Choose
MONROE

experience
NORTHEAST LOUISIANA
Louisiana residents enjoy a total tax burden—state and local taxes combined as a percentage of income—that ranks 5th lowest in the nation.

THE TAX FOUNDATION, 2014
RESIDENTS IN NORTHEAST LOUISIANA ENJOY ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FACILITIES THAT OFFER A VARIETY OF SERVICES AND TREATMENTS

Healthcare facilities in Northeast Louisiana offer residents a range of services and medical treatments. The area’s well-established healthcare centers include large, acute-care hospitals, a cancer institute and respected surgical centers featuring high tech equipment and experienced physicians.

An award-winning surgery center, P&S Surgical Hospital is among 56 national physician-owned “Hospitals to Know” according to Becker’s Hospital Review. The downtown Monroe facility has earned accolades for patient outcomes, including the Excellence in Joint Replacement Award for 2013 and 2014 from Healthgrades, and the 2013 Guardian of Excellence Award from Press Ganey Associates, Inc., which recognizes top-performing national facilities consistently achieving the 95th percentile of performance in patient satisfaction.

Centrally located in West Monroe, Glenwood Regional Medical Center is one of the largest acute-care facilities in the region. Emergency heart care at Glenwood utilizes top-of-the-line technology, including a hypothermia protocol which reduces body temperature and preserves brain function. Over the years, Glenwood has received many awards for its Heart and Vascular Institute services.

The region is home to two major healthcare centers that provide cardiac and neurological care at state-of-the-art facilities as well as patient care in more than 45 other specialties. In 2014-15, U.S. News & World Report designated St. Francis Medical Center a “Best Regional Hospital” in neurology and neurosurgery, and orthopedics.

In addition, the region’s teaching hospital provides an environment for physicians to see more than 150,000 outpatients each year, perform more than 3,800 surgeries, and deliver more than 1,000 babies at a 247-bed hospital, which includes an intensive care unit.
NORTHEAST LOUISIANA’S HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OFFER A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS FOR AREA STUDENTS

Northeast Louisiana is home to several higher education institutions, including community colleges, trade schools and acclaimed universities. Each provides students with a range of degree programs and a variety of experiences through research and community service, as well as an expanding list of online courses that follow leading national trends for distance learning.

As one of the nation’s twenty largest public higher education systems, the University of Louisiana includes nine distinct campuses across the state. Northeast Louisiana features three universities within this system—the University of Louisiana at Monroe (ULM), Louisiana Tech University in Ruston (LA Tech) and Grambling State University in Grambling. These universities have received recognition for strengths and achievements in several key areas. In 2014, BusinessInsider.com and Niche.com cited ULM as an institution with great academics and strong in-state student populations, while PayScale.com ranked LA Tech No. 1 of all Louisiana universities for return on investment for in-state and out-of-state students. In addition, U.S. News & World Report designated LA Tech a Tier 1 institution in 2015 for the fourth consecutive year. Grambling State University is nationally known historically black colleges and universities.

ULM is the only university in Louisiana to offer a master’s degree in gerontology and the only public university in the state to offer a doctor of pharmacy degree. ULM is also the only institution in Louisiana and Arkansas with an Atmospheric Sciences bachelor’s program. In addition, ULM’s online MBA program was ranked among the top 25 best programs by Affordable Colleges Online in 2014 and named the “Best Buy” according to GetEducated.com in 2014.

Louisiana Delta Community College, located in Monroe, provides a bridge to four-year universities with associate degrees, certificates and diplomas, and maintains a number of branch campuses across the region—including Ruston, Farmerville and Bastrop. Adult literacy and workforce development programs are also housed across its eight campuses.
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN THE MONROE AREA FEATURE UNIQUE PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

When it comes to public education in Northeast Louisiana, families find excellent options both within the city of Monroe, which operates its own district, and outside city limits at schools operated by the Ouachita Parish School System. Louisiana has received multiple No. 1 ratings from Education Week for teacher training, a tradition that benefits students at both public and private schools across the state.

Northeast Louisiana is home to some of Louisiana’s top public schools, including those within the City of Monroe School District—which contains 19 schools in its district boundaries and serves approximately 8,200 students. In 2013, residents of Monroe voted overwhelmingly in favor of authorized $58.8 million in bonds with 70 percent of voters approving this measure. Proceeds from bond sales will help fund capital improvement projects for district schools, buildings, playgrounds and more, and serve as an example of the community’s dedicated investment in committing tax dollars toward a quality education and corresponding infrastructure for students at area schools.

