**GNO, Inc. Year-End Report – January – December 2024**

**NEW AND NOTABLE**

**Insurance Crisis**

* *Property Insurance:*
	+ GNO, Inc. collaborated with LA Dept of Insurance, LABI, JEDCO to advocate for key reforms during 2024 Regular Legislative Session, including extension of fortified roof grant program, Citizens surcharge suspension, and 3-year rule elimination
	+ Hosted Commissioner Temple at the Q2 Investor Briefing to recap and discuss state legislative session accomplishments and insurance market improvements
	+ Continued to broadcast discounts and resources through [www.gnoinc.org/insure](http://www.gnoinc.org/insure) and worked with Commissioner Temple to update LDI’s “Storm Mitigation Incentive” brochure
	+ Promoted Louisiana Fortify Homes Program – approx. 90% of all fortified roofs are in GNO
	+ Aided Sen. Kirk Talbot in serving as National Insurance Caucus’ Chair
* *Coalition for Sustainable Flood Insurance (CSFI):*
	+ Testified at a U.S. Senate Banking Committee Hearing on “Reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program: Local Perspectives on Challenges and Solutions”
	+ Opened the 2024 National Flood Association Conference in a fireside chat on “Collaboratively Moving NFIP Reforms Forward” with Michael Hecht and David Maurstad
	+ Hosted FEMA’s Flood Insurance Advocate and new Customer Care Branch at public meeting
	+ NFIP extended 4 times in 2024 on a short-term basis by Congress; CSFI worked w/ Sen. Cassidy and Rep. Pallone to refine NFIP Reauthorization & Reform Act (multi-year reauthorization)
	+ Advanced support to Rep. Schiff on INSURE Act, proposing an all-peril reinsurance backstop
	+ Informed legislative text of Reps. Cartwright and Carter’s NFIP Premium Transparency Act
	+ Advised FEMA on improvements to Flood Insurance Discount and Direct-to-Customer tools
	+ Featured on USA Today’s Hurricane Helene and NewsNation’s Hurricane Milton coverage
	+ Continued to support Louisiana AG’s office on 10-state litigation, in which GNO parishes are plaintiffs; the court mandated that FEMA produce full “Administrative Record”
	+ Provided testimony at House Natural Resources Subcommittee field hearing, entitled “Rigs to Restoration,” to underscore impact of Risk Rating 2.0 on working coasts
* *National Catastrophic Insurance:* GNO, Inc. began conversations with national experts on potential NatCat solutions for the 119th Congress

**Louisiana Future Energy**

* *Asset & Brand Development:*
	+ Created Louisiana Future Energy (LFE) brand and collateral, for shared use by LED and regional EDO partners in out-of-market recruitment and attraction
	+ Groundbreaking for the Louisiana Future Energy Center at The Beach, which will be a key hub for energy innovation in the region
* *Business Attraction:* LFE BD efforts with South LA REDO partners generated 700+ qualified leads in 2024, resulting in 43 active projects with potential for 21k jobs and $52B cap ex
	+ Hosted 4 LFE business attraction events at national conferences, resulting in 5 net new qualified energy projects in GNO; attended 9 energy conferences (such as CLEAN POWER, Hydrogen Americas) to showcase LFE and attract future energy projects
* *Future Energy Workforce:* Through H2theFuture workforce programs, 1,000+ students completed GNO, Inc.-supported future energy courses at partner universities and community colleges
* *Energy Policy:* Served on advisory board and committees driving the State’s Clean Hydrogen Taskforce and Strategic Offshore Wind Roadmap
* *Entrepreneurship & Innovation:*
	+ OHUB New Energy Technology Incubator cohorts has graduated 114 climate tech founders from around the country and invested $500K in startups
	+ Newlab partnered with GNO, Inc., Shell, Battelle, Carbonvert, and LSU to launch two DOE-funded programs focused on carbon management and clean hydrogen technologies

**NOLA Coalition**

* *Coalition Leadership*: 2024 marked the [NOLA Coalition](https://nolacoalition.info/)’s 2nd anniversary; since forming the Coalition has grown into one of the largest, most diverse civic action group in New Orleans history, with over 570 nonprofit and corporate members, representing thousands of employees
	+ Designated GNO, Inc. Executive Director of Economic Mobility to lead The NOLA Coalition
* *Violent Crime Reductions:* Advocacy of the coalition, supporting the work of many has led to remarkable results; since 2022, violent crime has declined by 26.8% in New Orleans
	+ Participating in the Orleans District Attorney’s New Orleans Data Informed Community Engagement initiative, which is utilizing Risk Terrain Model Mapping to focus on areas with high crime concentrations; participated in 2 neighborhood tours in Treme and Hardin Park
* *NOLA Coalition Investment in Youth*:
	+ Reached $9M threshold in funds raised for youth orgs, including support for coalition partners’ Super Bowl LIX Impact 59 grants, which secured $675k in funding for TNC orgs
	+ Initiated partnership with Delgado to support the Regional Career Project, which targets adults 18+, including justice-involved individuals, to provide job training
	+ Led Angola State Penitentiary site visit to promote workforce training for incarcerated individuals and support efforts to reduce recidivism through meaningful employment

