar joined the LSU Shreveport faculty in 2000 and opened his heart by describing his encounters with various people and the lessons learned in the process. The crowd included about thirty people including Dr. Paul Sisson, interim chancellor, along with several other professors.

Vassar divided the lecture into three sections. One was named “those things I knew,” second was “those things I knew I didn’t know,” and the third was “those things I don’t know.”
See DARK, pg. 2

New chancellor talks LSUS

Christopher Talerico
STAFF WRITER

The chancellor has been chosen and Dr. Lawrence “Larry” Clark will begin his tenure as chancellor shortly before the fall 2014 semester.
Clark is already well versed in the challenges that LSU Shreveport faces.
“I believe the biggest issues will be building team [both within LSUS and the community], overcoming budget challenges, becoming more attractive for new students and achieving a stronger focus on career/graduate school preparation and placement,” Clark said.

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[What am I] dreading? That which must occur before our move to Shreveport—packing moving boxes, convincing our golden retriever that change will be good, etc.
Dread concerning LSUS?
None.

- Dr. Lawrence Clark

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Clark surely plans to make some big changes, but he is really big on one thing: teamwork.
“My vision for the future is for LSUS to be recognized as being an outstanding university. LSUS is already a very good university. We need to be about teamwork, better tell the LSUS story, work more in collaboration with



Photo courtesy of Lawrence Clark

Dr. Lawrence Clark will begin his tenure as chancellor in July.

partners and continue to look for ways in which LSUS can make a major difference in the region,” Clark said.
Despite the ever-present budget issues, Clark is also well aware that some feel student life on campus is lacking and he is eager to find solutions.

“Enhanced student life on campus is important to both attract and retain students. I look forward to meeting with the Student Government Association to hear their ideas,” Clark said. “I understand that several years ago a student recreation center was put before LSUS students but voted down. I get that the
See CLARK, pg. 2

Community support swells with Clark appointment

Corey Drummond
STAFF WRITER

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Michael Woods, president of Woods Operating Company, showed support for the appointment of Dr. Lawrence Clark as LSU Shreveport’s new chancellor on Feb. 27 by donating \$60,000 to LSUS to establish the Michael H. Woods Family First Generation Scholarship.
“Mr. Woods called me the morning of the announcement. From the initial discussion to the donation, everything transpired within days of the appointment of Larry Clark. It was a gesture of support for the new chancellor,” said Laura Perdue, LSUS foundation executive director. “The only requirement is that the student be a first-generation college student and enrolled full-time.”
Woods, a 1975 graduate of LSUS, previously funded another scholarship of its kind. He is setting up this scholarship with the knowledge of how difficult it can be to finance college admission. Woods explained his parents’ situation and recognizes the importance of the college experience.
Soon after the announcement of the donation, Woods

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- Laura Perdue

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was quoted in a press release, “Education, specifically higher education, is a commitment I have made for my charitable dollars. My father was a first generation college student; my mother, one of four girls, couldn’t even afford to get a college degree. It is important to us, and my family knows firsthand the impact a degree can have on someone.”
The charitable donation is combined with a gift from the state to set up the scholarship. The process for establishing it has just begun and involves many intricacies. It will take time to set up the details.
“This scholarship is matched with \$40,000 from the state. The total \$100,000 will then be invested, and the returns will be used for the scholarship. I would anticipate the entire process will take a year of investing to enable us to make the first award possible in the Fall of 2015,” Perdue said.
Clark will not take up the chancellor position until July 1. However, he has stated his appreciation of the Woods family for their donation and their dedication to the LSUS community.
The Louisiana Board of Regents established the First-
See DONATION, pg. 2



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Does Bronson Hall have a ghostly new student?



A week ago Friday, this mysterious pair of coveralls was found outside the communications office by Dr. Linda Webster.

The coveralls appear studious, notepad in hand, perhaps waiting to be advised for the fall semester.

However, this studious swatch of fabric could not stay long, disappearing less than an hour after first being spotted by Webster.

Are the coveralls all that remains of a ghostly past student in Bronson Hall? The only visible part of a student in an exchange program from Charles Xavier's mutant school? Or maybe a prank, set up by a student with a "cover-all" sense of humor?

