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By Mary Crawford, NCTA News

[Vet Tech student is Aksarben scholar](#)

CURTIS, Neb. – Jenna Garver wants to help humans by helping the pets and animals in their lives.

A \$2,000 scholarship from the Aksarben Foundation will assist her in reaching that goal as she studies veterinary technology in college.

Jenna Garver, a 2017 graduate of Hastings Senior High, is in the veterinary technician program at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture. In late June, she was awarded the Aksarben Vet Tech Scholarship from the statewide foundation which is targeting worker shortages in specific, technical trades such as veterinary technology.

"I've always had a strong passion for working with animals so I started working at The Animal Clinic of Hastings the fall after I graduated high school," she explains.

"I sat in on some of the things the veterinarians were doing, but the people who stuck out the most to me were the vet technicians. The vet techs worked one-on-one with the animals from the time they got there, to the time they left the clinic."

Currently in summer school with her vet tech classmates at NCTA, she will begin her sophomore year next month and is on track to graduate with her associate of science degree in May, 2020.

"As soon as I got to NCTA in 2018 and I started my classes, I knew I had made a great choice. This program has broadened my mind on the world of veterinary medicine," Garver says.

"There are so many opportunities and they (the faculty) know exactly how to prepare us for all of them. They are very knowledgeable and the classes are centered at challenging us to make sure we are the best veterinary technicians we can be."

To be a licensed veterinary technician and practice in Nebraska, a graduate must pass rigorous skills testing and college exams, apply to the American Association of Veterinary State Boards, sit for the Veterinary Technician National Examination, and become licensed by the State of Nebraska.

The scholarship was awarded before her classmates in their "Fur and Feather" course by instructor Judy Bowmaster-Cole, LVT, and NCTA Dean Ron Rosati.



NCTA Dean Ron Rosati and vet tech student Jenna Garver of Hastings.

In order to address a shortage of licensed veterinary technicians in Nebraska and encourage enrollment in NCTA's program, Lincoln veterinary Dr. Kent Forney and his wife, Shelley, started the annual award in 2016, said Jack Round, CFO at the Aksarben Foundation.

"An LVT is a veterinarian's right hand," Forney wrote in a letter to Round. "They do everything from anesthesia, lab work, radiology, surgical assisting and direct animal care. They are valuable members of our professional team."

The scholarship will help Garver in paying for textbooks and vet tech supplies, tuition and fees in her final year at NCTA.

Garver is a member of NCTA's Student Technicians of Veterinary Medical Association, and also works with Gunner, one of the dogs owned by the NCTA Vet Tech department.

Additionally, she is a student worker at the NCTA Welcome Center, assisting staff with projects, answering telephones and welcoming campus visitors.

"I have had plenty of late nights and long days studying for tests, just like any college student. However, the thing that keeps me going, is knowing that I am doing something I love," she admits.

"By putting in this hard work and dedication over these two short years, I am going to make a difference in many human and animal lives as I continue on in my career of being a licensed veterinary technician."

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