



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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New Yorker finds quality, best cost college at NCTA

By Interim Dean Kelly Bruns, Ph.D.

When Alex Penna started her search for a college program she was a high school student, farming with her family in northwestern New York, raising livestock, alfalfa and other crops, and riding horses in rodeos and county fair shows.

Little did she expect that an internet search would lead her to a small, two-year college program located on a rural campus in southwestern Nebraska.

“The school had exactly what I was looking for, programs in agriculture production and hands-on courses,” says Penna, who will graduate with an associate degree in Animal Science next week from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis.

Why go to a school half-across the country to attend college?

Affordability, academic quality, and the small-town feel of rural America.

“NCTA was less cost for me with tuition and fees than going to a community college in New York,” she says.

She brought her horse, Kiwi, to college with her, boarded off-site at a private farm south of Curtis, and paid tuition that matches that of in-state residents. Current tuition is \$135 per credit hour.

Classes in animal science, crops production, equine management, animal health and more topped her list of interests.

Alex also joined the Aggie rodeo team, was active in clubs such as Women in Ag and Collegiate 4-H and FFA, and lived in campus housing where she was a resident assistant.

Work study on campus paid for housing, plus supportive friends and professors in the rural campus helped deal with the unexpected death of her father in her freshman year.

She’s been back home in New York, running the farm again, since early April, and taking remote courses and sending her professor videos of the progress that she and Kiwi have made in her advanced performance course.

Alex Penna is just one example of many who grabbed leadership and academic opportunities and made the most of them during their 2 or 3-year career at NCTA.

On May 7, she will graduate in a virtual commencement ceremony. While not the semester finale that any



Alex Penna of Holley, New York, brought her horse, Kiwi, to the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture for her animal science coursework. (Photo by Mary Crawford / NCTA)

graduate imagined - whether high school or college – the completion of achievement is to be celebrated. We will do just that at 2 p.m. next Thursday. See details at <https://ncta.unl.edu/spring-commencement-2020>

We will begin summer session on campus June 15 for hands-on skills work for our veterinary technicians. Also, we plan to have students back in Curtis for the fall semester which begins August 24.

New Student Enrollment

As COVID-19 directives allow for re-opening of campus meetings in small groups and on-site interactions, we are prepared for New Student Enrollment of freshmen and transfer students.

Campus sessions for NSE are June 9 and July 7 as new students will complete admissions forms, meet with advisors and register for classes. They also will make housing deposits with financial aid, select dietary plans, buy parking permits, and can meet student services staff and a disabilities coordinator.

Technical services will help to connect personal computers and devices, download software, install programs and ensure email works.

Prior to NSE, information about financial aid and NCTA scholarships is an important component for students and their families. Contact Krista Williams at NCTA financial aid at 308-367-5207.

Nebraska Promise

Nebraska families recently learned about Nebraska Promise from University of Nebraska President Ted Carter.

The initiative guarantees that full-time (12 hours or more) resident undergraduates whose families have an adjusted gross income of \$60,000 or less, or who qualify for the federal Pell Grant, can attend NCTA or any NU campus, and pay no tuition.

See details at www.nebraska.edu/nebraska-promise or call NCTA admissions at 308-367-5267.

Gossen is new NCTA dean

On Monday, we were excited to share the announcement by Mike Boehm, University of Nebraska vice president, that Larry Gossen will become dean of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture on June 15.

We welcome Dr. Gossen and his wife to become Curtis residents in mid-June where they will reside at the NCTA campus. Congratulations, Dr. Larry Gossen!

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.

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Online: <https://go.unl.edu/rji4>