Photos courtesy of Linda Webster



DARK cont.



Photo by Malvya Chintakindi

The crowd listens to Vassar with rapt attention.

things I didn't know at all." Under these different sections, Vassar categorized all his perceptions and spoke candidly.

"In November of 2012, Dr. Sisson sent me an email that read 'John, would you have a few minutes to come by the office this afternoon?' I sent it on to Karen, my wife, and said simply 'This can't be good!'" Vassar said while explaining his appointment. "I was right, and I was wrong."

He spoke openly of relationships and how they can be strength as well as weakness.

"C. K. Gunsalus, The College Administrators Survival Guide said of faculty their attitude toward administrators is often one of disdain: a commonly heard quip asserts that an academic who takes on administrative role loses 20 I.Q. points," Vassar said.

Vassar included quotations, research, and a little humor in his lecture to make it more contextual and gripping. He remarked how his interaction with Dr. Sisson has helped him and what an excellent leader Sisson is.

"I knew that I would be working closely with Dr. Paul Sisson. The circumstances into which he stepped into this office were remarkable. LSU had lost their president, LSU [Alexandria] had lost their president, the Board of Supervisors had decided not to renew Lombardi, a lengthy power outage on campus, and Chancellor Marsala retired. I've

never worked as closely, seen someone so often both on- and off-campus, and been so impressed by their consistency," Vassar said.

He also explained his hopes and challenges for the future while recognizing the new chancellor and his outstanding abilities.

"I don't know what the next year holds. I am excited about Mr. Clark's arrival. I think that he will bring about a renewed sense of energy, new plans, and the greatest connections with the community that we have ever had," Vassar said.

There was a question-and-answer session after the lecture for faculty interaction and to shed light on untouched topics. Vassar replied to everyone who asked a question.

"We just had an interesting talk from Dr. Vassar. I've been here for 24 years and I think this is the first time I heard an administrator tell us from the inside what his job is like. It is very easy for us to look at someone who is effectively our boss and go 'he doesn't understand' but he does understand," said Helen Taylor, professor of English.

Vassar ended the talk saying, "College is such a formative time in a person's life. We are all privileged to get to play a role in shaping and forming these students. We have the honor and privilege of helping students to perceive this world around us."

He reiterated that no matter how a professor educates, they get to shape reality.

CLARK cont.

current tuition and fees are already a challenge for LSUS students. However, it may be time to at least explore this idea."

The journey was a long one, beginning in September when the LSUS Chancellor Search Committee posted the administrative opening in the Chronicle for Higher Education.

"This is the only institution where I was seeking a leadership position. The LSUS position announcement... set forth a number of challenges, including enrollment, funding and community relations/development. I was encouraged to consider the opportunity. I did," Clark said.

Clark was selected from four candidates by LSU System President Dr. F. King Alexander and the LSU System Supervisory Board.

"The wait seemed long because I wanted so much to be offered the privilege to return as Chancellor of LSUS. When President Alexander offered me the position I almost could not talk- I was that happy to hear his words," Clark said.

Clark has already worked at LSUS once before, serving from 1985 to 1994 as the Dean of Business. He was involved in various events that benefited LSUS the institution.

"I know and respect the mission, culture and history of LSUS. I know the quality of the faculty and staff and of the LSUS graduates over time," Clark said. "I believe my leadership experiences, both at LSUS and since, will help me to be effective at LSUS in building teams and helping to further move LSUS towards becoming a really outstanding university."

Clark has his work cut out for him full of challenges that lay ahead, but those are challenges he embraces – mostly.

"[What am I] dreading? That which must occur before our move to Shreveport- packing moving boxes, convincing our golden retriever that change will be good, etc. Dread concerning LSUS? None."

DONATION cont.

Generation Endowed Scholarships Program in 2007 to help admission and access to first generation college students. Based on this program, establishments for first generation scholarships require a private benefactor to fund 60 percent of an endowment and the Board of Regents to match them with 40 percent.

The LSUS Foundation is a nonprofit corporation responsible for managing the funds and support of private investors for the school.



