

Ag Program at Omaha Bryan
Promotes Career Awareness

FALL 2016
CornsTalk
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Nurturing the Next Generation of Ag Leaders

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Nebraska Corn Board Internships Provide Opportunities from



Lincoln, Nebr.



Denver, Colo.



Panama City, Panama

Say the word “intern” and it may conjure up images of filing papers, taking out trash or making a coffee run for the staff. But an internship through the Nebraska Corn Board is about being engaged at a high level with some of the leading agricultural organizations in Nebraska, the nation and around the world.

“We want to help students gain a greater awareness of the scope of the industry and help them develop both personally and professionally,” said David Merrell, a St. Edward, Nebr. farmer and chairman of the Nebraska Corn Board. “It’s about developing the next generation of leaders and advocates for agriculture.”

The Nebraska Corn Board has funded internships for more than 20 years. Currently, seven internships are supported including several with national/international organizations that receive corn checkoff funds from Nebraska.



Marri Carrow

“Since I’ve been in the Panama office, I have had the opportunity to oversee two highly skilled interns – Greg Sullivan and Andrea Gurney. It takes a special type of person to pack up, leave behind your friends and family, and travel to a country where literally everything is different from home – climate, language, food, culture, traffic and commuting! Because we are a small staff, it is extremely valuable to have additional hands on deck thanks to the Nebraska Corn Board. Especially with the quality of work produced by these two talented young professionals.”

Marri Carrow | Regional Director for the Western Hemisphere | U.S. Grains Council | Panama City, Panama

Applications recently closed for the 2017 internships which will include:

Communications Internship with the Nebraska Corn Board in Lincoln, Nebr. (May 2017-May 2018)

Promotion and International Relations Internship with the U.S. Meat Export Federation in Denver, Colo. (Summer 2017)

Communications Internship with the Nebraska Corn Growers Association in Lincoln, Nebr. (May 2017-May 2018)

Public Policy and International Relations Internship with the U.S. Grains Council in Washington, DC (Summer 2017)

Marketing and Communications Internship with the National Corn Growers Association in St. Louis, Mo. (Summer 2017)

International Agricultural Relations Internship with the U.S. Grains Council in Panama City, Panama (Summer 2017)

Public Policy Internship with the National Corn Growers Association in Washington, DC (Summer 2017)

Lincoln to DC to Panama



Washington, DC



St. Louis, Mo.

All intern positions are paid, and the Nebraska Corn Board provides a strong support system prior to and during the internships.

“They conducted an intern orientation seminar before we left, which prepared us for our summer and gave us greater confidence,” said Colton Flower of Scottsbluff, Nebr., who worked at the National Corn Growers Association office in Washington, DC, during summer 2016. “They were a really great resource and we were in constant communication.”

Interns from Nebraska have proven themselves to be valuable contributors to the organizations for which they work. “We have really enjoyed our Nebraska interns. So often in DC, the quality of summer interns is hit and miss. All of the interns we have had from the Nebraska program have been outstanding people. They are smart. They are interested and they put in the effort to learn and benefit from their DC experience,” said Jon Doggett, executive vice president of the National Corn Growers Association.

Andrea Gurney from Huntley, Wyo., is a senior ag business major at UNL who intends to pursue a law degree. In summer 2016, her internship took her to Panama City where she worked at the Western Hemisphere Regional Office of the U.S. Grains Council. “Working internationally had never really crossed my mind before,” she said. “But now I see opportunities that are very encouraging and exciting to consider.”

Kelsey Scheer of St. Paul, Nebr., worked for the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) in Denver. Kelsey’s background as a member of the UNL meat judging team gave her an edge in terms of both getting the internship and being up to speed when she arrived in Denver. “My work at USMEF helped me better understand the importance of the criteria we use in meat judging as it relates to market value around the world,” she said. “It completed the circle for me.”

The deadline to apply for Nebraska Corn Board internship programs is typically in mid- to late October each year. For information, visit nebraskacorn.gov or call Emily Thornburg at 402.471.2676.

Here’s what some of the 2016 Nebraska Corn Board interns said about their experience:



Maddy Breeling

MADDY BREELING

Internship: U.S. Grains Council Headquarters, Washington, DC

Hometown: Omaha, Nebr.

UNL Major: Global Studies

Internship Experiences:

- Researched communications and policy issues related to biotechnology around the world
- Worked with media on biotech issues
- Assisted with annual stakeholder meeting in Louisville, KY
- Created meeting/conference app
- Daily office-related duties

“I’m very interested in public policy. It was interesting to see how agriculture overlaps with other public policy issues such as trade and economics. My internship was a unique and valuable experience—and the Nebraska Corn Board provided not only financial assistance but an amazing support system as well.”

