Welcome to July, with a busy kickoff to recruiting and outreach from the NCTA campus.

It’s been a whirlwind of conversations and campus visits at the end of June, several key to NCTA’s academic and administrative progress. I’d like to share notes for readers.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Ronnie Green and his wife, Jane, stopped by NCTA last week on travels across Nebraska. They were tying a short vacation into visiting colleagues and locations of university education, extension, and research. We were very glad to welcome Dr. Green back to NCTA, as he was responsible for NCTA and our campus programs while IANR vice chancellor from July 2010 to May 2016.

Now, with June 15 as my first-year anniversary as NCTA dean, I was quite appreciative to finally meet Chancellor Green and Jane. We found that we have many close friends and educators in common, throughout the United States.

In an enjoyable 1-hour visit, we discussed what’s new at NCTA and our partnerships through UNL, Nebraska Extension and particularly the UNL College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. NCTA’s Link to Lincoln transfer agreement and 2+2 opportunities enable Aggie students to become Huskers.

NCTA has Professor of Practice agreements in place for NCTA faculty to teach UNL courses from Curtis. These include Dr. Ricky Sue Barnes in Veterinary Technology, Dr. Brad Ramsdale in Agronomy, and Dr. Doug Smith in Animal Science and Agriculture Education.

While here, Chancellor Green met some of our summer session Veterinary Technician students who demonstrated new equipment in radiology and skills testing on canine simulators, plus hands-on methods in training and caring for small animals such as birds and pocket pets.

I look forward to ongoing conversations with Dr. Green and CASNR Dean Tiffany Heng-Moss. Each year, NCTA has 10 to 15 Aggies who go on to UNL for a bachelor’s degree, or higher.

West Central Research, Extension and Education Center Director Kelly Bruns (also is an integral partner as an NCTA associate dean) hosted Chancellor Green and I for an update session and luncheon at North Platte.

I had a chance to greet WCREEC faculty and staff who I’d not met. UNL is part of NCTA and Nebraska Extension’s discussion for possible joint faculty appointments. Such collaborations, regionally and statewide, are a win-win for us all in terms of resource and budget efficiencies.
**Nebraska Extension Frontier County** For decades, Nebraska Extension has maintained presence and partnerships in Ag Hall of NCTA. In June, Associate Dean Jennifer McConville and I met with the Frontier County Board of Commissioners and also with Frontier County Extension Board to update our partnership MOU. Outlined are specifics for rent and responsibilities for office painting, floors, and furniture. We are focusing on cost-effective procurement of supplies and purchases. I greatly value our NCTA-Extension partnership, another win-win.

**Nebraska’s Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education** is based in Lincoln. CCPE Executive Director, Dr. Mike Baumgartner, came to campus with an update on financial aid through a program called Community College GAP Assistance. Nebraska Lottery Funds are used to address aid to low-income students where there has been a GAP when Pell grants are not available.

Previously, the GAP program in Nebraska applied to six community colleges, only. Now, due to Legislative action and changes to a state statute this last session, tribal colleges and other non-profit, 2-year colleges such as NCTA will be eligible. Credentialed programs must lead directly to a degree and help fill high-need jobs. For NCTA, we will explore criteria in programs such as welding, irrigation technology, animal care, and perhaps others.

I appreciated the information and proposals suggested by Dr. Baumgartner and look forward to more planning in this important educational partnership.

**Little Priest Tribal College** located at Winnebago, Neb., is adding agriculture courses to its 2-year programs. Dr. Loretta Broberg, VP of Teaching and Learning, and Mark Keck, agriculture instructor, at Little Priest Tribal College toured the NCTA Farm and discussed agriculture programs with me and Agronomy Professor Brad Ramsdale. We shared curriculum on crop production, irrigation management, ag chemical management and more. I currently serve on the LPTC Agriculture Advisory Committee. Our conversations enhance the statewide outreach that NCTA has with educational partners.

**Recruiters Out ‘N About**

Our NCTA outreach recruiters, Rulon Taylor and Andela Taylor, are visiting with prospective Aggies here on campus or at ag-related events in July. Look for Rulon or Andela at county fairs, livestock arenas such as National Jr. Hereford Show in Kansas City and National Jr. Angus Show in Grand Island. Career fairs at Nebraska Agricultural Youth Institute and National High School Finals Rodeo are ideal settings to share NCTA Aggie success stories.

**NCTA Events:**

- July 6-8: NCTA Ag Mechanics Instructors Boot Camp
- July 7: NCTA Agronomy Youth Field Day, 9 a.m., Ed Center
- July 8: Curtis Rotary, Noon, NCTA Education Center
- July 15: NCTA recruiter at NAYI Career Fair, Lincoln
- July 18-24: NCTA recruiters at National HS Finals Rodeo

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.

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