



## NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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### **Discovery Day showcases agriculture**

By NCTA News

CURTIS, Neb. - The second Aggie Discovery Day of autumn is Monday, Nov. 15 at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

“Prospective college students and their parents or friends who attend Discovery Day can learn a lot about the college, people and programs in just a few hours at our campus,” says Braden Johnson.

The second-year Aggie from Gering is majoring in livestock management. Johnson said he had two goals when he started his FFA program nearly six years ago at Bayard High School.

He wanted to earn his American FFA Degree, and to attend an ag college which would best prepare him as an agriculture producer, as are his parents and before them, his grandparents.

Braden, whose older brother, Dalton, had received his associate degree from NCTA, attended a Discovery Day with his parents, joined by Dalton and their family friend, Ryan Liakos, who also was a senior classmate from Bayard.

Soon, check to goals one and two.

Last week, with his family gathered at Indianapolis for the National FFA Convention and Expo, Braden and now-NCTA classmate Liakos, both received their American Degrees.

“I knew that NCTA had the types of programs I was interested in, and would help me reach my initial goals, said Braden.

The programs that he explored at Discovery Day and then broadened while a senior as a BHS Tiger, led him directly to his career plans.

In May 2022, Braden graduates and heads back to the farm in Scotts Bluff County.

“Highlights at NCTA, so far, are doing the calving checks on the fall-calving and spring-calving cow herds, processing cattle in Dr. (Doug) Smith’s classes, and when I took my AI, artificial insemination of beef cattle course,” he says.

Although he often makes the 3 ½-hour drive west for long weekends of fall harvest or cattle work, he also enjoys campus programs with Collegiate Cattlemen and Collegiate Farm Bureau clubs. Intramural, coed sports such as volleyball and softball add to Aggie camaraderie.

He encourages his high school friends to go check out a college, even if they aren’t leaning toward college. Skills in welding, irrigation technology, livestock management, agribusiness, animal health and crop production are in high demand.

Visitors to Discovery Day on November 15 will gain insights into campus life, academic units, clubs, teams, and from the Aggie Ambassadors who lead tours.

Nearly 70% of the current freshman class were able to attend a Discovery Day or come to campus for a tour, even during the pandemic, says Jennifer McConville, NCTA associate dean.

“The Fall sessions are prime time to encourage college prospects to visit campus,” McConville said. “The weather is terrific, the campus is beautiful this time of year, and we have many interactive sessions.”

While students are touring residence halls, applying some hands-on lessons with horses, animals or livestock in our classrooms and labs, their parents are in separate sessions on financial aid and having questions answered by students and staff.

Activities begin with sign-in at 8:30 a.m. at the Welcome Center, and a group assembly at the Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center auditorium. Faculty and staff will be available for agribusiness management systems, agronomy/ag mechanics, animal science/ag education, and veterinary technology.

The day is free to attend, but does require pre-registration for information packets, designation of preferred academic interests, and for the lunch served at “The Barn” gymnasium. See <https://ncta.unl.edu/discovery-days> to register.

For questions, contact Gaylene Stinman, admissions recruiter, at [gstinman2@unl.edu](mailto:gstinman2@unl.edu).



Livestock Management major Braden Johnson of Gering (on ground, black sweatshirt) wrestles a calf at the NCTA Spring branding in April. Johnson was interviewed for the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture Discovery Day on November 15. He encourages college prospects to attend campus tours and interactive experiences. (M. Crawford photo / NCTA)

*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.*

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Online article: