



# NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

NCTA NEWS

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By NCTA Dean Ron Rosati, Ph.D.

## Thank you to our friends and colleagues

Sometimes we get so busy with day-to-day activities that we forget to occasionally step away and look at the big picture.

For NCTA, it's especially important to pause so we can recognize the growth and development that's occurred at the institution over the past 10 to 15 years.

During that time, more than \$15 million has been spent at NCTA adding new facilities and renovating existing buildings. We now have some outstanding classrooms and residence halls available for our students.

At the same time, our faculty and staff have been skillfully using those resources to deliver academic programming that is now recognized as some of the best at two-year colleges in the United States.

For the second year in a row, Forbes magazine ranked NCTA as one of the nation's top two-year trade schools. Other national organizations are ranking NCTA as the most successful two-year college in the state and one of the top two-year colleges in the country.

These analyses are largely based on federal government data resulting from the Internal Revenue Service assessing employment and salary of NCTA Aggie graduates through their tax returns. The U.S. Department of Education tracks academic outcomes on its *College Scorecard*.

The quality of our educational programs is also measured when Aggie students compete in national academic contests against students from other two-year college agriculture programs around the country.

NCTA students have done very well in those competitions. For the past two years, NCTA has been ranked as the number two two-year agriculture college when measured by student academic strength in these contests.

Word is getting out about the success of NCTA graduates.

As a result, 2018 fall semester enrollment of full-time students was the highest enrollment in 23 years. On-campus enrollment has increased every year since 2013 and all trends indicate that this growth will continue.

NCTA has also done a commendable job keeping its tuition costs low so it can accomplish its mission of ensuring that all Nebraska residents have the opportunity to attend college. NCTA provides higher education access by being both open admissions and low cost.

Our most recent data shows that 73 percent of NCTA students receive grant and scholarship financial aid sufficient to pay the cost of tuition and fees.

When you put all those characteristics together, you find an extraordinary package: nice facilities, low cost, growing enrollment, highly skilled students, and successful graduates. That's the picture of NCTA in 2018. This college is an example of a state institution that's accomplishing its mission with a high degree of success.

There are many people responsible for bringing NCTA to this point. Faculty are the front-line personnel working with our students on a day-to-day basis to teach them academic skills, appropriate work habits, ethics and the life skills needed to be a successful adult.

Our staff also play a very important role in student success. Most NCTA students come to the college directly from high school. This is the first time they have been away from home and responsible for their own behavior.

A big part of our student services curriculum involves helping students develop the "adulting skills" needed to transition from high school to the real world. Our staff are very skilled at working one-on-one with students to help them. That work occurs in the classroom but also in the evening in the residence halls and on the weekends during student activities.

The University of Nebraska plays a big role in the success of NCTA students. We rely heavily on the outstanding assistance we receive from Lincoln to strengthen the college in multiple ways including academic partnerships, student financial aid, facilities improvements, and student support services.

We are very fortunate to be living in the community of Curtis with residents supportive of the college and its activities. Our friendly small-town engages all through its churches, businesses, and community events. Many local businesses provide employment for our Aggies. College students are welcomed with open arms during Curtis events such as Fall Festival. The Curtis medical clinic is a wonderful asset serving health care needs of our students. We are pleased to see the Curtis community continue to grow and develop, with the addition of a new pharmacy and a major renovation underway for one of its restaurants.

Nebraska's agricultural industries support NCTA through multiple partnerships which help us design a curriculum which is appropriate for the needs of modern agricultural industries. Industry partners provide students with internships, serve as guest lecturers, and hire students after graduation. Much of the equipment we have on campus came to us as a result of recommendations or as outright donations from our industry partners.

Nebraska state government, through the legislature and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, supports NCTA with financial resources, technical assistance and partnerships.

Thank you to all of these friends and supporters who have helped NCTA grow and develop. We look forward to many more years of partnering with you to meet the workforce needs of Nebraska's agricultural industries, and the higher education needs of Nebraska citizens.

**October Events:**

6-7 – Shotgun Sports Team at Concordia Sporting Clay Shoot, Brainard

8 – Discovery Days, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Ed Center

9 – "Ag in Nigeria," Tony Adesemoye, 7 p.m., Ed Center

10-11 – Aggie Rodeo Team to Sisseton, South Dakota

11 – Phi Theta Kappa, Red Cross Blood Drive, 12-6 p.m., Ed Center

12-13 – Aggie Rodeo to Fargo, North Dakota

12-14 – NCTA Ranch Horse Team to Fort Collins, Colorado

**NCTA Mission:** The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is devoted to a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, food and related industries. The college provides open access to innovative technical education resulting in associate degrees, certificates, diplomas and other credentials.



Agricultural mechanics instructor Dan Stehlik shows welding students some of the materials donated by an industry partner to the welding laboratory. (Crawford / NCTA photo)