



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

May 5, 2021

Aggies: Ride for the brand

By NCTA Dean Larry Gossen, Ph.D.

We observe commencement Thursday for our Class of 2021 of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

In many regards, our academic programs have been full speed ahead with in-person classes throughout the fall and spring semester. However, this group of graduates saw some personal and college tests unlike any before seen by those passing under the Aggie arches near Ag Hall.

Alongside our campus community of faculty, staff, fellow students and their families, the Class of 2021 has prevailed with three-fourths of their two-year college career under veil of a global pandemic.

True grit came to the fore in completing their degrees. They persevered. They “rode for the brand.”

With determination and immense support from many surrounding them, these young people have kept their eye on achievement of a college degree. My congratulations to each one!

They’ve been fortunate to live in a period without major global conflicts. Such was the scenario with the start of World War I, just a year after campus opened its doors in 1913. Nor have these Aggies faced the turmoil or heartache lived by many in their families through major wars of the past 80 years.

We are grateful to each student and their family for making the commitment to proceed through recent uncertainties with the education of their Aggie student here at Curtis.

To our outstanding faculty, adjunct instructors, team coaches and University administrators, we extend our deepest appreciation. The NCTA staff and supportive partners in the community and region have demonstrated dedication. They’ve have sustained our students at every turn. Thank you.

Many individuals were part of the formula for success during 2020 and 2021. They enabled our small college to continue with experiential learning. Though going remote for classes in the latter part of spring 2020, NCTA was able to be here, educating students again for the Summer session of 2020 and directly into the Fall semester.

In-person, on campus

NCTA increased its fall enrollment with returning students, a large freshmen class and some transfers whose intended institutions did not reopen to in-person programs. I am grateful to each student who chose NCTA for career development.

This Spring, we have had many successes on campus and for the Class of 2021, and no doubt that success will continue for the Class of 2022.

A few Aggie highlights:

Veterinary Technology

- Nineteen veterinary technicians completed their internships this spring. Many had job offers for permanent employment before semester-end.
- Veterinary Technology was reaccredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

- A technology grant has expanded teaching resources in Vet Tech to include state-of-the-art, life size simulators for an equine, canine and feline for palpation, taking vitals and more.
- The Stock Dog Team co-hosted three public trials and is a popular team across campus.

Agribusiness Management

- Capstone Class was again a highlight of the combined Agribusiness and Ag Production programs.
- In a new project, students evaluated cost of production for feeding cull cows on the NCTA Farm.
- Students in Sales and Entrepreneurship learned hands-on management for the NCTA Aggie Store.

Agronomy and Agricultural Mechanics

- Crops teams could again travel and judge in 2021, with NCTA hosting a regional contest in March.
- Several students are going on to obtain 4-year degrees (or higher) in agronomy.
- Four welding students passed rigorous standards for American Welding Society Certification.

Agricultural Education, Animal & Equine Science

- FFA contests, public seminars and youth events drew more than 1,000 users to campus.
- Three Aggies will transfer to UNL this fall in Agricultural Education, Animal Science, and the Feedlot Management Internship Program. Three others are going elsewhere for higher degrees.
- Equine Training and Management Programs grew enrollment, with Ranch Horse Team able to again provide competitions and team travel opportunities.
- Competitive, travel teams were Livestock Judging, Ranch Horse, Rodeo and Shotgun Sports.

Congratulations to all graduates of the University of Nebraska campuses! We are proud of you, Aggies!

NCTA Events:

May 6: NCTA Graduation, 1:30 p.m., Football field south of Ag Hall

May 22: Collegiate Cattlemen Summer Preview Beef Show, Lincoln County Fairgrounds

May 26: NCTA Standard of Excellence Livestock Judging Camp, NCTA

May 27: Animal Science Discovery Day, NCTA

June 7-10: Nebraska Youth Range Camp, NCTA

June 26: Aggie Alumni Day, 10 a.m., Registration, 11:30 a.m. Luncheon, program

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.



Aggie students graduate from NCTA, true to the J-H\ college brand. (Photo by A. Taylor / NCTA)

Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/w0uj>