June 10, 2020

Join an Aggie team

Dean’s Message from Interim Dean Kelly Bruns, Ph.D.

CURTIS, Neb. – Quentin Anderson wanted to rodeo after his high school years so he headed to a college where he could not only gain a degree but continue his love of calf roping and being horseback.

He joined the Aggie Rodeo and Ranch Horse Teams at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis while studying equine industry management and ag business.

“It was nice to be able to rodeo while I was a student at NCTA and really work hard at something I enjoyed,” says the native of Pierce, Nebraska.

At his final college rodeo last November he won calf roping and was third in team roping. Then, COVID-19 halted the spring rodeo season.

Anderson graduated in May with an associate of applied science degree and now works with his parents at the family farm. They raise crops and some horses.

“I had fun and learned a lot,” Anderson says. “It was good getting away from home, meeting new people and traveling with the ranch horse and rodeo teams.

“The knowledge I gained and the ability to use the skills here at the farm helps in our operation. I do quite a bit of riding and training horses for my folks.”

Teams build leaders
Aggie students have opportunities to expand their college experiences at NCTA by participating in academic enhancement and travel teams.

Being a part of a team is an asset for the long-term, in building confidence, leadership and communication skills, and gaining experience in working with other individuals.

Our NCTA graduates share that some of their closest friends, even decades later, are the individuals they met at college.
This fall, as students return to campus in late August, we plan to resume all of our Aggie teams. Interest is high by incoming freshmen and returning Aggies for competition teams.

An overview of fall teams includes:

**Livestock Judging** – Students evaluate livestock, learn terminology, and gain confidence in giving oral (or written) reasons for their comparisons and placings. Students are animal science and livestock management majors. Dr. Doug Smith, animal science associate professor, is the coach.

**Ranch Horse** – Coach Joanna Hergenreder is set for another season teaching students from any major who want to focus on stock cow work, reining, trail class and pleasure. The emphasis is on practical, versatility skills for ranch horses. The team hosts a 2-day show in the spring which draws more than 100 contestants.

**Rodeo** – Any NCTA student can join the Aggie Rodeo club and try out for the travel team. J.R. Dack is the coach.

**Shotgun Sports** - The Aggie Shotgun Sports Team is open to any NCTA student. Members concentrate on Skeet, Sporting clays, and Trap sports. They travel regionally and went to nationals in Texas. The coach is Alan Taylor.

**Stock Dog** – Students training working stock dogs focus on safe and low-stress handling of livestock. The teams hosts public trials on campus and travels to contests, too. Faculty sponsor Judy Bowmaster-Cole is assisted by volunteer coach Kelly Popp. Students go to Popp’s farm to practice several times a week with cattle and sheep.

Each spring semester, the fall teams continue competitions or host events at campus. An opportunity for national competition occurs in April for many NCTA academic teams at the National Association of Colleges and Teachers in Agriculture contest. We plan to compete again as the contest resumes for 2021.

Additional competition teams in the spring include:

**Ag mechanics** – Students in welding can participate at NACTA. Their instructor is Dan Stehlik.

**Crops Judging** – Agronomy professor Dr. Brad Ramsdale has classes in the fall teaching potential crops team members for four or five spring contests. NCTA has garnered four national crops judging championships.

**Agribusiness** – Students from Agribusiness Management Systems also have opportunity to participate at NACTA. Division chair is Mary Rittenhouse, joined by AMS faculty in teaching skills such as spreadsheets and ag sales.

**Virtual Livestock Judging**

Our virtual livestock judging camp sponsored by NCTA and UNL is June 16-18. See [NCTA/ UNL Virtual Judging Camp Registration](https://nacta.unl.edu/vjcamp) or e-mail doug.smith@unl.edu.

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 numerous 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.

Online article: [https://go.unl.edu/n28k](https://go.unl.edu/n28k)