COLTON FLOWER

Internship: Nebraska Corn Growers Association, Washington, DC

Hometown: Scottsbluff, Nebr.

UNL Major: Agriculture Education Leadership

Internship Experiences:

- Assisting lobbyists with research and leave-behind materials
- Writing articles and speeches
- Writing weekly crop reports
- Taking notes at Congressional hearings

“Growing up in Nebraska, you don’t realize all of the different aspects that are in motion as part of agriculture. I never thought I could learn so much in just twelve weeks. There’s nothing that compares to being that far away from home and being involved in the scope of agriculture that I got to see at that level.”



Colton Flower

Ag Career Academy at Omaha Bryan Includes FFA Chapter

One of Nebraska's fastest growing high-school based agriculture education programs is about as far removed from the farm as you can imagine.

Omaha Bryan High School is in its fifth year of offering its agriculture career academy program, jump-started with a grant from the Howard Buffett Foundation, which provided initial funding for an ag teacher.

Students must apply to be accepted to the program, which is limited to some 60 students each year.

Faculty member Tyler Schindler now leads the Omaha Bryan ag academy. "Over the course of five years, students have identified the ag program as a really good place to be," he said. "We have more technology than in the past, which is important since agriculture is constantly changing and technology is helping drive that change."

"Not a lot of metro kids know that one in three jobs in Nebraska is related to agriculture. A lot of them believe that they don't need ag and that it doesn't really impact their lives," Schindler said. "This program is helping open their eyes to the possibilities and opportunities that exist within agriculture and food production, whether you're interested in science, engineering or business."

The program also serves as career preparation and awareness for students who may not be exposed to agriculture on a daily basis. "There are a lot of students who want to become a veterinarian, an agronomist or get into another type of career related to food or animals," Schindler said. "This program is a great place for them to discover more about those careers."

According to Schindler, having a FFA chapter as part of the ag education program at Omaha Bryan has actually become part of the program's "cool factor." "FFA is a national organization that provides opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, attend conferences and visit other schools," he said. "It gives students the chance to have a unique identity in high school because of the organization they're in."

Several Omaha Bryan students have fared very well in state and regional FFA competitions. The Nebraska Corn Board invests in the Nebraska FFA Foundation, which supports FFA chapter activity across the state, including the Omaha Bryan program.

Stephan Becerra, general manager of Hoegemeyer Hybrids in Hooper, Nebraska, was instrumental in providing the impetus for the Omaha Bryan program. "I had seen a similar program in Chicago while I was working for John Deere and I recognized both a void and an opportunity to do something in Nebraska's urban areas," Becerra said. "About 42 percent of Nebraska's high school students are in the Omaha Public Schools, so if we're going to develop the talent pool for agriculture's future workforce—and help create advocacy for issues vital to our industry—a program like this is critically important."



NAYC Connects UNL Ag Students with High Schoolers



For 45 years, Nebraska has had a group of college-aged agricultural ambassadors who help tell the story of agriculture to high school students and consumers across the state.



The Nebraska Agricultural Youth Council (NAYC) is sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, with financial support from the Nebraska Corn Board and other ag stakeholders.

Morgan Zumpfe from Friend, Nebr., has been a member of the (NAYC) for three years. This past year, she served as one of two head counselors for NAYC. Morgan is a senior at UNL majoring in Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Communication and also a past intern with the Nebraska Corn Board.

“In essence, we serve as the youth outreach team for the Department of Ag,” Morgan said. “Becoming a part of NAYC involves a competitive interview process. From there, 23 college students are selected to share their passion for agriculture with others, especially with high school students.”

The Nebraska Agricultural Youth Institute (NAYI) is the largest NAYC event of the year. The five-day institute is held on UNL’s East Campus and is attended by high school juniors and seniors. “The intent is to expose high school students to the wide range of careers in agriculture,” Morgan said. “Attending NAYI as a high school junior and senior was a big reason I chose to come to UNL and pursue a career in agriculture.”

NAYC is very involved in youth outreach throughout the year, and even arranges farm tours for elementary students in the Lincoln Public Schools. The organization also participates in promotional and educational activities at AKSARBEN, the state FFA convention and other events to help raise awareness of and appreciation for agriculture.

During her college career, Morgan has had four internships. “My internship in the Nebraska Corn Board offices started it all off,” she said. “They took me as an intern when I was a sophomore and gave me great experiences for an entire year. I’m really blessed that the Nebraska Corn Board offered me that internship, and it convinced me that a career in agriculture was right for me.”