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Behind-the-scenes of the LSUS drama club production

Emily Wright
STAFF WRITER

The LSU Shreveport Drama Club will be presenting three short plays in April including David Ives’ absurdist comedy, *Sure Thing*.
“I am really looking forward to actually performing these plays because they are so humorous, and there’s not a part where you don’t laugh,” said Drama Club President Modesté Golston.

Golston is playing the part of Betty in *Sure Thing*. Director Robert Alford II, associate professor of arts and media, said the plot of this one-act play explores various situations that could happen between a couple and what a dinner date may turn out like.

“You don’t have to try really hard to become the character that’s being played. Everything feels natural and I truly believe that each person fit the character’s description,” Golston said.

Alford said the two other one-act plays to be performed are *Dances with Football* by Prince Duren, a zany comedy about a husband and wife arguing over different programs they want to watch and fighting over the remote control and *Wright and Wrong* by Phoebe Torres, an absurdist comedy which revolves around a mother, two daughters, and violated rules associated with their gated community.

Golston also plays the role of Hannah in *Wright and Wrong*. She thinks students will enjoy the three one-act comedies very much.

“I know they will love it. Mostly everyone can relate to all three of these plays. It’s what we all go through with just



Photo courtesy of Modesté Golston
Modesté Golston, drama club president

dealing with loved ones and life,” Golston said.
The three plays were chosen by Alford because of the interest students expressed, as well as his own interest.
The first play, *Sure Thing*, was chosen because of the interest that students raised in Alford’s introduction to acting class last semester.

Alford picked the other two plays, *Dances with Foot-*

balls and *Wright and Wrong*, from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.

The KCACTF is a nationwide theater program for students enrolled in colleges or universities. The national, state, and regional festivals are held across the country and strengthen the knowledge and professionalism students receive from participating in their school’s theater program.

In addition to that festival, Alford said there is a competition where writers write a 10-minute play. Judges then pick from those written plays and choose the best of those to be performed in readings. This competition is where he discovered *Dances with Footballs* and *Wright and Wrong*.

“It’s not a full production but a stage reading of those during the festival,” Alford said. “I went to that last year and two of those I really liked. I contacted the playwrights and asked them if they would be interested in having a production of their play and they both said yes. I thought they would be a good fit with a good comedy.”

Southern Girls by Sheri Bailey and *Dura Temple*, a drama presented by the LSUS Drama Club last semester, was entered into the state festival of the competition last year, along with many other college and university entries.

“The regional festival of the American College Theatre Festival is going to be here in Shreveport. It was here last year and it will be here next year, too. So for three years it will be in Shreveport, which is unusual because it’s usually in Dallas or St. Louis,” Alford said.

The performance dates of the Drama Club production of the three one-act comedies are April 24 through April 26 at 8 p.m., and April 27 at 2 p.m in the LSUS Black Box Theatre, BH 111.

LSUS shirks national trend toward hiring adjuncts

Christopher Talerico
STAFF WRITER

The employment landscape of the academe is changing and has been changing for some time now. Increasingly, institutions of higher education have been hiring part-time employees in favor of full-time, tenured professors. What once was a strategy intended to provide temporary, supplemental assistance has evolved to become the dominant administrative paradigm in the nation.

But at LSU Shreveport, everything has been done to buck that trend and retain as many full-time faculty as possible.

“We’re one of the few colleges our size that have not put into the paper these massive lay-offs. Our administration has been trying to protect both the tenured and non-tenured full-time positions to the detriment of our staff, travel budgets, facility service budgets, adjunct budgets, even on some level our services for students,” said Mary Jarzabek, faculty senate president and non-tenured professor.

While that may make employment precarious for part-time faculty, it is sometimes accepted as the cost of providing secure employment for the institution at large.

“As I think about the steps that I need to take to become tenure-track [full-time], suddenly I see – you know, I of course think that adjuncts deserve certain rights but as I think about like when I am tenure-track [full-time], what if suddenly they’re looking at cutting my job. You know, from my perspective I’d probably be looking at it and saying, ‘yeah, the adjuncts should go before I do,’” said Amy Roper, part-time LSUS English instructor.