In 2014, three of 18 finalists for Louisiana Student of the Year were students at Ouachita Parish public schools. In 2013, the Louisiana State Department of Education designated 19 sites in Monroe and West Monroe as “Top Gains” schools in recognition of exemplary student academic progress. Children can start kindergarten at an A-rated parish campus and then progress to highly regarded middle and high schools within the same local community.

Monroe private schools vary in size and educational outlook. Area private schools provide both traditional and progressive learning opportunities, but challenging coursework, lively sports programs and nurturing campuses with high expectations for achievement and character are unifying themes. Qualifying high school students can earn college credit hours through dual enrollment programs in partnership with the University of Louisiana at Monroe and Louisiana Tech University.

NO.4
COLLEGE PREPARATION AND READINESS
Louisiana ranks 4th in the nation for students’ college preparation and readiness

EDUCATION WEEK
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Public schools in Northeast Louisiana include some of the highest performing schools in the state, several of which consistently receive A ratings from the Louisiana Department of Education.

Monroe’s public school curriculum offers students traditional core courses—math, science, English and history—in addition to a diverse range of elective courses that serve to enhance the learning experience. Accelerated Reader programs give students incentive to read as many books as they can each school year. Additional subjects that complement core courses include arts, music, computer applications and foreign languages such as French and Spanish.

Outside the classroom, student organizations, clubs and athletic teams provide students with a range of activities in which to participate. Band and chorus programs offer in-depth musical instruction and competitions. National Junior Honor Society highlights the importance of volunteering and giving back to the community. Sports teams include football, basketball, baseball and cross-country, allowing students a variety of options from which to choose.

Some of the public schools in the area include:

- Claiborne Elementary School
- Kiroli Elementary School
- Morehouse Magnet School
- Neville High School

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Northeast Louisiana is home to private and parochial schools varying in size as well as in educational philosophy. Schools enroll children from pre-kindergarten-through-12th-grade and offer challenging coursework paired with extracurricular options designed to encourage high levels of academic achievement.

Small class sizes—like the 12:1 student-to-teacher ratio at Riverfield Academy—promote a collaborative environment and allow students to receive a high level of attention from teachers. Students at all grade levels take traditional coursework in English, math and science and can choose from a number of electives, including business education, computer science, fine arts, French and Spanish.

Monroe’s private schools also offer a number of extracurricular activities to students. Volunteer opportunities benefiting area nonprofits are offered each school year. Programs such as band, chorus and dance allow students to deepen their learning experiences in a variety of educational environments outside the classroom. Sports teams include football, baseball, basketball, cross-country, tennis and track.

Some of the private schools in the area include:

- Cedar Creek School
- Jesus Good Shepherd Catholic School
- River Oaks School
- St. Frederick Catholic High School
Northeast Louisiana’s twin cities, Monroe and West Monroe, offer a range of options, from Spanish-style homes, bungalows and gardens to more modern housing with open and wooded areas. Monroe’s neighborhoods provide exceptional value to relocating families, couples and individuals. Those moving to the area from larger urban centers find they can purchase more square footage and larger lots than expected. New residents also enjoy efficient commutes to work, leaving more time to enjoy Greater Monroe’s vast leisure activities, including organized and recreational sports in nearby parks, an assortment of visual and performing arts, and a variety of classes and workshops from ceramics to yoga.

Monroe and West Monroe are separated by the picturesque Ouachita River, a defining feature in the community. Both cities have downtown retail districts, including outdoor markets which, between the Farmer’s Market in West Monroe and the RiverMarket in Monroe, host a variety of local vendors. Local neighborhoods in the area range from Monroe’s century-old Garden District and its eclectic and elegant housing, to West Monroe’s scenic planned developments, such as Indian Lakes and Parkwood Estates.

The region provides a variety of rural living opportunities—with river and lakefront views available even in the immediate surroundings of Monroe. The 2,000-acre Black Bayou Lake represents one such area, with the added privacy of the national wildlife refuge along its northern banks. Expansive country clubs provide park-like settings and recreational opportunities, with areas like Frenchman’s Bend only a short drive from Monroe.

Year-round mild weather makes it possible for residents to enjoy the community’s centrally located parks as well as boating, fishing and water sports in Bayou DeSiard and the Ouachita River. The popular urban waterways along with numerous lakes in the area provide satisfying outdoor recreational opportunities that are often just minutes away.
FRENCHMAN’S BEND OFFERS GOLF AND HEALTH CLUB

Frenchman’s Bend is a popular subdivision 20 minutes north of Monroe. Encircled by picturesque Bayou DeSiard, the neighborhood is known for quiet living and spacious lots.

The average sale price of homes in Frenchman’s Bend in 2013 was $275,000. Typical amenities include open, gourmet kitchens, upscale bathrooms, enclosed garages and large yards. A homeowners’ association promotes social events and maintains the subdivision’s codes and architectural guidelines.

PARKS/OUTDOOR

Frenchman’s Bend features scenic trees and shady sidewalks for biking, walking and jogging. The neighborhood also provides convenient access to the semi-private Frenchman’s Bend Golf and Health Club. The club offers a range of recreational areas, including an 18-hole championship golf course, pool and fitness center. The Black Bayou Lake National Wildlife Refuge, 10 minutes south of the neighborhood, provides year-round hiking, fishing and birding.

SHOPPING

Frenchman’s Bend is situated off LA-165, which takes residents directly into the cities of Monroe and West Monroe, whose downtown areas feature high-end women’s clothing and gifts. Pecanland Mall, located about 20 minutes from Frenchman’s Bend, is the largest mall in North Louisiana and holds major retailers and specialty stores.

SCHOOLS

Residents of Frenchman’s Bend often send their children to these public schools:

- STERLINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- STERLINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL
- STERLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
HISTORIC HOMES AND LOCAL RETAIL HIGHLIGHT TREE-LINED GARDEN DISTRICT

Located in northwest Monroe, the Garden District features architectural diversity amid mature trees and foliage. With architectural styles ranging from English Tudor to Spanish Mission to bungalow-style, homes in the Garden District are, on average, 2,700 square feet. The average listing price for 2013 was $267,650.

PARKS/OUTDOOR

The district’s location places it very near two community anchors: the Garden District borders 53-acre Forsythe Park and the Ouachita River, both of which attract families and community events throughout the year. The park has tennis and volleyball courts, a nine-hole golf course, a children’s playground, soccer and baseball fields and a public boat launch for the Ouachita River. Several of Monroe’s 5K races begin at Forsythe Park and continue through the Garden District. The park also serves as the starting point for six municipal bike trails.

SHOPPING

Residents of the Garden District can walk or bike to numerous retail shops, among them spas and salons, coffee shops, clothing boutiques and outdoor outfitters. Downtown dining options include farm-to-table and locally-owned restaurants, and Pecanland Mall, less than 15 minutes from the neighborhood, contains numerous national and local retailers.

SCHOOLS

Residents of the Garden District often send their children to these public schools:

- J. S. CLARK MAGNET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- NEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
Located in West Monroe, Indian Lakes sits about 10 minutes north of Interstate 20 and contains more than 550 homes, many of which face one of four lakes and are maintained by the homeowners’ association. Most of the houses were built in the 1990s and offer family amenities such as great rooms, eat-in kitchens, spacious bathrooms, generous storage and home offices. The 2014 list price for homes in Indian Lakes averaged between $480,000 and $770,000. Median size was 3,627 square feet.

PARKS/OUTDOOR
Large lots in the northern part of the neighborhood border the D’Arbonne National Wildlife Refuge, which offers fishing, walking paths and an observation tower overlooking a waterfowl sanctuary. The Biedenharn Sports Complex hosts diverse sporting events for young people and is less than 10 minutes from Indian Lakes, as is 150-acre Kirol Park, which features children’s playgrounds, a dog park, tennis courts, picnic areas, fishing ponds and walking trails.

SHOPPING
Residents also have access to grocery stores, local and national restaurants, service providers and retailers along Cypress Street, about seven minutes south of Indian Lakes. Downtown West Monroe has shop-lined streets 15 minutes from the subdivision, and Pecanland Mall, equally close, offers national retail stores, boutiques and a 10-screen cinema.

