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By Mary Crawford, NCTA News

Aggie med center intern steps into career

Curtis, Neb. – “I always wanted to be a veterinarian, since I was little.”

Cliché, perhaps, but true for Gordon native and now-college graduate Brianna Young.

Young graduated in May from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture Veterinary Technology program in Curtis, returned to Lincoln where she had served an 8-week internship as a veterinary technician this spring, and has started her animal health career at the Nebraska Animal Medical Center.

“I work with all types of animals and situations, applying my veterinary technician training and skills,” said Young. “I love what I am able to do here.”

The Gordon High School and NCTA graduate excelled at NCTA, serving as a resident assistant for campus housing and a leader of Phi Theta Kappa honor society for academic excellence, and her student club for “vet techs.”

Last winter, she was awarded a \$500 scholarship from the Veterinary Technician Continuing Education Association (VTCEA) not only for her academic standing, but campus leadership including secretary for Student Technicians of Veterinary Medicine Association.

The student group is a staple within the college’s longstanding academic division, one of the first college programs established and certified in the U.S. by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Young’s childhood goal to become a veterinarian had changed slightly as she pursued two other college settings before her hometown veterinarian suggested looking at the veterinary technician program at NCTA.

“My mother knew about the school in Curtis because my grandfather (Joy Fairhead of Merriman) had attended high school here (when it was a regional boarding school called the Nebraska School of Agriculture),” she said. “We came for a tour, I liked what I saw and signed up. It’s been a great experience.”

Among her favorite courses in the rigorous two-year associate of science program was anatomy and physiology.

“I liked learning the mechanics of the body, the bones and structure, and how it worked within the animal,” she said. “It is very interesting to see how the body works.”

Young is on track to sit for the Veterinary Technician National Examination offered in July in Omaha and officially become a licensed veterinary technician.

In Nebraska, veterinary technicians must be licensed by the state and then take 16 hours of continuing education credit every two years.

Young's scholarship assistance will be helpful in paying for more classes, and the costs of travel and lodging.

NCTA has provided veterinary technician programs for more than 40 years and annually hosts CE courses no matter the alma mater of the individual, said Barbara Berg, LVT, and chair of the NCTA Veterinary Technology division.

"Each year, the VTCEA recognizes deserving students from our program to help prepare them for a career in veterinary technology," Berg said. "Scholarship funding is derived from our continuing education conferences held each year at the NCTA campus."

As Young prepares for the national exam, daily she is applying her college skills on the job with the Nebraska Animal Medical Center.

Perhaps someday she will find opportunity for what she once also deemed a "dream job."

"I could see myself at a zoo, wildlife sanctuary or a refuge working with exotic animals such as tigers, iguanas, snakes, and all the good stuff," she says with a smile.

"It took me a long and twisty road to get where I am now," she adds. "I had a lot of support from my family and friends. This field is challenging and often heartbreaking, but I couldn't wish my life to be any different than what it is right now."

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Online article at: <http://go.unl.edu/ob7k>

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Brianna Young of Lincoln



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