Starting in the 1970s, the trend in faculty hiring of adjuncts and other non-tenure track positions over tenured or tenure track positions has skyrocketed to a rate of 70% of all higher education faculty (this number includes instructors at trade schools and community colleges) as reported in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. *GPB News* details that the vast majority of those adjunct positions are part-time. This is a problem because adjuncts are compensated at a much lower rate than tenure or tenure-track professors, and that can directly impact the effectiveness of instruction provided. This upswell of adjunct ranks with a stagnation of compensation has led to virtually entire campuses organizing into or with unions.

LSUS currently hires roughly 25% non-tenured instructors.

“Come on, your loyalty [to your employer] is going to be affected whether you’re part-time or full-time. Part-time people don’t have the same level of loyalty, interaction, or participation in the governance of the institution as a [full-time employee] does. Faculty governance is supposed to go hand-in-hand with the administrators, determining the goals and performance within their institution. [If] you don’t have a real deep pool of people that have the history, participation, and knowledge and dedication to that university to be actively involved in its governance...then it becomes just an administrative model,” Jarzabek said.

One persistent problem in the contemporary jobscape is the degree of education obtained by the part-time instructors. Over 90% of adjuncts hold post-graduate degrees, more than half of those hold doctorates within their fields of study as well. However, with an average of \$30,000 in debt from getting a masters and \$90,000 in debt for getting a doctorate, \$18,000 per year barely covers the student loan payments.

The term “adjunct” is a job title modifier. It indicates that the employee is a temporary, contract employee. The contract may last anywhere from one term (eight weeks) to a few years with one year being the most common. At LSUS, adjuncts are referred to as “instructors” and are both part and full-time. Many are hired semester to semester, never knowing if they will be employed from one 16-week period to the next. Part-time professors are often given less time to prepare as well, sometimes as little as one month to a single day. This cannot help but negatively impact the instruction students receive – through no fault of the instructor who is as much a victim of the system as the student.

“If you’re going to be an adjunct I think you’re already going into a shaky, risky kind of thing. It’s a supplemental thing. It’s something that if you were cut, you would survive. You would have another option kind of thing you could go to. It’s always a concern and it’s always something that makes you angry if it happens to you, but it’s not entirely unexpected,” Roper said.

But short notice of class openings and terminations are far from the worst inconvenience many adjuncts around the country face. A January report by the House Education and the Workforce Committee disclosed that the average national salary for adjunct and non-tenure track professors was \$22,041 per year. For a single parent of two, the poverty level is a little over \$18,000. That national salary average includes the fact that 89% of adjunct instructors work at more than one institution. Many adjunct instructors are a medical disaster away from bankruptcy as the vast majority of institutions for higher education do not provide any form of health insurance to adjunct professors either.

“Most people without tenure around here have yearly contracts. But they are given one year’s notice. If you’ve worked here for more than three years you will have a one year notice that your contract will not be renewed at the end of [that] year,” Jarzabek said.

If adjuncting were consistently a temporary step along the inevitable track to tenure, then there may not be such an organized movement. But it is becoming increasingly common for instructors who begin adjuncting to become stuck adjuncting. The reasons are varied, but have a lot to do with the amount of time the professor is able to allocate towards research and publishing within their field. This can be, and often is, a problem for adjuncts who do not make enough money to pursue the requisite publications that would advance their careers.

For tenured and tenure-track professors, this is less of an issue. They are expected to conduct research and publish their findings in various academic and scholarly journals, and

that time is often factored into the workload at their institution.

LSUS has generally sought to keep as many tenured and full-time professors possible.

“At this point in my life, I’m adjuncting and I’m totally fine with that, but I have a goal to become tenure-track somewhere down the road. So it’s interesting to me because I’m thinking about my role currently as an adjunct, but I’m knowing in the future that I’m wanting to be tenure-track,” Roper said.

The vicious cycle with career advancement for adjuncts, has created an institutional system in which part-time instructors are second-class employees. This “two-tiered” system is detailed by Keith Hoeller in the book *Equality for Contingent Faculty* and reported by *Inside Higher Ed*: “[The] two-track system in academe does set up two entirely separate, but unequal, tiers in which the upper tier, the tenure track, is treated in a vastly superior manner to the lower tier, the non-tenure track, which is treated as inferior.”

