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NOLA Back 2 School Fest Backpack & Supply Distribution Presented by Shell Helps Students Start the School Year Strong

NEW ORLEANS, LA -- The 2024 **NOLA Back 2 School Fest presented by Shell** will provide 5,000 students in grades K-6 with **free backpacks filled with essential school supplies** – **Saturday, July 27, from 8 a.m. until 12 p.m.** at the Xavier University Center, 4955 Drexel Drive, New Orleans, LA 70125, located on Xavier’s south campus.

Students in grades K-6 who live in the Greater New Orleans area can receive a free backpack and school supplies by pre-registering at www.nolabacktoschoolfest.org. Backpacks and supplies are limited, however, students who are **pre-registered** are ensured a backpack and supplies.

Parents and caregivers who have pre-registered their children can drive through to pick up the free backpack and supplies at the Xavier University Center. Those who arrive on foot can pick up backpacks at the entrance of the St. Joseph Center, located directly across the street from the Xavier University Center.

“One of the best ways we can give back to the community that we love is to invest in our kids,” said Colette Hirstius, Shell’s Senior Vice President, Gulf of Mexico. “A backpack full of supplies means that students can take a confident first step into a successful school year.”

“At Xavier University of Louisiana, we know well the profound impact that access to educational tools can have on a student’s academic journey. This annual event on Xavier’s campus, supported by Shell Corporation, provides essential supplies to students who might otherwise not have access to such items and gives them the confidence to begin their school year with a great start,” said Reynold Verret, President of Xavier University of Louisiana. “For almost 100 years, Xavier has carried forth its great mission to promote a more just and humane society through the education of students, and even if the students receiving these supplies do not attend Xavier in the future, they are the next generation who will heal the broken world and be a gift to all as they fulfill their academic journeys. We deeply thank Shell Corporation for helping us build a brighter future for the talented youth of New Orleans, one backpack at a time.”

“When we support students with school supplies, we also support teachers. The backpacks are filled with pocket folders, a notebook, pencils, a pencil case, scissors, a glue stick, and more,” said Jennifer LaCoste, Executive Director of the Greater New Orleans STEM Initiative (GNO STEM). “Teachers often spend their own money to purchase supplies to ensure their students have the basic tools necessary for learning. The backpack and school supplies provided by Shell help students and teachers start the school year strong and with confidence.”

The eighth annual NOLA Back 2 School Fest presented by Shell is hosted in partnership with Xavier University of Louisiana and the Greater New Orleans STEM Initiative (GNO STEM).

Parents can pre-register children (while supplies last) and learn more by visiting www.nolabacktoschoolfest.org.



Back 2 School Fest at Xavier Helps NOLA Students Start School Year Off Strong & Confident



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About Xavier University of Louisiana

On the cusp of celebrating its first 100 years of service, Xavier University of Louisiana remains America's only historically Black and Catholic University and is ranked among the top HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) in the nation. Recognized as a national leader in STEM and health sciences, Xavier has historically produced more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Additionally, Xavier's College of Pharmacy is among the country's top producers of African American pharmacists.

Established almost a century ago in 1925 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as a place for African Americans and Native Americans to receive a quality education, Xavier has since expanded its programs in nearly every industry, including the arts, sciences, business, education, pharmacy, and political science. More recent additions in STEM-based master's programs and undergraduate options in robotics, bioinformatics, engineering, data science, neuroscience, and genetics, have provided Xavier students (3,181 students) an unbeatable experience of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities, and life experiences. Xavier students collaborate with world-renowned faculty and experts in their fields to produce award-winning research and notable work. The winning Xavier formula provides students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls, developing all who choose to learn at the institution into the next generation of leaders and agents of positive change. Blessed with a mission to promote a more just and humane society, Xavier is leading the way to a brighter future for all. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit www.XULA.edu or contact the Marketing and Communications Department at (504) 520-5425 or XULANews@XULA.edu.

About Shell Corporation

Shell is a leading oil and gas producer in the deepwater Gulf of Mexico, a recognized pioneer in oil and gas exploration and production technology over the last 30 years, and one of America's leading oil and natural gas producers, gasoline and natural gas marketers, and petrochemical manufacturers. Learn more, [here](#).

We take great pride in the communities where we live and work. We aspire to make a positive, lasting economic impact in Louisiana and across the Gulf Coast through our business activities and social investments. Our Social Investments comprise donations and in-kind contributions, complemented by our employee volunteer and donation matching programs. We build collaborative relationships working with local, regional, and national partners to help safeguard the environment and improve the quality of life for the people who make up the communities where we operate.

Shell supports educational initiatives that improve student performance, encourage diversity, and benefit our nation's future competitiveness. These programs focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) concepts and give parents and teachers new tools to inspire students of all ages with a love of math and science.

Visit our [Energize Your Future with Shell](#) website to play fun games, download engaging STEM classroom materials, and learn about careers in energy.

About Greater New Orleans STEM Initiative (GNO STEM)

The Greater New Orleans STEM Initiative (formerly Core Element) provides kindergarten through 12th grade math and science teachers with the tools and resources they need to deliver hands-on, minds-on learning opportunities in the classroom. GNO STEM's teacher professional development programs ensure students receive rigorous and enriched classroom instruction to encourage critical thinking and foster student proficiency and interest in STEM subjects and careers.

Since 2007, GNOSTEM has trained more than 700 teachers and impacted thousands of students. Through teacher professional development, GNO STEM equips the next generation of students with the STEM skills and knowledge to become truly engaged citizens in our community. To learn more about GNO STEM, visit www.gnostem.org.