



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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By Mary Crawford, NCTA News

Lexington alumna receives vet tech scholarship

CURTIS, Neb. – Aileen Reynosa-Esquivel of Lexington knew she wanted a career in health care, particularly working in a veterinary field with all types of animals, small, large, exotic and wildlife.

Once she stepped into her college classes in the fall of 2019 at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, however, she soon learned that her training as a veterinary technician surprisingly drew her to agriculture, too.



Aileen Reynosa-Esquivel of Lexington, Nebraska is a sophomore student studying veterinary technology at NCTA. (Crawford / NCTA News)

“It’s a different environment for me. I never grew up in an ag-based background so being exposed to all of this here wasn’t scary at all,” the sophomore says.

Last month, the graduate of Lexington High School and first-generation college student, received exciting news from Barbara Berg, chair of the Veterinary Technology Systems at NCTA.

“We are pleased to inform you we have awarded the 2020 Aksarben Veterinary Technology Scholarship to Aileen Anahi Reynosa-Esquivel who has completed 61 hours of classwork at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture,” Jack Round of the Omaha-based Aksarben Foundation wrote in a letter to scholarship donors, Kent Forney, DVM, and wife, Shelley, of Lincoln.

“According to the teaching staff at NCTA, Aileen works very hard, is very dedicated, participates in class, and is very dedicated to the animals she cares for. She sets goals and priorities and is inspired to be better every day. Her goal is to achieve a bachelor’s degree in veterinary technology,” Round wrote.

Aileen is a Resident Assistant at Aggie West, where she is one of 12 NCTA students who serve as RA’s in the residence life program on campus.

She also is treasurer of Student Senate, president of the Safari Club (exotic animal emphasis), and secretary of Student Technicians of Veterinary Medicine Association.

From Oct. 11-17, Reynosa-Esquivel and STVMA leaders are celebrating Vet Tech Appreciation Week. Their responsibilities as veterinary technicians can range from handling feeding and kennel chores, to being a nurse, anesthetist, groomer, phlebotomist, X-ray or lab technician, or a sounding board for their human clients.

Highlights in her two-year program include extensive labs and skills, facilities management class where she held a snake, and interaction with professors and classmates.

“I came to NCTA because it is close to home (one hour), it is a hands-on college that I really enjoy, and I know my classes here will help me further my education,” she adds.

Her goal is transfer to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and pursue a bachelor’s degree in veterinary technology.

“NCTA’s vet tech program is top of the charts for two-year programs. I get experience with large animals, exotics, and small animals – it’s great!”

The close-knit community of veterinary technicians across Nebraska and nationally is due to decades of academics based in Curtis. It began in 1969 as one of two programs to be accredited nationally by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Professionals in veterinary technology and veterinarians in private practice will be earning continuing education credits on Oct. 23-24 as NCTA is the site for their 44th annual CE seminar, said NCTA professor Libby Fraser, DVM.

Current veterinary technology students are invited to participate in the sessions and interact with professionals and potential employers.

Reynosa-Esquivel said scholarships like the one awarded by the Aksarben Foundation greatly help NCTA students. “It’s awesome!”

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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