



# NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

March 3, 2021

## **Spring outreach from the Aggies**

NCTA Dean's Message by Larry Gossen, Ph.D.

It is almost spring and college outreach is in full swing. High school students are making college visits and filling out financial aid and scholarship applications.

Here at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture our recruiters and the enrollment and admissions staff have been busy all winter. The pace is steady and very productive. Our team has enjoyed hundreds of conversations with high school students, often with parents and school counselors and teachers.

We hosted another highly successful Discovery Day at NCTA on Tuesday and have another day of visits, tours, and interactive academic sessions on April 12. These are free to attend and feature displays from the academic divisions as well as the Aggie student clubs and competition teams such as ranch horse and stock dogs.

Applications made electronically to University of Nebraska campuses are proof that there is heavy interest in NCTA's programs with high-demand skills in agriculture production and management, agribusiness, animal health and veterinary technology, and agricultural mechanics specialties for irrigation technicians and welders.

### **Open for education**

We are quite fortunate that during this time of COVID-19, NCTA has been able to maintain safe, healthy events on campus. Visitors are invited to attend a variety of events which are well-designed for health measures, which include public access to Aggie Dining services at the school's cafeteria and campus deli.

From the popular Cattle AI School for Aggie students and the public, to Career Development Events for students in the region's FFA chapters, and now the Discovery Days in March and April, we are providing educational opportunities.

All the while in this early part of 2021, our two recruiters have been making visits to high school classrooms in person and virtually. Rulon Taylor traveled to five high schools in northeast Nebraska last week.

Andela Taylor hosted several Zoom sessions with high schools and is telling middle school students about some career choices through the "Connect the Dots" programs hosted with our partners in Nebraska Extension.

At the 2021 Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic last month, Rulon and Andela spent a couple of days around the show ring and hosting a college display at the Expo Hall. Youth of all ages stopped by to chat and learn about agriculture, particularly on FFA Day and Career Day.

### **Partners in education**

This week on Tuesday and Wednesday, NCTA joined 75 colleges and higher learning institutions in a Virtual College Fair sponsored by EducationQuest.

In February, Perkins County High School brought students for a day of tours and conversations about college and career possibilities. Their travel and expenses were covered by a scholarship from EducationQuest. Nebraska has a one-of-a-kind educational resource in the nonprofit organization, EducationQuest.

Free college planning services started in Nebraska in 1986 and are available to all. These include need-based scholarship programs, college access grants to high schools, resources for middle schools, and outreach services for community agencies.

As families and students are preparing for college they will want to complete the FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. NCTA relies upon FAFSA and federal grants and scholarships to assist our students with the cost of college.

Having been an agriculture education instructor at the high school level and state leader with education departments and National FFA, I fully endorse college planning for youth and their families.

It's never too early to start exploring careers, deciding what you are driven to learn, and preparing yourself for the workforce. As we like to say – NCTA: "Where your passion becomes a career."

*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 for the success of student teams 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.*

**NCTA Events:**

- March 6: NCTA Collegiate Crops Contest
- March 6: Frontier County 4-H Market Beef Weigh-In, Red Barn
- March 9: FFA CDE Contest, NCTA Campus
- March 13-14: Stock Dog Trials, 8:30 a.m., Livestock Teaching Center
- March 15: Western Regional H.S. Science Fair
- March 15: Frontier County 4-H Council meeting
- March 15-19: Spring Break, no classes, offices open

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Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/rh4w>



Rulon Taylor, recruiter with the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, visits with youth at the 2021 Nebraska Cattlemen's Classic in February. (A. Taylor / NCTA photo)