**Investor Engagement**

* *New & Improved Investor Events:*
	+ Launched a new quarterly Investor Impact Breakfast series, with strong response and attendance from investors; average attendance was 75 investors and 2024 feature topics were: Future Energy, Insurance Crisis, Business Development Strategies, and Tax Reform
	+ Hosted additional events including: GNOthinc with LED Secretary Susan Bourgeois and Jazz Fest House April 25 - 27 with 500+ guests
* *Investor Engagement & Communications:*
	+ New CRM (HubSpot) implemented to ensure improved, accessible, efficient system for tracking and communicating with prospective and existing investors across organization
	+ Investors reviewed/triaged for engagement; 85 investor companies contacted, resulting in 50 meetings in Q3-Q4 coordinated by newly hired Business Engagement Director to discuss satisfaction and opportunities for maximizing investment

**Super Bowl LIX**

* Designated by Governor Landry to serve as SBLIX State Coordinator for Infrastructure & Economic Development; successfully executed “Summer of Super Bowl” press conference – marking unprecedented leadership of the State for the Super Bowl
* Compiled list of 550+ individual projects, which was developed into the primary P6 schedule and guided all coordination, prioritization, and troubleshooting efforts; executed project management contract with The Tobler Company to support GNO, Inc.’s SBLIX role
* Distributed weekly infrastructure updates to media and businesses; launched nolastreets.info to keep residents informed about construction road closures within the “Entertainment District”
* Advanced numerous legal agreements, both with GNO, Inc. and between partners, to execute infrastructure and beautification improvements; agreements include:
	+ DOTD and LSED for Superdome campus roads, sidewalks, and utilities rehab
	+ DOTD and City of New Orleans for LSU HSC campus rehab and fence contract
	+ CNO and FQMD for French Quarter lighting repair funding
	+ GNO, Inc. and FQMD to contract Tobler Company as project manager for light repairs
	+ GNO, Inc. and City of NO for infrastructure improvements
	+ GNO, Inc. and RTA for bus and shelter repairs
	+ GNO, Inc. and DDD to deliver Project French Doors
	+ DDD and BioDistrict for beautification projects
* Chaired Economic Development Committee to attract businesses and catalyze investment:
	+ Commissioned PURE Agency to develop signage promoting the economic assets of the region and state – conducting outreach to business owners for intentional installation
	+ Leading Lakefront Airport VIP experience, including volunteer recruitment, signage, and collateral for livery services
	+ In collaboration with LED Chief Innovation Officer, planning Innovation events at Louisiana NOW Pavilion to showcase start-ups, innovators, and the state’s start-up ecosystem
	+ Assisting Governor’s Office and LED on Louisiana NOW Pavilion programming
* Advanced or directed “Hot Spot” projects including:
	+ Beautifying Plaza Tower with decorative wraps – four wrapping the building’s corner at Howard & Loyola with pro-New Orleans signage, and one wrapping the marble fascia
	+ Worked with The Tobler Company and City of N.O. to shave 90 days from the procurement timeline for the French Quarter Right of Way contract
	+ French Quarter Management District lighting repairs in throughout the neighborhood
	+ Continued French Quarter Quality of Life sweeps to address illicit vending, vagrancy, crime
	+ Hard Rock Hotel site and Loews State Palace Theater building cleanup/beautification
	+ Secured 100 housing vouchers for CNO OHSS for rehousing efforts
	+ Ensured that welcoming / wayfinding signs in the CBD are refreshed by DDD and DOTD
	+ Commissioned a New Orleans East sign refresh, adding art to the wayfinding marker
	+ Collaborated with DDD on Project French Doors to beautify the first 100 blocks of the French Quarter with new and decorative lights, sidewalk and vertical murals
* Secured legislative wins during the 2024 Regular Session to prepare for Super Bowl LIX:
	+ Identified legislative vehicle and drafted amendment to increase written contract exemption threshold from $5K to $150K ([Act 761](https://legis.la.gov/legis/BillInfo.aspx?s=24RS&b=SB265&sbi=y))
	+ Secured $14M for SBLIX projects, in partnership with DOA, through DOTD & LED ([Act 723](https://legis.la.gov/legis/BillInfo.aspx?s=24RS&b=HB786&sbi=y))
* Assisted in advancing more than 10 murals, including HEAL Garage (Brandan “BMIKE” Odums), N.O. Civil District Court (Carl Joe Williams), and Marriott New Orleans (Shepard Fairey)
* Engaged in Super Bowl PR efforts, including:
	+ Met with FOX Sports to discuss Super Bowl broadcast location
	+ Developed “Top Ten Economic Development Stories” and “Top Ten Flood Resilience Stories” PR decks for Super Bowl use
	+ Collaborating with OUTFRONT Media on outreach for SBLIX advertisement
* Hosted consistent coordination meetings with RTA leadership, City of N.O. CAO, and GNOSF to implement transit route augmentations; partnered with GNOSF to develop a Park & Ride system
* Hosted NOLA Beautiful volunteer cleanup events in coordination with HandsOn New Orleans
* Hosted 2 Super Bowl LIX Business Webinars in partnership with the City, DDD, and New Orleans & Co. to provide over 100 businesses with info on clean zone, NFL events, and infrastructure
* Received Dow grant of $250,000 for infrastructure improvements