However, some part-time instructors are starting to organize, acting as a single body for bargaining purposes and either joining or forming unions. Adjuncts that are part of a union earn an average of \$600 more per course than adjuncts that have no union membership. *GPB News* reported that 22% of all adjuncts nationwide are unionized, and that number is growing. The second largest such union for public sector professionals is the Service Employees International Union or SEIU which represents many of the campuses with adjuncts unionizing.

“My only problem with unions is just like the administration: at some point they lose track of what their idealistic goals were, and then it’s all about money. It becomes lobbying efforts in the state legislature. It becomes a nasty voice always in the ear of the governor, and it becomes where maybe the best decisions are not being made. I see the need for unions, but I’ve personally chosen not to join one. I don’t think that that is necessarily the best way to go about this,” Jarzabek said.

Union adjuncts point to the national trend where administration positions are not only increasing at a much greater rate than the actual instructors, but the administration salary has increased at much higher rates as well, reported in the *Chronicle for Higher Education*. The highest compensated administrator was E. Gordon Gee, President of Ohio State University with a baseline salary of close to \$2 million. In 2011, the average salary of public-college presidents was between two to four times the average salary of their respective full-time professors.

At LSUS, administration and staff outnumbers faculty. But salaries for instruction consist of about \$12 million while salaries for administration and staff are only \$4.5 million combined in 2010. Regardless, LSUS is blazing a trail of its own, by going against the national administrative trends and hopefully improving the experience of its students along the way.

New MCAT rubs salt in the wound of medical students

Corey Drummond
STAFF WRITER

Students of LSU Shreveport will face many challenges when applying to Medical School. The updated Medical College Admission Test in 2015 will make an already difficult goal even more so.

According to Dr. Tara Williams-Hart, chair of the health science advisory committee, the biggest challenge for students is the MCAT. This standardized, multiple-choice exam evaluates the critical thinking and problem solving skills relevant to the study of medicine of an examinee.

Hilary Harris, senior, molecular/cellular biology, has been accepted to LSU Health Shreveport School of Medicine. Saad Shams, junior, molecular/cellular biology, is applying to medical school and plans to take the MCAT a second time.

“The MCAT is very different from any standardized test I have ever faced in the past. It isn’t one of those things that you can really study for. The main challenges when it comes to the MCAT are building up your endurance and learning to look at the big picture,” Harris said.

Shams also feels the pressure of the MCAT. He has taken several high-level courses to give him an edge is his first attempt of the exam.

“I feel that the MCAT is my greatest obstacle when applying to medical school. Having taken more classes and the MCAT once, I feel more prepared for it next time. Along with the MCAT, I have constantly worked to improve other aspects such as my GPA, interview skills, and social skills,” Shams said.

Students must take the test to apply to Medical School. It already dissects the student’s knowledge of science and medicine, but the MCAT 2015 will add another field of science to the information applicants will need to understand.

“There is a new social sciences section and it involves their understanding of psychology and sociology because doctors need to know people. They want to make sure that students have an academic understanding of individuals and

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The MCAT is very different from any standardized test I have ever faced in the past. It isn’t one of those things that you can really study for. The main challenges when it comes to the MCAT are building up your endurance and learning to look at the big picture.

- Hilary Harris

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society,” Hart said. The MCAT 2015 will make other changes as well. Of course, there are annual changes to the natural sciences section to reflect recent changes in medical education.

Outside of the addition of psychological and social sciences to the exam, new Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills sections have been added to reflect the medical school’s desires for well-rounded applicants from a variety of backgrounds.

LSUS students typically apply to either medical school or the ULM pharmacy school. ULM produces pharmacists that generate and distribute most of the prescription drugs in Louisiana, but they have other roles with a higher rate of patient contact.

The MCAT’s blend of cognitive skills with physical and biological science and verbal reasoning means future pharmacists and doctors will have to prepare, but it might not be that easy.

“I don’t think anyone ever feels prepared for the exam. You just have to take as many practice tests as you can and become very aware of the testing style,” Harris said.