SCHOOLS
Residents of Indian Lakes often send their children to these private schools:

■ JESUS GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC SCHOOL
■ RIVER OAKS SCHOOL
■ ST. FREDERICK CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
QUIET AND CONVENIENCE IN WEST MONROE’S PARKWOOD ESTATES

Parkwood Estates is a subdivision in West Monroe, located about one half-mile south of Interstate 20. The median sale price of homes in the neighborhood in 2013 was $250,000, with a high sale price of $320,000. New construction continues in the neighborhood today.

Housing styles include brick and stucco facades with such features as home offices, enclosed garages, fireplaces, gourmet kitchens with open floor plans and large backyards with decks. The neighborhood association frequently coordinates block parties and other social events.

PARKS/OUTDOOR

Parkwood Estates is an enclosed, quiet area where neighbors walk and jog and children ride their bikes. The neighborhood is located six minutes from Restoration Park, a wetlands preservation area, and 12 minutes from West Monroe’s signature Kirol Park, a 150-acre park featuring several playgrounds, a dog park, tennis courts, numerous gardens, picnic areas, fishing ponds and hiking trails.

SHOPPING

The subdivision’s proximity to the interstate enables residents to quickly reach amenities in the metro area. West Monroe’s Antique Alley, a collection of several antique stores on historic downtown streets is seven minutes from Parkwood Estates, and the Pecanland Mall, which holds national anchor stores and specialty boutiques, is 11 minutes away.

SCHOOLS

Residents of Parkwood Estates often send their children to these public schools:

- CLAIBORNE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- WEST RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL
- WEST MONROE HIGH SCHOOL
POINTE DELIEU IS QUIET, ELEGANT LIVING IN WEST MONROE

Pointe Delieu is a small, upscale development established in the mid-2000s in West Monroe just north of Interstate 20. Average sale price of homes in Pointe Delieu in 2013 was $397,000. The neighborhood features spacious homes with modern amenities such as enclosed garages, open kitchens, large backyards and luxury bathrooms.

PARKS/OUTDOOR

Pointe Delieu features quiet streets for walking and a scenic lake. The neighborhood is located minutes from notable Kiroli Park, a 150-acre park featuring forested and recreational areas, multiple playgrounds, a dog park, jogging and nature trails, a fishing pond, gardens, covered picnic areas, a climate-controlled lodge and an outdoor amphitheater.

SHOPPING

Pointe Delieu is less than 10 minutes from downtown West Monroe and Monroe, which feature adult and children’s clothing boutiques, antique stores, farm-to-table eateries and gift shops. On the Monroe riverfront, the outdoor RiverMarket attracts vendors, artists and farmers from across the region during warm-weather months. Pecanland Mall, the largest mall in north Louisiana, is about 15 minutes from Pointe Delieu and holds national retailers and specialty stores.

SCHOOLS

Residents of Pointe Delieu often send their children to these public schools:

- KIROLI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- GOOD HOPE MIDDLE SCHOOL
- WEST MONROE HIGH SCHOOL
ELEGANT HOMES AND CONVENIENT AMENITIES IN RIVER OAKS

Northwest Monroe’s upscale River Oaks area contains homes reflecting a variety of architectural styles situated on large lots. Interiors include modern bathrooms, gourmet kitchens, large bedrooms and expansive living areas. Many homes in River Oaks are situated near Bayou DeSiard providing scenic waterfront views. The average price of active listings in 2014 was $460,000 for a 3,200-square-foot home. Real estate prices in some areas of the neighborhood can exceed $1 million.

PARKS/OUTDOOR

River Oaks residents who live on the water enjoy access to boating and water sports. Shady trees and quiet streets encourage walking, biking and jogging, and River Oaks Neighborhood Park offers a playground, soccer field and basketball court. Residents have even more options at the Monroe Athletic Club, a popular private fitness facility, with tennis, aquatics and a variety of wellness and exercise classes.

SHOPPING

Proximity to shopping accentuates the neighborhood’s perks. River Oaks sits only 10 minutes north of the numerous boutiques and businesses along Forsythe Avenue in midtown Monroe. This commercial area contains coffee shops, eateries, casual and high-end clothing stores, outdoor outfitters and other retailers. Downtown Monroe and its locally-owned shops, including contemporary women’s clothing and children’s boutiques, is a 15-minute drive from River Oaks, with Pecanland Mall only 20 minutes from the neighborhood.