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

**Announcements – 13 PROJECTS ANNOUNCED, $1.5B CAPEX, 585 NEW + 1,121 RETAINED JOBS**

* RNGD expansion – Jefferson Parish, $25M capex – 130 new + 240 retained jobs
* S&W Foods expansion – Tangipahoa, $21M capex – 100 retained jobs
* Agile Cold Storage – St. Tammany, $45M capex – 100 new jobs
* UBE Corporation – Jefferson, $500M capex – 56 new jobs @ $85K average salary
* Life for Tyres – St. John the Baptist, $46M capex – 46 new jobs @ $50K average salary
* Birdon – Jefferson Parish, $3.3M capex – 25 new jobs @ $99K average salary
* Woodland Biofuels – St. John the Baptist, $1.35B capex – 110 new jobs @ $90K average salary
* DAQA – Orleans, $100K capex – 20+ new jobs
* Graham Packaging – Tangipahoa, $35M capex – 100 retained jobs
* Laborde Products – St. Tammany, $5.8M capex – 13 new + 40 retained jobs @ $65K average salary
* TCI Tank Logistics – Orleans, $2M capex – 40 new + 41 retained jobs @ $60K average salary
* National Finance Center – Orleans, 600 retained jobs – 80k sf office space at The Beach
* Copado – Orleans, 45 new jobs @ $80K average salary

**Foundational Sector – WTCNO/Trade & Logistics**

* Hosted 110 government and business leaders from 23 countries, including 5 Ambassadors, 7 Consul Generals
* Successfully executed a Belgium Trade Mission focused on hydrogen development and a Rotterdam Trade Mission focused on maritime and logistics
* Cohosted the Louisiana International Wind Exchange
* Met with 20+ foreign companies and government officials at SelectUSA, generating 2 qualified leads
* Led Central European Roadshow to Austria, Slovakia, and Czech Republic, executed an MOU with the Council of Slovak Exporters
* Hosted inbound trade missions from Denmark and Quebec, highlighting energy, maritime sectors
* Appointed by Gov. Landry to serve on Louisiana-Ireland Trade Commission
* WTCNO hosted 8 events with over 500 participants in attendance

**Foundational Sector – Advanced Manufacturing**

* Hosted Annual GNO Regional Aerospace and Advanced Manufacturing Partnership (GNO RAAMP) meeting to highlight supplier needs to support continued growth and business attraction
* Continue to serve on the New Orleans Regional Business Park Board of Directors to support the continued growth of advanced manufacturing firms in New Orleans
* Continue to partner with National Space Council to develop a skilled and technical workforce to support the growth and sustainability of NASA Michoud

**Foundational Sector – Energy**

* See LFE section in New and Notable; pipeline of active projects continues to be robust with several renewable projects, blue ammonia, and blue hydrogen projects considering GNO

*Focus Area – H2theFuture*

* Continued to successfully lead 25-partner H2theFuture coalition, now expanded to LFE initiative
* Test beds construction and installation continues to progress at LSU, ULL, and UNO:
	+ LSU alongside Exxon and Haliburton hosted spudding ceremony for the PERTT Testbed
	+ ULL completed first phase of green hydrogen and biofuel testbed
	+ UNO installed the wave tank on campus
* E-methanol fueling barge in final EDA approval for bid solicitation; construction to start in 2025
* GNO, Inc. is a core partner on LSU-led NSF FUEL grant awarded (up to $160M over 10 years), helping drive the first year of projects across research, commercialization, and workforce development; nearly every H2theFuture partner invited to join FUEL proposal

*Focus Area – Wind Energy*

* Serve as co-chair of State’s Offshore Wind Roadmap Supply Chain & Workforce Committee
* Held 2nd annual Louisiana Wind Energy Week in January 2025 alongside RWE, Pew Charitable Trust, Southeast Wind Coalition, UNO, and Tulane University Energy Law; 150+ attendees including local/statewide suppliers, economic development, and national developers
* Lead partner with LSU to develop Gulf Louisiana Offshore Wind (GLOW) EDA Tech Hub proposal, received Tech Hub designation, though not selected for Phase 2 funding, GLOW received $500k accelerator award to position for a future Tech Hub funding opportunity