When students apply to medical school, they can be recommended by the health science advisory committee. These recommendations can significantly increase their chances of being accepted.

While the statistics for recommended students accepted to medical school need to be updated to reflect the past three to five years, Hart estimates that 60% of “recommended” and 70% of “highly recommended” students are accepted.

“If you consider all of the students that are considered LSUS students who apply, there are about 50% who get accepted. But if you just consider those who are recommended by the committee, it’s 60-70%,” Hart said.

Among the thousands of applicants to medical schools, Hart gives LSUS students as much advice as they can take. Students get a document loaded with expectations including coursework, GPA, and MCAT scores. Requirements are not enough, so applicants need to work to stand out.

“To stand out from the other applicants, students need to show they are interested in patient care, they need to have experience in the field, and have some form of community service. There is no cookie cutter way to do this. They need to exhibit the personal characteristics that you expect from a physician,” Hart said.

Applicants to medical school need to show an interest in medicine outside of the classroom. The road to acceptance requires hard work in and outside of class, and features a large amount of competition.

The MCAT is one of the largest and clearest obstacles. In 2015 the exam will become that much more difficult for students. Taking high-level courses and practice tests are the best ways to “study” for the MCAT.

“For the past four years, I have not only gained a wealth of knowledge, but I have also learned to look at the world in a scientific way. I have learned how to deal with huge amounts of stress and how to manage my time. From talking with others who have faced the overwhelming experience of medical school, I have learned that it is not so much a challenge of smarts, but one of durability,” Harris said.

Fishing team reels in results, chance at tournament

Elizabeth Murray
STAFF WRITER

The Bass Fishing Team at LSU Shreveport placed 10th out of 50 in a Forrest L. Wood Invitational qualifying fishing tournament. The team is striving to recapture 2011, when founder Zach Caudle and Joe Landry achieved second place in the FLW National Championship.

For the past three years, Caudle has been fishing on the professional level through the FLW tour; and has acquired six corporate sponsors along the way.

If the team places 10th or better at the invitational in October, they will qualify for the three-day televised 2014 FLW National Championship. FLW is an acronym for Forrest L. Wood, the founder of Ranger Boats.

“They have three qualifying tournaments and then at the end of the year they have an invitational. We actually qualified for the invitational in February on Toledo Bend, so we’ll be there in October,” said Jared Rascoe, freshman, secondary education/mathematics.

The February tournament was Rascoe’s first collegiate fishing tournament, and he said qualifying for the FLW invitational is his best fishing memory.

In order to qualify for the invitational, a team must rank 15th or higher at the end of a qualifying tournament. There are three qualifying tournaments total. Teams are ranked by the total weight of five fish captured during the tournament. The winner receives money and points towards their overall ranking.

Rascoe hails from North Desoto High School, which sent three fishing team members to regionals last year.

“I watched him come in second three times in a row to the same person,” said David Lindley, a former fishing team mate from North Desoto High School. “It never brought him down. He was always trying to do his best at the next tournament.”

Lindley is gearing up for his first tournament of the year this weekend, the high school state fishing championship.

The team consists of six members.

“We try to practice together as a team, with your partner,” Rascoe said.

During a tournament, two members of a team share a boat and fish together.

“The morning of, we all just kind of hang out and get ready,” Rascoe said. “You have to be signed in by 6:30 a.m.



Photo by Elizabeth Murray

Jared Rascoe, freshman, secondary education/mathematics displays winning trophies from his career.

so I try to get there by 5:30 a.m. So that means leave the house by 4 a.m., if it’s local.”

During tournaments, teams usually fish until 3 p.m.

In June, the team will be traveling to a tournament in Oklahoma. Then in July they are scheduled for two tournaments, one in Arkansas and one in Alabama.

“When we go to Oklahoma, it’s like a 7-and-a-half hour drive while pulling a boat,” Rascoe said.

As of right now, there are no scholarships available

specifically for the fishing team, but other schools do offer them. The team has been attempting to gain corporate sponsorship through Academy Sports and Outdoors in Shreveport.

The LSUS fishing team will travel to the FLW invitational to be held October 25-26, at Sam Rayburn Reservoir in Jasper, Texas.