



Jan. 9, 2020

Collegians gain industry experience

NCTA Dean's Message

By Interim Dean Kelly Bruns, Ph.D.

Our campus officially soon returns to full swing as students return from their holiday break this weekend and second semester classes begin Monday.

Things had been fairly quiet after final exams and the holiday break started on December 21. However, not everyone was away from campus for the duration of the University break.



Skills such as wiring an electrical box on an irrigation system prepare Aggies for careers in the agriculture industry. (Cy Cannon/NCTA News)

Responsibilities and work duties by student employees and several vet tech students continued. They fed and cared for livestock and horses at the NCTA farm and the various birds, dogs, cats, reptiles, small animals and other species housed at the veterinary technology complex.

We appreciate the work shifts these students and staff took to maintain proper management, maintenance and exercise for our campus animals over the holidays. Just like at your farm or household, whether managed for food production, ranch and farm work, or family companionship, animal care is a priority.

At NCTA, we are fortunate to offer strong experiential learning opportunities for students due to unique resources of the college. A working, commercial crop farm and field laboratory is coupled with livestock facilities and a state-of-the-art veterinary technology complex. Animals are used for teaching programs in animal science and equine science, livestock and meat evaluation courses, the veterinary technology program and much more, including programs for 4-H and FFA, Nebraska Extension and external partners.

Safari Club

Speaking of veterinary technology, among the VT department's student organizations is the "Safari Club" which emphasizes study of exotic animals such as those at zoos, refuges, aviaries and wildlife sanctuaries. Judy Bowmaster-Cole is the faculty sponsor for Safari Club. Some of our veterinary technicians will serve college internships or establish careers in the field of exotics care and management.

Safari Club schedules an annual travel opportunity over the holiday break. This year, students, friends and faculty sponsors took a 10-day study trip to Costa Rica. We look forward to hearing about highlights of their travels when students give public presentations in February.

Aggie Livestock Judging

Animal science students in Aggie livestock judging returned to Curtis on Wednesday for two days of "work outs" at Nebraska livestock facilities, and in a mock contest over the weekend at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Coach Doug Smith's team of 13 students in the pre-season boot camp, so to speak, will evaluate market and breeding cattle, sheep, and swine in preparation for seven collegiate contests this winter and spring.

Sophomore students will be competing at the National Western Stock Show in Denver next week, followed by both freshmen and sophomore teams traveling to Sioux Falls, South Dakota Jan. 24-25. We appreciate the ag producers who host Aggies to their farms and operations to evaluate livestock and gain industry perspectives.

Agribusiness Club

Professor Mary Rittenhouse, chair of the Agribusiness Management Systems division, reports that business entrepreneurship will be the focus of the AMS Business Club study trip to Colorado coming up in two weeks.

The business students will attend the National Western Stock Show in Denver, tour several Front Range businesses and gain perspectives on entrepreneurship in the agricultural industry.

NCTA Stock Dog Team

Aggie students and their canine companions will be competing in cattle trials at the National Western Stock Show. NCTA Stock Dog Team faculty sponsor Judy Bowmaster-Cole plans to take six students for the two-day contest.

This is the second trip for Aggie students to compete at the NWSS. We look forward to another great year with our stock dog team, which is open to any NCTA student and coordinated through the Veterinary Technology division.

Industry studies

For some of our NCTA students, the industry interactions and learning opportunities experienced through these travels and events are unmatched. Along with classroom and campus academics, Aggies see new perspectives. Some might have never traveled outside of Nebraska or been in a national competition, for example.

Value of exposure to these industry interactions may not be measurable now, but memories and experiences will be treasured and recalled for a long, long time.

Welcome back to campus, Aggie students. Best wishes for a successful and unforgettable 2020!

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

Upcoming events

Jan. 9 – Curtis Rotary, noon, Ed Center
Jan. 13 – NCTA Spring Semester begins
Jan. 16 – Curtis Rotary, noon, Ed Center
Jan. 20 – Martin Luther King Jr. holiday (no classes)
Jan. 20 – Frontier County 4-H Council meeting, 7 p.m.
Jan. 21 – UNL Beef Update simulcast, 7 p.m., NCTA Ed Center
Jan. 22 – FFA District 11 LDE contests, NCTA campus
Jan. 23 – Curtis Rotary, noon, Ed Center

Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/0325>