



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

June 12, 2023

Aggie Alums Impact

By Dean Larry Gossen, Ph.D.

Three topics to share this week have a common theme—Aggie alums are making a Big Impact!

New Office Associate

As the Summer Session begins this week, students are greeted by a friendly new face in our welcome center. Taylor Hendrix, a '22 NCTA Agribusiness Management graduate, brings a fresh and authentic perspective as the tour and events coordinator, among other duties. She was raised farming and ranching with her family near Holyoke, Colorado.

Taylor shared that her favorite things about NCTA are the terrific hands-on experiences, the small campus, and the wonderful community of Curtis. In her words, "The opportunity to be a part of the college that taught me so much and allowed me to make outstanding connections was the driving reason for me to want a career at NCTA."

We know the impact of Taylor will be positive as she trains our Student Ambassadors, shares her student experience, and her passion for "just about anything outside—riding horses, roping, working with cattle, and gardening."

Nebraska Ag Education

Last week I attended the Nebraska Career Education Conference along with several of our alums, faculty, and recruiters. This conference supports career and technical education of all forms, including agriculture teachers. The slate of beneficial sessions for them is profound, but this year it was particularly inspirational with Dr. Temple Grandin as the keynote speaker. Notably, two alumni were invited to dine with Dr. Grandin and were truly inspired!

Our alums attending spanned the range from student teaching to a retiring teacher. We are particularly proud of two special honorees. Randy Vlasin, Hayes Center ag teacher, who has retired this year, was honored as Outstanding Agriculture Education Teacher. Emily Whipple, Ainsworth ag teacher, was honored as Outstanding Early Career Teacher.

I was honored to be given recognition for 45 years in agriculture education. This career path has been rewarding every step of the way, and I am very motivated to increase the number of future ag teachers starting here at NCTA. Our Ag Boot Camp and Tri-State Conference to be hosted here this summer are two strategies for increased exposure.

Alumni Celebration on Saturday

To end this eventful week, join us for the Aggie Alumni Day on Saturday, June 17, with registration starting at 10:00 a.m. Alums from all eras—NSA, UNSA, UNSTA, NCTA—will gather in the Barn for an

11:30 a.m. luncheon, followed by a program. I am eager to share news of the accomplishments this past year on campus and our high-achieving students.

As we celebrate the extremely generous challenge gift from Wally and Barbara Weitz of Omaha for the Student Success and Activity Center project (expanding and renovating the Barn), we are thankful for the tremendous support of our alums and the community of Curtis.

Part of the University of Nebraska system, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is a two-year institution with a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, and related industries. NCTA is known for its affordable tuition, high job-placement rate for its graduates, and student teams' success in competitive activities, including crops judging, ranch horse events, livestock judging, shotgun sports, stock dog trials, and intercollegiate rodeo. The college is consistently ranked as one of the best two-year schools in the nation.

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NCTA Events:

June 12: NCTA Summer Session

June 16: Farr Fundraiser

June 17: NCTA Alumni Event

June 20-23: NRCS Hydraulics Training

June 25-29: Ag Teacher Bootcamp

June 27: Agronomy Youth Field Day

July 9-14: Tri-State Ag Teacher Conference

July 18: New Student Enrollment