SCHOOLS

Residents of River Oaks often send their children to these private schools:

- JESUS GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC SCHOOL
- RIVER OAKS SCHOOL
- ST. FREDERICK CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
The Monroe area mixes culture, community and the great outdoors.

#1 Public Golf Course
Northeast Louisiana’s Black Bear Golf Club named #1 public golf course in Louisiana.

GOLFWEEK, MARCH 2014
RESIDENTS IN NORTHEAST LOUISIANA ENJOY A LIVELY ARTS AND MUSIC SCENE

Northeast Louisiana maintains and shares a tradition of arts and music. Monroe, a hub for the region, houses the Riverside Cultural District, with a span of galleries, museums and performance venues throughout the Downtown Riverfront area. The district also crosses the river to encompass part of Downtown West Monroe.

Northeast Louisiana offers a diverse selection of art and music venues to explore. The largest visual arts museum in the region, the Masur Museum of Art, can be found in Monroe's Cultural District. Museums and galleries in the region house everything from paintings and sculptures to ceramics and photography. Some museums and galleries also provide workshops and classes.

Ballet, theater and opera represent a few of the performance opportunities that residents of Monroe and the surrounding areas attend. Additionally, the Monroe Symphony Orchestra not only provides the region with seasonal concert series each year, it also strives to enrich the community through educational music programs, such as its Sound Safari series for elementary students. From the University of Louisiana at Monroe to the Dixie Center for the Arts in Ruston, the region provides a number of locations for musical performances and ranges in style from classic pieces to youthful, modern performances.

The region celebrates its art, music and performances with a number of events and festivals. Opportunities range from a bi-weekly gallery crawl in Downtown Monroe to the annual celebration of Northeast Louisiana’s Celtic heritage with music and dance.

Because the region continues to expand as a cultural hub, residents of Monroe can expect to benefit from more and varied arts venues. In addition, the area brings tax-exempt art, classes from pottery to painting to dance, as well as an evolving streetscape through improved sidewalks, roadways and bike paths.
AFTER THE SUN SETS ALONG THE OUACHITA RIVER, NIGHTLIFE RISES ACROSS NORTHEAST LOUISIANA

From Downtown Monroe along the Riverwalk to spots tucked away in the suburbs, locals enjoy all the region’s nightlife scene has to offer—from its eclectic restaurants, to socializing at an after-hours get-together, or, depending upon the evening, seeing a live production or performance.

For live music, fans jam out to the sounds of southern bands like Doctor Zarr’s Amazing Funk Monster or the Downtown River Jams concert series held in the heart of the city.

A number of eating establishments in the region, from cantinas and pubs to grills and restaurants, make a gradual shift to music venues as the evening matures. The transition means patrons can find a quiet corner and chat, enjoy live music or do both.

Given Louisiana’s mild climate, numerous restaurants and nightlife establishments offer outdoor seating and patios as well as dining opportunities overlooking the expansive Ouachita River. Grabbing a quick bite or visiting with friends by the light of the stars can be experienced year-round.

West Monroe’s Ouachita River Art Gallery, located in the Antique Alley area, showcases some 30 artists and a variety of their work, from watercolors and paintings to ceramics, jewelry and photography. Known by locals as The River Gallery, the co-op participates in the local bi-monthly Art Crawl, “10 Galleries. 2 Cities. 1 Night,” with other local galleries.

Live music is a staple in Northeast Louisiana. From classic and modern rock to funk, blues and acoustic singer/songwriters, music lovers can catch almost any kind of beat at one of the local venue.
THE MONROE AREA OFFERS A VARIETY OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES CELEBRATING COMMUNITY TRADITIONS

Northeast Louisiana, like much of the state, is a place where residents find many reasons to celebrate community traditions. From browsing local art shows to enjoying live music at one of the region’s numerous venues, events in the Monroe area offer a variety of opportunities for residents to enjoy Louisiana’s unique culture.

Popular annual events bring thousands of visitors to the region every year and include food and music festivals, seasonal parades and firework displays. In Monroe, the Downtown RiverMarket offers a variety of family activities and features handmade crafts as well as local artwork and music, making it a frequent destination for social events.

