Saluting the NCTA Class of 2015
By Ron Rosati, NCTA Dean

This week about 40 agricultural professionals will receive diplomas or certificates from the University of Nebraska’s College of Technical Agriculture.

Graduates from NCTA leave campus with a strong set of skills that will serve them well at home and in the workplace. In addition to technical knowledge gained at college, NCTA students have been coached by our faculty and staff to develop the values and ethics that will help them to lead a successful life.

To all graduates, I encourage you to continue to demonstrate these important values and behaviors:

- enthusiasm for continued learning;
- a desire to help others;
- personal responsibility for your actions;
- character and integrity; and
- a strong work ethic.

Continued learning is important because our Internet-based society is changing at a very rapid pace. Your education will not stop after college but will continue throughout your life. An important skill you learned at NCTA was how to find accurate information and use it to solve real-world problems.

The value from service to others is perhaps best summarized by Booker T. Washington who said: “Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others.” Deep and meaningful satisfaction comes not from putting yourself before everyone else but rather doing what’s best for the whole community.

Personal responsibility and how you handle your actions, choices, reactions, statements and attitude are keys to all interpersonal relationships and communication. Be committed to “own” your actions and statements. Take responsibility for your successes and failures.

Integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. When practicing integrity, people consistently hold themselves to high moral and ethical standards. They are honest, truthful and accurate in their actions. When listing characteristics of NCTA graduates, none is more important than demonstrating personal character and integrity.

You demonstrated a strong work ethic when you completed the requirements for graduation. As you leave the college, continue to demonstrate that work ethic through dedication, effort, time management, goal setting, planning, commitment, and discipline.

NCTA is proud of its graduates and is confident in their abilities. We conduct multiple assessments which
show us that our students are knowledgeable and skilled with the latest agricultural information.

Our graduates provide feedback on the quality of their experiences at NCTA. From those who have been working for a few years post-graduation, they tell us in overwhelming numbers that they are quite pleased with their career preparation at the college.

Reports in the news and in social media frequently tell the stories of NCTA student success. When teams of our NCTA students compete with those from other institutions in academic competitions, Aggies often place in the top three nationally.

NCTA students perform very well when they take national licensure exams such as those required by the American Veterinary Medical Association to be a certified veterinary technician.

And, one of the most telling ratings comes from employers. Industry partners report a high degree of satisfaction with graduates who are defined by skills and experiences through NCTA.

We invite families, friends, employers, mentors and the Curtis community to join NCTA faculty and staff at 1:30 p.m. May 7 at the Curtis Memorial Community Center.

I hope to see you there as we congratulate the 2015 NCTA graduates for their strong start down the next path.

*NCTA Events May*
6: PTK Honor Society Initiation, 3 p.m., Ed Center
6: Campus Awards Night, 7 p.m. Ed Center Auditorium
7: Graduation and Reception, 1:30 p.m. Curtis Community Center
14: Paul Clark Reception, 12 noon to 1:30 p.m., Ed 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.