When she graduates in May 2017, Morgan will begin her career with Cargill Animal Nutrition in the company’s junior management program.

Morgan says that pursuing a career in agriculture does not require growing up on a farm or ranch. “I strongly encourage people with different backgrounds to consider a career in agriculture—from finance to business to engineering,” she said. “We have a big world to feed, and it’s going to require a wide range of experience, talent and ideas in order to help us meet the challenges ahead of us.”

Here’s what some of the 2016 Nebraska Corn Board interns said about their experience:



KELSEY SCHEER

Internship: U.S. Meat Export Federation, Denver, Colo.

Hometown: St. Paul, Nebr.

UNL Major: Animal Production, Production Management Option

Internship Experiences:

- Attending board of directors meeting in St. Louis
- Research project to quantify the value of beef and pork exports to the corn industry
- Assistance in the technical services department
- Attended World Pork Expo in Des Moines

“I grew a great deal personally as I discovered that some of the skills that I have naturally are valuable in the workplace—working hard, getting up early, being willing to accept responsibility. This internship definitely helped me prepare for a career in sales and marketing related to animal agriculture.”

ANDREA GURNEY

Internship: U.S. Grains Council, Panama City, Panama

Hometown: Huntley, Wyo.

UNL Major: Ag Business

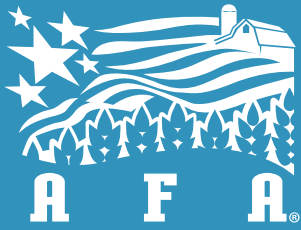
Internship Experiences:

- Assist with marketing programs and international trade team visits
- Coordination of distillers grains/sorghum conference in Peru
- Meeting with grain producers throughout Central America
- Interaction with U.S. Grains Council Mexico team

“This international internship has changed my view of the world, opened my mind and enhanced my respect for other cultures. I have a more global perspective now and can see myself working internationally in agriculture after I complete law school. I’m intrigued by the idea of making an impact on agriculture globally—and it sparks an extra fire in me to want to make a difference.”



Andrea Gurney



Building Career Skills Beyond the

Successfully preparing for a career in agriculture is not simply about meeting the academic requirements in college. It's also about making the most of one's college experience through involvement and engagement, while also developing the soft skills needed to become a leader, collaborator and productive employee.

That's the objective of AFA—Agriculture Future of America.



Mark Stewart

"AFA invests in young men and women that share three characteristics – they are talented, passionate and committed to a career in agriculture. We deliver the programs, experiences and connections that stimulate leader development and fuel passion in order to equip tomorrow's leaders to shape agricultural innovation for the betterment of the world," said Mark Stewart, CEO of AFA.

AFA's flagship program is its annual Leaders Conference, which features a four-track leadership development program. Students must apply to attend the conference. Some 700 students are selected from across the nation to participate annually.

The Leaders Conference includes a progressive series of intense four-day workshops that focus on key success areas—from professional skills development to time management, from problem solving to conflict resolution. Qualified students move through four tracks over the course of their college years.

"We're not redundant with the students' college education. Instead, we're focused on personal development training that enhances their college experience and prepares them for success in the workplace and in life," said Mark Stewart, CEO of AFA. "We want to challenge their perspectives and help them hone the skills they need to work collaboratively in a diverse and challenging environment."

AFA also offers specific institutes focused on key areas such as policy, leadership, crop science, animal agriculture and food. Programs for young professionals who have already begun their careers are also available.

The Nebraska Corn Board provides scholarships for qualified Nebraska college students to participate in the AFA. "By supporting AFA, the Nebraska Corn Board is making it clear that they believe in the personal development training we offer students," Stewart said.



AFA Leaders Conference

College Classroom



Emma Likens, a UNL graduate from Swanton, Nebr., went through three of the four AFA Leaders Conference tracks and participated in many other activities. “If you are passionate about rural agriculture, entrepreneurship, and personal development—and you have a real drive to get connected with other students and career professionals from across the nation—AFA is definitely for you,” she said. “It gives you a larger, more diverse perspective than you’ll get on campus.

I learned about everything from strawberry farming to pecans from the connection I made with other AFA students—things I would have never thought of as ‘farming’ if I hadn’t had the chance to network with students from those backgrounds.”

For more information on AFA, visit: www.agfuture.org.