**Diversifying Sector – Digital Media & Entertainment**

* Hosted 8th annual Game Fete familiarization tour in partnership with LED and NOLABA
	+ 50+ video game executives from across U.S attended, inc. DAQA (2024 announced project)
	+ Educated attendees on GNO quality of life, talent pool, and incentives
* Co-sponsored Game Quality Leaders event for 40+ game quality assurance leaders
* Co-hosted Grammy Week event with Louisiana Entertainment for the Recording Academy’s Producers & Engineers Guild – attended by 250+ music industry professionals
* Hosted Music Industry Professional’s Familiarization Tour for 6 visiting industry executives including record labels, performance rights management orgs, and indie music trade associations

**Diversifying Sector – Health Sciences**

* Hosted Ontario Brain Institute for a presentation and discussion with NeuroNOLA stakeholders about replicating the model for South LA
* Began Phase 1 of a 3-phase study with WAVE Strategy group to reverse engineer the Ontario Brain Institute and determine actionable steps to replicate the model in Louisiana
* Supported BIO from the Bayou event in San Diego, an effort to promote Louisiana biomed opportunities at the largest bio conference in the country
* Supported BIO on the Bayou and AI in Healthcare Design Lab at Tulane

**Focus Area – Innovation & Entrepreneurship**

* *Startup BD & BRE:* Conducted 50 high-growth startup BRE engagements; engaged with 13 startup attraction prospects (resulting in 1 ongoing/active project), 23 local and national Venture Capital

firms, and 16 national startup-focused organizations

* *Startup NOLA/Ecosystem Leadership*: Managed website directory, social media/news updates, and monthly e-newsletter; planned/co-hosted 12 StartupNOLA Now monthly meetups, 10 Metronome Re-mixers, and 4 NOFAB quarterly meetups, plus:
	+ Planned and hosted first Access to Capital program featuring Louisiana Angel groups, including closed pitch session with angels beforehand
	+ Served on advisory board for Palette Northshore
	+ Facilitated local VC/ecosystem engagement for Newlab Innovation Summit
	+ Managed partnerships for: StartupUNO, BIO on the Bio, Bio Pitch Challenge, Black Tech NOLA, Tulane AI and Healthcare Design Lab, 3rd Coast Venture Summit, and NOEW
	+ Hosted IDEACorps fam tour for visiting MBA student teams
	+ Co-planned Innovation Day program with LED for Superbowl LIX
* *Neuro NOLA:* Contracted with Wave Strategies on landscape analysis and strategy development
* *Access to Capital/Deal Flow*: Facilitated numerous introductions to VCs on behalf of startups raising funds; served on NOSF investment committee
* *SSBCI:* Continued to promote funding opportunity to startups and outside parties; worked with GNODF legal counsel on establishing legal entities to launch GNO Regional Growth Fund
	+ Supported LED with submission of U.S. Treasury SSBCI Competitive Technical Assistance application; award $5.3M
* *New Orleans Food & Beverage*: Increased NOFAB membership to 200+; led regional EDO group to align food CPG efforts; coordinated food CPG product showcases at Washington Mardi Gras, Jazz Fest House, and Superbowl LIX; co-hosted Food Exports Bootcamp
	+ Supported writing and development of JEDCO’s EDA Disaster Supplemental Grant application, awarded $2M EDA, matched by $2.2M local funds
* *MetroNOME*: Continued partnership with the Idea Village on Music Tech Accelerator program launched in 2023; 11 startups have completed (including Jrumz Ear Wear, which secured a partnership with the Pelicans); participated in NOLA MusicCon and AmericanaFest
* *Krewe de Nieux*: Provided administrative, operational, and communications support

**Focus Area – Military/SEMA**

* Provided support for 2025 Defense budget appropriation, includes 2 new C-130J's at VR-54 at Belle Chasse Naval Air Station to modernize aging C-130s and fulfill Naval Reserve mission; preparing to engage new Commanding Officer of NAS-JRB Belle Chase Captain Andrew McGinley in August (replacing Captain Lena Kaman)
* Assisted The Beach at UNO in retaining Naval Information & Warfare Command, which was at risk of losing the 600+ full time positions as a result of their lease renewal
* Working with The Beach at UNO, NIWC, advanced manufacturers, and entrepreneurs to create a new Artificial Intelligence and Data Security initiative as well as 2025 business development strategy on Military Tech and growing NIWC and NFC

**Business Retention & Expansion**

* Conducted 51 BRE visits that resulted in 4 announced projects; currently working 3 new projects to provide incentive, workforce, and real estate support services

