



# NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

November 21, 2022

Dean's Column

## **Give Thanks—Dr. Larry Gossen**

This week is a time to reflect on our blessings and show our gratitude to those around us. I have had the privilege of serving as the Dean of NCTA for 2 ½ years now. What an amazing time it has been. Fay and I have been able to meet so many wonderful people in Curtis and the surrounding communities.

Heartwarming is the word I use when I talk to people that, when they learn I'm from NCTA, tell me of someone they know, or they attended UNSA, UNSTA, or NCTA. There is always a fond memory they want to share or a story of some kind.

At times, it is difficult to feel grateful. In the middle of an extended drought, many of our farmers and ranchers are struggling. Inflation has impacted so many families trying to make ends meet. However, even in these hard times, we still have reasons to be thankful.

Never take for granted that we live in the greatest nation in the world; that we have access to fresh water, clean air, ample food; that we have a caring community and friends and family that love us.

Keeping these good thoughts in our minds will help you get through hard times. I am reminded when I read my favorite Book, that we should think about things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, and excellent.

Several things come to my mind when I look back on this past year at NCTA. We have truly been blessed in so many ways. Enrollment numbers are up when many colleges are showing continued declines. We have been able to host over 2000 FFA members and guests to campus for events and competitions.

Good things are happening on the recruiting trail. The majority of our students have a common link to a local FFA chapter. Whether from Nebraska, Alaska, Texas, or Vermont, we continue to broaden our outreach in FFA. Recruiter Rulon Taylor and two students represented NCTA at the national FFA convention and made connections with students from across the nation.

I know that the success of NCTA can be placed squarely on the outstanding faculty and staff. They are passionate about students, focused on student success, and dedicated to making NCTA the best it can be. They believe NCTA is the place for students to come and get the very best education in agriculture and veterinary technology.

Veterans Day a couple of weeks ago reminds us again to be thankful for our freedoms, and for the men and women in uniform that have helped preserve those freedoms. Regardless of your politics, religion, or other beliefs, we can celebrate our freedom to exercise these rights and privileges every day.

I continue to be amazed at the generosity of our alumni, stakeholders, and friends across this state and nation that continue to support the mission and vision of NCTA. Whether large or small, donations come

in that provide opportunities for our students. Their support makes what we do possible in so many ways.

Next week you will hear much more about a very generous donor that has made a transformational gift to NCTA. Make plans on coming to the college for lunch on December 7 to learn more about this amazing gift and the impact it will have on, not only the college campus, but the community as well.

Gratitude should be a yearlong attitude and way of life for us all. Let this Thanksgiving season be the beginning of a year of gratefulness and appreciation to all those that cross your path. Enjoy your time with friends and family. And my best (worst) advice, don't gobble your turkey.

**NCTA Events:**

Nov. 21-25: Happy Thanksgiving (student holiday break)

Dec. 7: NCTA Celebration Event in the Barn

Dec. 12: FFA District 11 LDE on campus

*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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