



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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By Mary Crawford, NCTA News editor

Sky is the limit for NCTA Class of 2021

With a sky of sunshine overhead during their commencement May 6, a bright future also is ahead for graduates of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

The Class of 2021 persevered with grit and determination, and each graduate is well prepared by their NCTA experiences for a successful career and future, University of Nebraska President Ted Carter shared in his keynote address.



Ag Hall provides the backdrop at the Nebraska College of Agriculture graduation on May 6. (Andela Taylor / NCTA photo)

“This has been a truly character developing year to get to this position,” Carter said. “You have shown amazing grit. That’s a Nebraska trait I have come to know already. You have displayed it like no other class that maybe has ever graduated here at NCTA.”

In a heartfelt, personal message, Carter shared he was aware that students were already out in their jobs.

“Many of you were branding calves during the same week you were taking final exams. You do what

Nebraskans always do. You see the work that needs to be done and you go do it.”

Some graduates were already in the workplace, immersed in their careers and responsibilities. They were caring for animals in veterinary clinics or tending to livestock on farms and ranches. The class valedictorian was working in north central Nebraska, serving an agronomy industry during a busy crop planting season.

Applause from the Dean

Forty-five candidates assembled for the outdoor commencement at the old football field south of Ag Hall, said Larry Gossen, NCTA dean.

“I applaud the efforts by you graduates, and your hard work in achieving much success as NCTA Aggies,” Gossen said. “Thank you to the families, friends, faculty and many who helped you along the way.”

To share in an outdoor, face-to-face commencement and celebration was especially rewarding for the Aggies and campus community, Gossen added.

American Legion Post 95 Honor Guard posted flags as veterinary technology graduate Dharian Ahrens of Hartington sang the National Anthem.

A large group of family, friends and the campus community gathered, seated on chairs, or bleachers and standing on the old football field. Appropriately for the agricultural college, the pillars and three-story bricks of Ag Hall, the only building constructed as the school opened its doors in 1913, provided a scenic and historic backdrop.

Associate of Science and Associate of Applied Science degrees were conferred by Dr. Mike Boehm, NU Vice President and Vice Chancellor of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Dean Gossen.

Also, 11 one-year certificates in agricultural chemical application, agricultural welding, agriculture production systems, irrigation technology, and animal health care were presented.

Academic honorees

Class valedictorian graduating summa cum laude with a perfect 4.0 was Tiffany Dickau, a native of Elwood. She had completed her agronomy and agribusiness management degree in early December and has been a crop consultant with an agronomy company near Emmett.

Salutatorian Addison Villwok of Randolph, Nebraska, graduated magna cum laude in equine training and management. She also represented the class as an officer of the academic honorary Phi Theta Kappa and gave the benediction.

Taylor Sayer of Cambridge gave the invocation. She will go on to UNL for a masters and doctorate in agronomy.

Six honor graduates were magna cum laude (3.75-3.99): Jacob Jenkins, Mitchell; Lillyanne Lewis, Ord; Lucinda Overweg, Plankinton, S.D.; Darci Reimers, Boelus; Sayer and Villwok.

Five graduates graduated cum laude (3.5-3.74): JoCee Johnson, Royal; Michael Keeling, Manley Hot Springs, Arkansas; Lauren Nichols, Scottsbluff; Connor Nolan, York; and Sophia Nutter, Wilcox.

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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