**Business Development Strategy & Marketing**

* Partnered with JEDCO on Spring Fam Tour with 8 national site selectors and real estate experts; held GNO, Inc. Fall Fam Tour with 6 national site selectors showcasing GNO assets
* Launched 13 business attraction email campaigns targeting 5,000+ future energy and tech executives, resulting in 60+ meetings for the business development team and 1 active project
* Attended selected, high-value conferences, including:
	+ Area Development
	+ Game Developers Conference
	+ International Asset Management Council Spring Forum
	+ CERA Week
	+ Hydrogen Americas
	+ GigaUSA
	+ America’s Energy Summit
	+ American Hydrogen Forum
	+ Intermodal South America
	+ International Partnering Forum
	+ CLEAN POWER
	+ Site Selector Guild
	+ ADIPEC
	+ MSV Engineering Fair
	+ Workboat Show
	+ Economix
	+ Area Development Consultants Fall Forum
	+ Music Con
	+ Industrial Asset Management Council Fall Forum
* Managing the GNO region’s Louisiana Competes Regional Economic Development program through LED; allocated $710K of $1M available funding to support GNO site development projects:
	+ St. Tammany – Construction of new water tower at Gulf South Commerce Park, and support for promotional video to attract projects to park
	+ St. Bernard – Site prep and demolition of outdated facilities at Port of St. Bernard
	+ Port of New Orleans – Site clearing for borings and wetland delineation report conducted at Jourdan & Terminal Road to support design/build opportunity to attract logistics projects
	+ Orleans – Master plan and site development for New Orleans Regional Business Park corridor to enhance the environment for NASA and manufacturing tenants
	+ Jefferson – Engineering and design for the Churchill Parkway extension/connector roadway
	+ St. Charles – Sewage and water study at St. Rose Business Park to support development
	+ Plaquemines – Support a parish-wide site master plan of high-impact greenfield sites
	+ GNO Sites Inventory – Executing region-wide site analysis to increase site inventory and inform infrastructure improvements for attraction and expansion efforts

**PUBLIC POLICY**

**State**

* *2024 Regular Legislative Session:* GNO, Inc. was directly involved in developing and delivering:
	+ Successfully lobbied Senate President to secure $2M appropriation for REAL
	+ Led the effort to include incentive administration negotiated settlements in LED re-org bill
	+ Galvanized written support for the successful Senate confirmation of LED Secretary Worked directly with bill author to lobby GNO delegation’s support for the confidentiality of negotiations related to local economic development projects
	+ Drafted and published Letter to the Editor advancing support for insurance reform
	+ Contributed to drafting Louisiana Offshore Wind Supply Chain resolution which commends the work of the supply chain and workforce assessment and encourages state support
	+ Successfully opposed measures purporting moratoriums on future energy production
	+ Released public statement on constitutional carry refinements for French Quarter via the NOLA Coalition, in collaboration with regional business leaders, and provided background support for the original draft and amendments
	+ Drafted amendment, convinced author to add WTCNO as consulting party in task force that will study use of ports by Louisiana businesses
	+ Supported Port NOLA in developing opposition to anti-LIT resolution
	+ Projected record-breaking job creation numbers for the FY25 Coastal Annual Plan, resulting in unanimous passage
	+ Successfully opposed bill to increase litigation against universities for DEI-related policies
	+ Assisted Board of Regents to build support for education partners’ ability to raise tuition
* *Tax Reform Special Session 2024*: Provided strategic advocacy and counsel to industry partners, parish leaders, and Chambers of Commerce during the Tax Reform Special Session leading to pivotal outcomes, including, but not limited to the preservation of key incentives (Historic Tax Credits, Motion Picture, Digital Media)
* *Energy Policy:*
	+ Submitted public comment to Executive Order JML 24-13, which calls for reorganization of LA Dept. of Energy & Natural Resources, to advocate for efficient permitting and regulatory systems that support an all-of-the-above energy strategy
	+ Appointed by House Chairman of Natural Resources to serve on the Clean Hydrogen Task Force, which included a presentation to the Task Force on LFE and H2theFuture
	+ Increased engagement with the Louisiana Public Service Commission through regularly attending Business and Executive meetings and proposing future reforms
	+ Successfully advocated for the passage of a Constitutional Amendment to dedicate revenues from offshore renewable energy projects to the Coastal Restoration Fund
	+ Presented to RPC Freight Emissions Summit on all-of-the-above energy, including hydrogen
* Led tour of key economic assets of GNO region for the Governor’s policy team, including his advisors on infrastructure and economic development, and his Chief Resilience Officer
* *Infrastructure:*
	+ Led GNO Infrastructure Opportunities Webinar to share evergreen resources and connections to technical assistance providers: National League of Cities, Build America Center, and Louisiana Infrastructure Technical Assistance Corporation
	+ Appointed by Governor to serve in the inaugural Southeast Louisiana Regional Drainage coalition with public works leaders from Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, and St. Charles parishes, as well as USACE, Flood Protection Authorities, and CPRA
	+ Served on New Orleans Transportation Electrification Plan Steering Committee
* *Coastal Advocacy:* Led coastal experiential trip for new legislators to Davis Pond, in partnership with Ellevate LA and Mississippi River Delta Coalition, to educate on Coastal Master Plan

