



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

August 24, 2022

New pathways and people at NCTA

By NCTA Dean Larry Gossen, Ph.D.

It's our official Welcome to College Week for the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture!

We had a successful first day of classes on Monday, and by week's end the shuffling of schedules and rearranging of courses and meeting locations will be complete.

A HUGE thank you to the Curtis community for sharing in the Welcome Picnic and our campus events to greet newcomers and returning Aggies.

I heard wonderful comments from friends and neighbors in town of the enjoyable conversations occurring in businesses, churches and on main street.



Aggies with NCTA Ranch Horse Team hosted an ice cream social with root beer floats at the Livestock Teaching Complex on the first day of classes. (Andela Taylor / NCTA photo)

Thank you, Medicine Valley Chamber of Commerce for helping to compile the welcome packets, and to the churches for cookies and welcome gifts for our students!

The Ranch Horse Team provided root beer floats Monday afternoon to the campus community. Who could pass up a root beer float with ice cream from the UNL Dairy Store?

Students serving ice cream were Blaine Brandon, Bassett; Kirstin Cawthra, Benkelman; Andrew Endicott, Ashland, Kansas; Gwen Olberding, Falls City; Jack Berggren, Wahoo; Celeste Tanguay, Derby, Vermont; Ashton Lund, Waldo, Kansas; Emma Hollenback, Ewing; and Alaina Schwedhelm, Kennard. Thank you, Aggies!

New faces

In addition to incoming freshmen and transfer students to NCTA, we've also welcomed new staff to campus.

I hope that you make a point to meet Kelley Duggan and Stuart Sparvier. Both have moved to Curtis in the past month. Please welcome them to the community.

Kelley is a native of Redmond, Oregon, and will be teaching courses in Animal Science. Her office is located in the Livestock Teaching Center suite.

She earned a bachelor's degree from California State University, Chico, in Animal Science and a minor in Agriculture Business. The focus of her Master of Science degree at Colorado State University was beef cattle genetics.

Her students and cattle producers who ranch in high altitudes will find her research of interest. She studied the effects of pulmonary arterial pressure and precipitation on beef heifer fertility. Stay tuned for more on that topic in a future article.

This fall, Kelley is teaching the large animal diseases course and feedlot practicum course. In the spring, she will teach the feedlot systems course. Welcome to our NCTA faculty, Kelley!

Residence Life

Stuart Sparvier brings extensive knowledge and background in higher education to NCTA as our new Residence Life Manager. With multiple degrees, certificates and job titles over two decades, his experience in coordinating a safe campus and residential environment for our Aggie students is unmatched.

During staff in-service last week, he joined the faculty and staff for a very brief introduction since he was simultaneously providing training for 11 Residence Hall Assistants.

To provide a comparison of student populations at the seven colleges where he has been responsible for student programs, Stuart noted the largest and smallest.

The largest was University of Maryland with 55,000 students on campus to Naropa University, a private Buddhist university in Boulder, Colorado the same size as NCTA.

He is an undergraduate of the University of Nebraska at Kearney in 1992, where he was recruited after playing football in high school and junior college in Saskatchewan. It was at UNK that he met his wife, Tammy. They have two daughters, now ages 13 and 19.

Stuart shared with our staff that he left higher education for five years to care for Tammy during her debilitating and declining health. Their daughters attended schools in Kearney. Sadly, despite surviving Covid, Tammy passed away a year ago.

We are so very thankful that NCTA and Curtis is the new home for the Sparvier family. Our community will welcome them heartily, to our school and campus.

Stuart will be a significant asset as we make plans for future Student Services and Residence Life programs and facilities at NCTA. His campus office is based in the Welcome Center of the Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center. Please join me in welcoming Stuart!

As Aggie students acclimate to NCTA, they have opportunity this week and next to become in student clubs and organizations. Coaches and faculty advisors have announced organizational meeting dates.

Also, students and clubs are being encouraged to volunteer for community service events. The Wellfleet Fall Festival is Sept. 9-10, and the Curtis Fall Festival is Sept. 16-18.

Welcome to campus, Aggie students and Curtis friends. Let's make it a great year!

NCTA Events:

August 24: Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory Open House, Whitman

August 25: WCREEC Water and Crops Field Day, 8 a.m. North Platte

August 26: Opening day of Nebraska State Fair, Grand Island

August 30: NCTA Student Senate meeting, 12:15 p.m., Ag Hall 1

Sept. 5: Labor Day, campus closed

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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Students and hometowns, are, left to right: Blaine Brandon, Bassett; Kirstin Cawthra, Benkelman; Andrew Endicott, Ashland, Kansas; Gwen Olberding, Falls City; Jack Berggren, Wahoo; Celeste Tanguay, Derby, Vermont; Ashton Lund, Waldo, Kansas; Emma Hollenback, Ewing; and Alaina Schwedhelm, Kennard.

Online link: <https://go.unl.edu/y7qt>