

May 11, 2016

Dean's Column by Ron Rosati, PhD

Saluting NCTA's Class of 2016

Congratulations graduates! We celebrated a memorable commencement event here on campus last week and saw many visitors join us in saluting the Aggies Class of 2016.

Thank you to all who were involved in the graduation week events for the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture. The great turnout of parents and friends who traveled to Curtis for special events on Wednesday afternoon and evening was the most we've seen on campus for these two special activities.

Involvement by parents, spouses, siblings and extended family was evident. Several sets of parents drove from 4-5 hours away (one-way) to see their sons or daughters inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa honorary society.

Of the 23 new inductees for the 2016 event, 21 of these students were able to attend on Wednesday. Congratulations to these new inductees! We are proud of their academic achievements, leadership and service and look forward to their campus programs in 2016-2017.

Additionally, we had another great turnout Wednesday evening for the awards ceremony, recognizing scholarship winners and others students of achievement. The Chandie Castle scholarships were awarded to **Dalton Johnson of Gering** and **Sheila Reichmuth of Creston**. They will both be back to campus this fall.

Several graduate honors were announced Wednesday:

Trevor Schipporeit, Broken Bow, a graduate in agribusiness management systems, earned a 4.0 GPA and was named valedictorian. He is going on to UNL for two years to earn his bachelor's degree in agribusiness management.

Ryleigh Rainey, Mud Lake, Idaho, also an agribusiness management major with a 4.0 GPA, had completed her classes in December and was unable to attend. She was salutatorian for the Class of 2016.

Michelle Connelly, Grand Island, was named Aggie of the Year, in a selection by NCTA faculty. Michelle graduated with honors in Veterinary Technology Systems. She will intern this summer at veterinary clinics in Grand Island and Kearney, while preparing to take her professional exams to become a certified veterinary technician.

The commencement ceremony on Thursday was a tremendous success. A number of dignitaries helped us celebrate the 57 students who received diplomas or certificates:

- Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts, keynote speaker
- Regent Bob Phares and his wife Margene, North Platte
- University of Nebraska President Hank M. Bounds

- Dr. Ronnie Green, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor-Elect and his wife, Jane
- District 44 State Senator Dan Hughes of Venango
- Archie Clutter, dean of UNL Agricultural Research Division
- Chuck Hibberd, dean and director of UNL Extension
- Craig Buescher, University of Nebraska Foundation
- Kevin Brown, Curtis Mayor
- Kelly Bruns, interim director of West Central Research and Extension Center
- Mike Kelly, North Platte, member of the President's Advisory Council
- Barb Scharf, Curtis, member of the NCTA community advisory

It is significant that several of our graduates are going on to further academic pursuits. Five students are enrolled at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in animal science, veterinary technology, agricultural education, agronomy or agribusiness.

Three other students are enrolled in the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) program through UNL's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources online program. These students will be active in fulltime careers in central or western Nebraska while taking classes through this unique program. It allows students to complete a four-year degree program online and in conjunction with faculty and campus resources at NCTA. We are excited to see this newer program's growth in its second year, and applaud those students pursuing this academic/career track.

Additionally, other honor students are pursuing four-year degrees at other institutions. My congratulations to each of our graduates! I appreciate the dedicated faculty and staff who commit themselves to our students each semester. Thank you to the parents, spouses and families who support students attending NCTA.

Agriculture is in great hands!

Campus Events in May:

- 12 – 4-H Cat Club Webinair, Ag Hall
- 13 – 4-H Horse Practice, LTC Arena
- 20 – 4-H Horse Practice, LTC Arena
- 25 – Standard of Excellence Livestock Judging Camp
- 26 – West Central Youth Animal Science Field Day
- 27 – 4-H Horse Practice, LTC Arena
- 30 – Memorial Day, NCTA Offices closed

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.