

March 27, 2017

By Mary Crawford, NCTA News

Living the green dream at NCTA

Curtis, Neb. – Andrea Burkhardt has lived her life amid seeds, soil and plants.

And, no, she is not a farmer or a rancher.

From her home in the far northeastern part of the state to her college campus in southwestern Nebraska, Burkhardt has had one goal – to establish a career in floral design.

The native of Winnetoon, Neb., is completing her third year at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis where she studies horticulture and business management systems.

She will graduate in May with an Associate of Science degree in each major.

“Then, I will be leaving for Portland, Oregon, in June to attend the Floral Design Institute where I will be taking part in Basic and Advanced floral design programs,” says Burkhardt, an NCTA honors student.

Sparked by interest in a floriculture contest while in Verdigre High School FFA, she decided to pursue college and a floriculture profession.

“Working at a green house in my hometown also continued to spark my interest in plants and their care,” Burkhardt said. She discovered NCTA’s horticulture program through her high school guidance counselor.

At NCTA, Burkhardt has invested much of her college career tending to the behind-the-scenes work of the 104-year old campus.

“Andrea has been an incredibly valuable asset to the NCTA campus,” said Tee Bush, associate professor of horticulture. “She is not only a great role model in the classroom but she has also taken on a great deal of responsibility in Horticulture Club as a president for the past two years.

“She also took over landscaping duties for campus last summer and made major improvements to the aesthetics of campus. The entire campus community will greatly miss her presence when she graduates in May.”

Burkhart is involved in the scholastic honorary Phi Theta Kappa, Collegiate Farm Bureau, and Business Club. She also was on the Dean’s List with a 4.0 GPA four of six semesters, and on Dean’s Honor Roll once.

During the National Collegiate Landscape Competition in March in Provo, Utah, Burkhardt showcased her skills in hands-on competitions of landscape plant installation, annual and perennial identification, business management, and flower and foliage design.

She received the Glowacki Family Scholarship from the National Association of Landscape Professionals Foundation. NALP annually sponsors the national collegiate contest.

There, she was joined by Tee Bush, her mentor in campus work and studies, as well as leadership development.

Burkhardt travels to Kansas early next month as the first NCTA representative to assist in horticulture competitions for a national competition hosted by the North American Colleges and Teachers in Agriculture.

The NACTA contest draws individual and collegiate teams from throughout the U.S.

Last October, she was selected for her leadership role in NALP's Student Ambassador Program and attended a conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

In January, she attended the Great Plains Conference of the Nebraska Nursery and Landscape Association where she is a student member and was awarded the NNLA Scholarship for 2017.

Upon graduation in May, she will concentrate on basic and advance floral design programs at the Floral Design Institute in Oregon. Her goal is to one day own and operate her own floral shop

Online link: <http://go.unl.edu/uavm>

#

Sources: Andrea Burkhardt and Tee Bush, NCTA associate professor of horticulture, 308-367-5226, tbush@unl.edu

Writer: Mary Crawford, NCTA News, 308-367-5231, Mcfawford@unl.edu

NCTA.Hort.Burkhardt.03.27.2017



Andrea Burkhardt (left) will graduate from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture In Curtis in May. She recently received a scholarship from the National Association of Landscaping Professionals. Her mentor and professor is Tee Bush. (Courtesy Photo)



Andrea Burkhardt on internship in 2015 at the Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest in Clermont, Kentucky. (Courtesy photo)