**Federal**

* *Workforce:* Drafted the TWIC Efficiency (TWICE) Act and secured bi-partisan authorship of Congressmen Carter and Higgins to introduce in the House; the act would increase infrastructure-related employment access for formerly incarcerated individuals and workforce availability; hosted meetings virtually and on Capitol Hill with key congressional offices and staffers of House Homeland Security Committee to gain cosponsors
* *Infrastructure:* Continued to compile and provide monthly infrastructure opportunity compendiums to stakeholders across the region; now 2.5 years after IIJA’s passage, there have been 90 competitive grants awarded within GNO, with 20+ supported by GNO, Inc.; key wins in 2024 include $226M for the Louisiana International Terminal (DOT’s INFRA), $61.5M to City of N.O. for New Orleans East mobility improvements (DOT Reconnecting Communities & Neighborhoods), and $160M to Louisiana Energy Transition Engine (NSF Regional Innovation Engines)
* *GNO, Inc. DC Executive Fly-In:* Led GNO, Executive Leadership D.C. Fly-In to meet with our Louisiana Congressional delegation, including BOEM Director Liz Klein and White House OMB Director Shalanda Young, discussing energy, urban and rural development, flood insurance, infrastructure, trade, workforce development, coastal restoration, and public safety
* *Coastal Advocacy*: Testified during U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources Field Hearing at Nicholls University, hosted by Congressman Graves, on importance of Louisiana’s energy leadership to coastal infrastructure, grid hardening, and reduction of flood insurance costs
* *Innovation:* Accompanied Sen. Bill Cassidy on a tour of GNO-based WRSTBND to showcase the innovation and success; participated in the roundtable discussion around on critical priorities
* *Disaster Response:* At request of Majority Leader Steve Scalise, completed and circulated an analysis of the impact of Hurricanes Katrina, Ida, and Francine to underscore the effectiveness of resilience and infrastructure investments made across the GNO region
* *CSFI*: Collaborated with Sen. Cassidy’s staff to refine National Defense Authorization Act amendment, which advances a means-test affordability program; worked with Rep. Cartwright and Rep. Carter’s staff to amend NFIP Premium Transparency Act, which requires FEMA to provide property-level flood insurance information tool and provide rating factors on declaration pages
* *WTCNO/International Trade:*
	+ Facilitated WTCNO Fly-In focused on trade and logistics federal issues including LNG moratorium, MS River navigation, LA International Terminal, and TWICE Act
	+ Submitted public comments during the official scoping period of the USACE’s $25M, 5-year Lower Mississippi River Comprehensive Management Study urging USACE to prioritize GNO regional environmental ecosystem, saltwater intrusion, and sediment supply needs
* *Energy Policy:*
	+ Joined 80+ business and civic leaders from across LA to participate in the Sharing Offshore Revenue from Energy Sources (SHORES) Coalition D.C. Fly-In, met with 105 Congressional offices to champion modernized, equitable revenue-sharing for coastal states via RISEE and BREEZE Acts, which led to increasing co-sponsorship and Senate passage
	+ At the request of Rep. Carter, contributed to a letter drafted by Congressional Democrats, who called on U.S. Treasury to maintain stricter rules for 45V incentive; which has been responded to by U.S. Treasury, advancing a commitment to consider adjustments
	+ Attended National Renewable Energy Summit to learn best practices for energy regulation and policy priorities, while promoting GNO business opportunities to developers
	+ Monthly coordination meetings with Majority Leader Scalise’s staff to share information about federal future energy policy and GNO parish and industry partner insight
* *EDA Reauthorization*: Successfully lobbied Speaker Mike Johnson and Majority Leader Steve Scalise to support the reauthorization of the EDA, which has not been done in 20 years
* *Regional Tech Hubs:* Successfully lobbied the Louisiana Congressional leadership to secure up to $500 million to preserve and expand the Regional Tech Hubs program, which increases probability of funding for the LSU Offshore Wind Consortium, in which GNO, Inc. is a part

