

May 8, 2017
Dean's Column by Ron Rosati, PhD

The Aggie trail to success

The students at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture have wrapped up an amazing year!

In the past week, we celebrated awards activities, inducted new initiates into the Phi Theta Kappa honor society, and conferred 88 certificates and degrees to the Class of 2017 at commencement last Thursday.

The futures of our graduates will be exciting and varied.

I visited with a number of students during commencement and almost all had plans to start a new job or go on for further education. A few posted photos on social media declaring by Saturday and Sunday they were settled into their next house, apartment or living quarters. Their next adventure started immediately.

We are quite proud of each graduate's accomplishments. Some Aggie students will be returning to their family ranch or farm for their lifelong pursuit of agricultural production. For example, class valedictorian Matthew Lundt of Iowa is returning to familiar roots on the family farm back in Correctionville as a full-time operator of his own enterprise.

About 20 percent of the students in this year's graduating class are transferring to a four-year institution to pursue a bachelor degree. We've seen very significant growth in our transfer population as a result of new programs making it easy for NCTA students to finish their bachelor's degrees with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Some students start at NCTA with the intention of transferring to UNL when they complete their associate degree. NCTA students majoring in agricultural education, for example, are required to have a bachelor's degree in order to be certified to teach high school agriculture. And this fall we will have two NCTA graduates pursuing their Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degrees in the partnership program between the University of Nebraska and Iowa State University.

Veterinary technician students who completed their 8-week internships just before graduating are heading into fulltime employment and will be studying for the *Veterinary Technician National Exam* – a necessary first-step for licensure if working in Nebraska.

Others are already gainfully employed in a Nebraska workforce that has strong demand for irrigation technicians, welders, animal care givers, feedlot and farm technicians, and agricultural equipment specialists.

Our assessments tell us these students had an outstanding experience during their college days at NCTA. We wish them all the best as they move into this new phase of life and encourage them to come back often to visit us on campus.

Classes resume June 12 with the NCTA summer session. Many veterinary technology students remain for this 8-week session. Some liberal arts and computer classes are also available for NCTA students and the community.

Throughout summer, seminars and training sessions are conducted by and for our public and private partners who use the facilities and services. Day camps for youth also begin soon.

Frontier County Extension, housed on campus in Ag Hall, has a very busy season ahead for 4-H youth and extension programs. One of the first activities is May 24 and 25 with the Standard of Excellence NCTA Livestock Judging Camps and Extension's West Central Youth Animal Science Field Day.

College offices will be open as usual throughout the summer months, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We look forward to your continued interest in the campus, its activities and our students. Thank you for supporting us through the 2016-2017 academic year and all year round!

NCTA Events:

May 11 – Frontier County 4-H Cat Webinar, 5:30 p.m. Ag Hall

May 11 – Frontier County 4-H Robotics session, 5:30 Library

May 12 – Frontier County 4-H Horse Practice, LTC Arena

May 15 – Frontier County 4-H Council, Education Center

NCTA Mission:

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is devoted to a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, food and related industries. The college provides open access to innovative technical education resulting in associate degrees, certificates, diplomas and other credentials.

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Animal science students walk cattle down an NCTA alley. (Chandler / NCTA)