The Nebraska Corn Board invests in many more initiatives designed to develop ag leadership and improve agricultural literacy in Nebraska:

- The Nebraska Corn Board was the first ag organization to commit funding for Raising Nebraska, the award-winning interactive experience on the grounds of the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island. Open year round and staffed by a full-time Nebraska Extension educator, Raising Nebraska helps students, adults and consumers discover more about their food and the families who grow it. In 2016, the Nebraska Corn Board provided additional funding to create the interactive quiz game which features a competitive learning experience about GMOs.
- The Nebraska Corn Board supports Ag in the Classroom, a flagship program of the Nebraska Farm Bureau Foundation. Ag in the Classroom connects farmers and ranchers with elementary students, provides state-approved ag curriculum for Nebraska teachers, and presents dozens of educational programs across the state.



Corn & Soy Mentor Program

Each year, ten students are selected from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln to take part in the Corn and Soy Collegiate Mentoring Program jointly funded by the Nebraska Corn Board, Nebraska Soybean Board, Nebraska Corn Growers Association and Nebraska Soybean Association. A two-day industry tour is a highlight of the program, during which the students visit virtually every link along the food production chain—livestock operations, crop farms, seed genetics facilities, truck and rail transportation, and grocery retailers. Through the mentor program, students also learn about state and federal policy issues, the role of checkoffs and commodity membership organizations, and the breadth and scope of agriculture careers in Nebraska. They also are prepared to become well-spoken “advocates” for Nebraska agriculture.



D.C. Leadership Mission

Young farmers and students take part in the annual DC Leadership mission to our nation’s capital to meet with policy makers, learn about key agricultural organizations and see how the legislative process works. The mission is sponsored in part by the Nebraska Corn Board.



- Corn checkoff funds support the LEAD program in Nebraska. Now in its 36th year, LEAD is a two-year experience for those involved in farming, ranching, agribusiness and related industries who wish to hone their leadership skills and become even better advocates for agriculture on a local, state and national level.
- The Nebraska Corn Board donates a flex fuel van for use by Nebraska’s State FFA Officers as they travel across Nebraska visiting FFA chapters and participating in leadership training and educational activities.

Platte Basin Timelapse Project Features Pivot Irrigation

NET Television's Platte Basin Timelapse Project is an innovative multi-year initiative designed to help people better understand the impact and importance of this critical watershed.

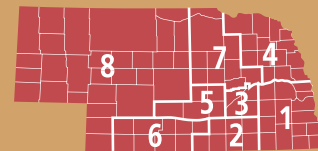
Some fifty cameras are stationed along the Platte River, from its sources in Colorado and Wyoming to the point at which it spills into the Missouri River. These cameras provide a fascinating look at how the river changes throughout the year and from year to year. Educational materials have been developed that focus on the environmental aspects of the river—and producers of the program knew that the next chapter needed to focus on the relationship between the Platte River and agriculture.

The initial phase of the agricultural track is co-funded by the Nebraska Corn Board and Nebraska Soybean Board. Other funders include NET Television and the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts has also provided funding.

The first step in the agriculture track was to install timelapse cameras on pivot irrigation systems—one on Brandon Hunnicutt's corn field near Giltner and another on a soybean pivot at Greg Greving's farm near Chapman. The cameras captured images during the 2016 growing season as they moved around the field. Eventually, a series of educational videos and curriculum will be developed in partnership with UNL and shared with schools in Nebraska and across the nation.

"The Platte River is central to the livelihood, economy and success of the people who depend on it," said Michael Farrell, NET Special Projects Manager. "We wanted to include the impact of the Platte on agricultural production in Nebraska and help people better understand how farmers and ranchers are managing this precious resource—and helping maintain the delicate balance needed to serve everyone and everything that depends on this river."

To learn more or see live shots visit: current.plattebasintimelapse.com/hunnicut-pivot/



District 1
Dave Bruntz
Friend, NE



District 2
John Greer
Edgar, NE



District 3
Brandon Hunnicutt
Giltner, NE



District 4
Debbie Borg
Allen, NE



District 5
Tim Scheer
St. Paul, NE



District 6
Dennis Gengenbach
Smithfield, NE



District 7
David Merrell
St. Edward, NE



District 8
Jon Holzfaster
Paxton, NE



At-large
Alan Tiemann
Seward, NE



Nebraska Corn Board members represent the eight districts indicated on the map and are appointed by the Governor. One at-large member is elected by the other Board members.

Nebraska Corn Board Staff

Kelly Brunkhorst
executive director



Emily Thornburg
director of
communications



Nikki Bentzinger
staff assistant



Boone McAfee
director of
research



Roger Berry
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