**TALENT, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ECONOMIC MOBILITY**

**Workforce Development**

* Launched [2023 Bank of America Jobs Report](https://gnoinc.org/news/gno-inc-and-bank-of-america-release-the-fifth-greater-new-orleans-jobs-report/) in partnership with Bank of America
* Launched first in-market StudyNOLA marketing campaign during festival season to showcase regional higher education assets in partnership with OUTFRONT
* Launched first StudyNOLA banner campaign congratulating graduates and their families in partnership with Downtown Development District
* Partnered with regional higher education institutions to provide support on new GNOu programs:
	+ Northshore Technical Community College, Associate’s Degree Advanced Manufacturing - Hosted roundtable
	+ University of New Orleans, Information Management Certificate Program – Hosted roundtable; launching in Fall 2024
	+ Loyola University, Trade & Logistics PACS Certificate Program – Hosted industry roundtable, evaluating degree type and providing labor and industry data to support program development; Fall 2025 program launch
* Managed GNO Higher Education Consortium, holding 2 meetings and support the collaborative projects and provide updates
* Graduated 7 apprentices in July from cohort 4 of the Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program (32 total graduates since 2019 launch with a 90% retention rate and average salaries of $50K)
* Held the 3rd Annual GNOu Summit on September 25 & 26 – increased attendance to 250 with 12 breakout sessions, 4 keynote sessions

**Workforce Development – Energy & Infrastructure**

* Minor and certificate programs launched at 3 HBCU institutions, on top of the previously launched New Energy Concentration program at Southern University and A&M College:
	+ Xavier University of Louisiana - Clean Energy and Sustainability Institute (CESI)
	+ Southern University at New Orleans - Renewable Energy Management (REM) Program
	+ Dillard University - New Energy Entrepreneurship Workforce (NEEW) Certificate
* Through the H2theFuture program and funding, energy-related training programs launched at 8 LCTCS community colleges in South Louisiana designed to train students for jobs in hydrogen production, carbon capture, solar panel manufacturing and more. LCTCS has reported 1,500 enrolled students and 900 completers so far
* New partnership to expand Southeastern Louisiana University’s STEM Scholars program to introduce St. James and Washington Parish high schoolers to hydrogen, wind, and solar energy
* Serving as project manager and convener for Greater New Orleans Infrastructure Partnership (GNOIP), led by Delgado and developed by GNO, Inc., which won $5.7M Department of Labor (DOL) Strengthening Community Colleges grant award in 2024 to expand infrastructure training programs
	+ Nunez established 2 new industry partnerships - SSE Steel Fabrication and RNGD - to 15+ partners in GNOIP target sectors of energy, industrial maintenance, and transportation
	+ Delgado partnered with Louisiana Social Workers Association Plus Partners (serves returning citizens, low-income individuals, and those experiencing homelessness) to enroll 36 students, with 30 successfully beginning Commercial Vehicle Operator course

**Talent Solutions**

* *Talent / Quality of Life:*
	+ Conducted quality of life tours for new PONO CEO and key Copado hire
	+ Assisted 19 VIP talent referrals throughout year, tracking and helping to place high-value individuals seeking new employment in the region
* *Tech Talent:* Planned and hosted 2 WorkNOLA Talent Den events and 4 Work in Tech meetups
* *WorkNOLA.com:* Released RFP & selected developer for redevelopment of WorkNOLA.com to improve site functionality for employers and job seekers; launching Spring 2025
* *Young Professional Talent Retention Plan*: Developed talent retention/recruitment strategic plan in partnership with NOLABA and YLC; plan set to launch in 2025 and will include new ambassador training program, regular events/ networking, and partnership with Greater New Orleans Higher Education Consortium on graduate talent retention

**GNO Region One STEM Center**

* *GNO Innovation Internship Program:* Expanded capacity to 24 paid internship opportunities for the Summer 2024 cohort; attracted new host companies: Urban South, Gallo, Zenistry Labs, Swaybox
* *Women in STEM:*  Through WISE Women NOLA program, served 20 high school young women from 5 parishes, including site visits to: Chevron, NASA Michoud, Chalmette Refinery, and New Orleans Crime Lab; in addition, hosted Women in STEM Event with Board of Regents, New Orleans Career Center, and UNO featuring a STEM panel and engaging 150 middle and high school students
* *NASA Michoud:* Hosted the 2024 Space Day at the Capitol (Baton Rouge) in collaboration with Boeing and NASA; supported NASA Artemis II launch with program support, including Roots of Music performance
* *STEM Ecosystem Leadership:*
	+ Awarded 10 GNOrocs mini grants, helping to provide STEM programs to ~3,952individuals
	+ Launched pilot Rural STEM Initiative with Tulane University Center for K-12 STEM to serve 50 students from Plaquemines, St. James, and St. John the Baptist
	+ Hosted 2nd annual STEM Summit for 200 GNO K-12 STEM teachers in partnership with New Schools for New Orleans