Recurring events range from concerts at Landry Vineyards to the Downtown Gallery Crawl, which organizes tours of museums and galleries in Monroe and West Monroe. Residents can also catch numerous sporting events including the University of Louisiana at Monroe Warhawks depending on the season and sport.

Other fun festivals occur throughout the year in Monroe and all across Northeast Louisiana, including the Peach Festival in Ruston, the Watermelon Festival in Farmerville and the Art & Folk Festival in Columbia.

The annual Bayou DeSiard Dragon Boat Festival takes place during the third weekend of May. More than 30 teams from around the region participate, testing their paddling skills in this unique event that not only brings an aspect of Chinese culture to the city but also raises money for a local nonprofit each year. Colorful boats and extravagant costumes are all part of the fun, and spectators enjoy a lively atmosphere over the course of the day with food, drinks and live music.
RESIDENTS ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS IN THE MONROE AREA

Northeast Louisiana is home to a variety of outdoor terrains—from prairies to upland hardwood forests to delta plains. Bottomland hardwoods and pines represent the prime habitats found in the region’s protected land. Totaling more than 200,000 acres, these lands include:

- FIVE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES
- NINE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS
- FIVE STATE PARKS
- TWO STATE HISTORIC SITES

Each area offers activities and educational opportunities. National wildlife refuges in particular focus on conserving the area’s habitat and wildlife. These protected areas cover approximately 70,000 acres and allow activities that minimally impact the environment, including hiking, boating, photography, wildlife viewing, restricted fishing and restricted hunting.

State parks and wildlife management areas allow additional activities such as boat rentals, overnight cabins, convenience camping and water sports. While visitors can explore the land, they also benefit from on-site education centers. State parks and historic sites frequently maintain visitor centers and additional facilities offering exhibits, books, videos and other educational resources.

In and around protected areas, interlocking bayous and rivers offer numerous boating and fishing opportunities in a still and scenic environment. Bayou Bartholomew in Morehouse Parish and Ouachita River in Union Parish represent two destinations popular among outdoor enthusiasts, with winding, scenic routes passing through a national wildlife refuge and a state park, respectively. Bayou Bartholomew is the longest bayou in North America, stretching from the Arkansas floodplain and flowing 350 miles south into the Mississippi River. The bayou contains well over 100 species of fish—among the highest variety counts for any stream in North America.
NORTHEAST LOUISIANA PARKS FEATURE AWARD-WINNING GOLF COURSES AND AMENITIES

In Northeast Louisiana, residents have a variety of opportunities to maintain an active lifestyle. Nationally recognized biking trails await in Lincoln Parish Park, offering a challenging, 10-mile course for avid cyclists. Basketball and tennis courts are located across the region, and there are more than 10 challenging and award-winning golf courses within the area. Facilities such as Bayou DeSiard Country Club, Squire Creek Country Club and Black Bear Golf Club provide residents with a number of amenities. In 2014, Golfweek magazine named Black Bear as Louisiana’s No. 1 Public Golf Course.

West Monroe city planners designed Kiroli Park with nature lovers in mind. It features 3.5 miles of walking and hiking trails through rolling terrain, separate paths focused on wild flowers, a wetlands habitat and gardens, to name a few. Shaded benches and lookout points throughout the 160-acre park give visitors places to relax and take in striking views of Kiroli’s wooded hills and colorful gardens, which contain an abundance of flora such as hydrangeas, morning glories and ferns.

Monroe, West Monroe and Ruston all have individual recreation departments overseeing as many as 28 parks, eight of which contain various sports facilities, including well-lit tennis and basketball courts, and baseball, softball and football fields. Organized men’s, women's and co-ed sports leagues for youth and adults are popular across the region, providing interested participants with a variety of choices, from flag football and soccer to baseball and adult softball. Monroe even has its own cricket club. Players of all skill levels are welcome to become members of the Monroe Cricket Club (MCC)—from novices and learners to cricket lovers. The MCC includes a wide cross-section of professionals such as lawyers, doctors, engineers and IT executives, as well as area students.

College sports provide nearly year-round entertainment for interested spectators. Teams from the University of Louisiana at Monroe and Louisiana Tech University in most major sports, including football, baseball, basketball, track and field, cross-country and golf have a devoted local fan following, especially for football.
Northeast Louisiana is a region filled with opportunity.

