



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

Oct. 7, 2020

Dean's Message by Larry Gossen, Ph.D.

Aggie academics target workforce

The month of October started off with exciting news for our Aggie community!

We were notified Friday afternoon that NCTA has been awarded a significant grant from federal Perkins funds which will enable the college to move into a new era of technology and academic delivery.

Our NCTA Action Grant leadership team this summer had submitted a proposal to the Nebraska Department of Education (which administers the federal monies) with a request for \$100,000 to boost Career, Technical and Adult Education programs at the college level.

One can imagine the enthusiasm which rippled across campus as the award notification came through by email.

Not only did grant reviewers deem NCTA worthy as one of two colleges in Nebraska to be awarded the CTE grant, but we will be receiving 100% of our request.

This is a powerful endorsement of NCTA's statewide mission for workforce development and our role within the University of Nebraska system. We are the sole two-year campus preparing students for the workforce.

Thank you to our industry partners throughout Nebraska and the Midwest who hire Aggie graduates. You have encouraged and advised us through the years that our NCTA academics are right on track.

Alumni have a proven record in career assessments of career-readiness and worthiness. National statistics show that 10 years after leaving Curtis, our graduates have a high level of salary compared to their educational investment.

Obviously, we can all celebrate the success of graduates and students throughout their college careers.

During this National 4-H Week and as we head toward a virtual 2020 National FFA Convention on Oct. 27-29, it causes personal reflection for me recalling some of the hundreds of students and youngsters who I have been privileged to mentor over my decades as an agricultural educator.

Now, as dean at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, I feel extremely fortunate to continue workforce and career development with this next era of Aggie students. Parents and industry partners, alike, can be confident in the academics of this institution.

The federal reVISION grant will help NCTA deliver interactive education here on campus, through virtual learning, and with high-tech outreach through methods such as mobile laboratories and livestreaming of courses.

Yes, we will continue to share our academic opportunities for associate degrees and certificates through NCTA. We pledge to maintain seamless transfer opportunities for those students seeking four-year degrees with the University of Nebraska and other institutions of higher learning.

Our academic travel teams and enhancement programs will become stronger with livestreamed and interactive technology for agronomy, animal sciences, welding, veterinary technology and many more NCTA programs.

We expect and trust that our industry partners, alumni and educational entities will keep our feet to the fire, so to speak, as NCTA implements expanded programming at the welding shop and irrigation systems lab, over at the Vet Technology complex, inside the classrooms and indoor arena of the Livestock Teaching Center, and certainly at the field laboratory and lecture hall of the Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center for lively agronomy and natural resources discussions, and the computer labs and hands-on teaching formats within our agribusiness management division.

Soon, NCTA will be making purchases for state-of-the-art technology with a robotic welder, mobile agronomy lab, life-size equine simulator, livestreaming cameras of animal science courses, and the recommended “ClearVet” converted imaging system for high-skill learning in veterinary technology.

On behalf of all of us at NCTA, I express our great appreciation to Curtis-area partners, and southwest region Nebraskans who support our campus and our Aggie students with career-defining opportunities. Also, to the CTE staff at the Nebraska Department of Education and industry partners everywhere who provide internships and hire our graduates, we are grateful.

NCTA may be small in stature but is huge in educational impact, and we stand ready to serve the industries who rely on skilled, well-prepared graduates.

Until next week, Go Aggies!

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.



Agribusiness management students from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture discuss crop yields and markets with AMS Professor Mary Rittenhouse during a 2017 class session at the NCTA campus farm. (Craig Chandler / University Communication)