**Economic Mobility**

* *Startup Noir NOLA (SNN)*: Launched new SNN events, brand, [digital hub](https://startupnoirnola.com/) to spotlight and support Black entrepreneurship in New Orleans focused on Community, Capital, and Customers
	+ Prior to lunch, hosted SNN Founders Circle luncheon to serve as a think tank, fostering ecosystem growth and enhancing capital connectivity for local entrepreneurs across all stages, from pre-founders to scale-ready and exit-ready ventures
	+ SNN launch garnered media accolades, including in [Black Enterprises, Inc](https://www.blackenterprise.com/startup-nola-noir-entrepreneurs-capital/?utm_campaign=feed&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=later-linkinbio).
* Served on Super Bowl Supplier Diversity Committee, including as panelist for Super Bowl LIX Source: Community, Culture, and Certifications Summit and Verizon [Small Business Summit](https://www.nola.com/sponsored/verizon_business/support-and-resources-available-as-leaders-encourage-new-orleans-businesses-to-capitalize-on-super-bowl/article_722246e4-96f4-11ef-9b47-9320678a210e.html)
* Joined America Achieves cohort through the Good Jobs Economies initiative

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**Coverage Recap**

**Earned Media:** Work with Pace PR earned 37 national media mentions, with a combined 706M+ impressions (publications included Fox News, News Nation, Yahoo! Finance, MarketScale, S&P Global, and BBC); earned over 360 local media mentions & published op-eds, including 5 newspaper front pages

**Social Media:** 743,331 impressions, 77,419 engagements, 58,550 link clicks, 4.3% follower increase

**Newsletters:** Continued strong engagement on monthly newsletters for StartupNOLA (53% open rate), Future Energy (52% open rate), Investor (30% open rate), and WTCNO (30% open rate) members (national average open rate is 21%)

**Sunday Night Highlights:** 51 [Sunday Night Highlights](https://gnoinc.org/news/category/sunday-night-highlight/), sharing news on regional rankings, project announcements, and industry overviews

**Press Events:**

* Advano ribbon cutting for the company’s pilot production facility in New Orleans East
* Rollout of 2023 Greater New Orleans Jobs Report, in partnership with Bank of America
* Release of Louisiana Offshore Wind Supply Chain Assessment with Southeastern Wind Coalition, Center for Planning Excellence, and Pew Charitable Trusts during CLEANPOWER conference
* Co-hosted Governor’s press conference at Saenger to unveil GNO, Inc.’s SBLIX role
* SmallBiz NOLA Launch event with LED to unveil new online resource for small businesses
* NOLA Coalition Two-Year Update at New Orleans Career Center, featuring NOPD Superintendent Anne Kirkpatrick, District Attorney Jason Williams, Michael Hecht, and more
* Louisiana Future Energy Center groundbreaking at The Beach with U.S. EDA, LED, and UNO
* Startup Noir NOLA Launch event at The Shop

**Press Releases (32):**

* U.S. NSF FUEL grant
* ADVANO
* TWICE Act
* Life for Tyres
* Ube
* Agile Cold Storage
* S&W Foods
* Wind Supply Chain Report
* RNGD
* Birdon
* SmallBiz NOLA
* Greater New Orleans Jobs Report
* Horsburgh & Scott
* WTCNO – Eugene J. Schreiber Award
* NOLA Coalition Statement – Crime Reduction
* NOLA Coalition Statement – End of Year 2023
* METRONOME Demo Day
* BOEM’s Wind Energy Leases
* NOLAstreets.info
* NewLab Louisiana
* Regional Training Partnership with Delgado
* TCI Tank Logistics
* Louisiana Future Energy Center
* Woodland Biofuels
* JEDCO New Orleans Food & Bev Incubator
* Laborde Products
* Graham Packaging
* DAQA
* Constitutional Amendment 1
* META AI Data Center
* Copado
* STEM Scholars

**STARs (Statistics, Awards, and Rankings):**

* New Orleans a “New Innovation Hotspot” – Axios
* MSY named one of the top airports in North America – Airports Council International
* Louisiana one of the two most improved states for resilience against extreme weather – Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety
* GNO, Inc. one of the top economic development groups in America – Site Selection
* #2 in U.S. for Custom Workforce Training – Business Facilities
* Top 5 Tech Talent Pipeline – Business Facilities
* Top 10 Life Sciences Sector Strength – Business Facilities
* Top Five in the US for Auto/Transit Ratio – New Geography
* Most Walkable City in the US – Travel + Leisure
* #1 Food Destination in the US – Travel + Leisure
* Best Work-Life Balance Culture – Travel + Leisure
* #1 Best City for College Students and Graduates – Forbes
* Top 5 Big City in the US – Conde Nast

**Other Comms Updates**

* Audited 12 GNO, Inc. websites to ensure content accuracy and site functionality
* Released RFP, selected vendor, and began redevelopment of WorkNOLA.com in September 2024 with a targeted launch in Q3 2025