Monroe is home to the headquarters for CenturyLink, one of the top 200 companies in the nation based on gross revenues.
NORTHEAST LOUISIANA IS AN AREA WHERE PROFESSIONALS FEEL RIGHT AT HOME

Whether it’s an after-hours social, a lunchtime event with guest speakers or casual networking, the region is filled with a number of professional organizations that provide an outlet for members to socialize while learning more about their chosen industry or profession.

Selected examples of professional organizations in Northeast Louisiana include:

■ 4TH DISTRICT BAR ASSOCIATION
■ AMERICAN ADVERTISING FEDERATION, Northeast Louisiana Chapter
■ HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA
■ LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS
■ LOUISIANA BANKERS ASSOCIATION, Northeast Region
■ LOUISIANA DENTAL ASSOCIATION
■ LOUISIANA SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS, North Louisiana Group
■ MONROE REGION OF THE LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF NURSE PRACTITIONERS
■ MONROE-WEST MONROE BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL WOMEN (BPW)
■ NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION, Northeast Louisiana Chapter
■ NELA SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (SHRM)
■ NELA YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
■ NORTHEAST LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS
■ OUACHITA PARISH MEDICAL SOCIETY
■ SOCIETY OF LOUISIANA CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, Northeast Chapter
THE STRENGTH OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA’S ECONOMY IS EVIDENCED BY THE TYPES OF COMPANIES THAT SELECT THE REGION FOR BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

In 2013, Forbes named Louisiana “America’s New Frontier for Business Opportunity”—one of the most attractive places in the nation for companies to do business across a number of industries.

Northeast Louisiana in particular is home to a strong manufacturing industry, a skilled, highly trained workforce, thriving companies that range from multi-state distribution centers to food processing centers, and CenturyLink, a Fortune 500 company with headquarters in Monroe. Northeast Louisiana’s trademark sense of community extends to the workplace as well, with opportunities available for professional enrichment and social networking across a variety of industries.

Northeast Louisiana is home to the flagship production site for ANGUS CHEMICAL COMPANY. The global petrochemical giant owns and operates the facility located in Sterlington, less than a half-hour from Monroe, where its 200 local employees manufacture more than 40 specialty products used in racing fuel, paints, pharmaceuticals and biocides.

CENTURYLINK is one of the world’s largest corporations and employs nearly 1,900 people at its headquarters in Monroe. The Fortune 500 company is the third largest telecommunications provider in the United States, specializing in cloud infrastructure and hosted IT solutions, and uses its base of operations in Monroe to help serve the needs of customers located across 37 states while supporting more than 18 million access lines.

CONAGRA FOODS LAMB WESTON is a subsidiary of ConAgra Foods, a Fortune 500 company that is home to some of the world’s most recognizable consumer brands such as Bertolli, Banquet and Healthy Choice. The company employs nearly 300 people at its frozen sweet potato processing facility located just over a half-hour from Monroe in Delhi, providing frozen sweet potato products to restaurants and food retailers across the country.
GARDNER DENVER THOMAS is a compressor and pump manufacturer with facilities located in Germany, China and Louisiana. The company has nearly 300 employees at its Monroe-based manufacturing facility, where it produces a variety of pumps and other products for devices with applications ranging from ice cream dispensers to air mattresses to photo copiers.

GRAPHIC PACKAGING INTERNATIONAL is one of the largest employers in the Northeast Louisiana region with a staff of more than 1,200 at its West Monroe paper mill and production facility. The packaging giant is a publicly-traded company with operations across the world and serves the needs of top worldwide brands like Capri Sun, one of the major users of packaging produced at the West Monroe mill.

KENNEDY RICE DRYERS, located less than an hour from nearby Monroe in Mer Rouge, operates the only rice mill from Southern Arkansas to Interstate 10. The mill serves as a valuable contributor toward Louisiana’s agricultural economy, which counts rice as its fifth largest commodity, and provides farmers across the state with a local solution for drying and commercially milling their Louisiana-grown rice.

SAPA EXTRUSIONS is an aluminum manufacturer that makes a variety of products ranging from aluminum sliding doors to football stadium seats. A subsidiary of the world’s largest aluminum profile producer, the company employs more than 300 people at its Delhi-based Louisiana manufacturing facility.