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CASNR Salute to Graduates

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CASNR SALUTE TO GRADUATES
May 4, 2007
John C. Owens
NU Vice President and IANR Harlan Vice Chancellor

We appreciate your being with us this afternoon as we celebrate the accomplishments of tomorrow's graduates from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Thank you for attending, and congratulations to the new alumni! This ceremony is rapidly becoming both a fixture and a tradition in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. As a matter of fact, it took the national "First Place Award" in a competition last year that was open to all the universities in the United States.

The roots of the institution which surrounds us here on East Campus grow especially deep. Nearly 138 years ago, the University of Nebraska Board of Regents established what then was the College of Agriculture.

One of their reasons for establishing the College was to bring to Nebraska the benefits of the Morrill Land-Grant College Act passed by Congress in the midst of the Civil War and signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on July 2, 1862. The Morrill Act established a land-grant college in each state, where the leading object would be instruction in agriculture and the mechanical arts. These colleges grew into today's comprehensive land-grant universities located in every state and territory.

Today, the leading object of the University of Nebraska is carried forward by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, the Agricultural Research Division, and the Extension Division which "teaches" research-based findings to constituents all across Nebraska, including 118,000 Nebraska 4-Hers. And the hub of all these activities remains today as it was over a hundred years ago, the East Campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

This special campus, situated within a city of a quarter million people, has a unique atmosphere which most people sense as they first enter the campus and its environs. There are open spaces, abundant trees and shrubs, pedestrian-friendly malls, and very friendly people, people who are more likely than not to say hello to strangers. Maybe it's common interests, common backgrounds, common concerns, and common pursuits that give us the sense of community that is so strong here. Many folks use the term "family" about East Campus. That's probably why so many former students stay closely connected to this College after they leave.

But I'll stop myself here, and we'll view a video expressly produced for this ceremony which so vividly portrays the interesting, colorful, and inspirational evolution of what is today's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. This video was produced by Joel Geyer of NET Television, headquartered right here on East Campus, and is narrated by UNL alumnus, Dick Cavett. Let's take a look at –

AG COLLEGE DREAMS – THE REAL CORNHUSKERS.

Following the video:

(At this point the first group of graduates will begin moving toward the Garden Room – they need a minute to get into place)

"Ag College Dreams" reminds us that studies in agriculture and related areas grew from especially modest beginnings into the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources which, today, is a national and international "powerhouse" in teaching, research, and extension education. We hope you "now have" an even stronger "sense of pride" in the institution which surrounds us this afternoon.

Recognize Faculty:

Those of you guests, friends, and family members who attended departmental receptions prior to this ceremony probably met some of the faculty who taught your soon-to-be CASNR Graduates. Our faculty members bring teaching, research, and extension education "excellence" to the College and take very

seriously their mission to excite their students and encourage their desire to learn. At this time, I would like to ask all faculty members present (and that includes the emeriti faculty) to please stand so that we may recognize you.

Begin Salute Ceremony:

We'll now move into the recognition of tomorrow's CASNR graduates. Here with us today is the President of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Alumni Association, Sheila O'Connor. Sheila will be presenting each graduate with a one-year membership in the CASNR Alumni Association to help them maintain ties with their College family. Sheila, would you please come to the platform?

To keep this moving smoothly, we'll ask that you hold your applause until all the students from each academic department have been recognized.

Begin first group –

Our first honorees are those with degrees from the **Department of Agricultural Economics**. Leading those graduates is the

Head of that department, **Dr. Alan Baquet**.

(See graduate list on separate sheet)

(At end of list) We extend our congratulations to these graduates. Applause.

Dr. Dan Wheeler is head of the **Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication** and will present his graduates from that department.

(See list)

Congratulations to you. Applause.

Dr. Mark Lagrimini is Head of the **Department of Agronomy and Horticulture** and will lead his graduates to the platform.

(See list)

We applaud your achievements. Applause.

Battery Break = = = = = =

We'll stop for just a moment to let Dr. Garald Horst, our photographer who is also a professor in the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, and Brett Hampton, a PROFESSIONAL photographer in our department of Communications and Information Technology, "change batteries". The individual photos being taken of our graduates are to share with you on the College Web site, to download to your computer, share with family and friends via e-mail if you like, and to print as you wish. I'd like to call your attention to the note in the box on page (3) of your program. You will see the College Web address there. These photographs will be available to you at that address by May 18 if not before. Also, please "watch" your local paper for news of your student's participation in this event. Nearly all of tomorrow's graduates gave permission for us to provide their LOCAL newspaper of choice with "a link" to each graduate's information and photo. You may want to contact your newspaper if you don't see it published soon.

Like Professor Horst, many of the folks associated with this institute generously share their talents. Dr. Kay Lynn Kalkowski, CAL COW SKI our pianist today, is also the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity housemother of 60 students.

Begin second group –

Dr. Donald Beermann is the Head of the **Animal Science Department** and leads his graduates to the platform.

(See list)

We salute the achievement of these graduates. Applause.

Dr. Ray Chollet, Interim Head of the **Biochemistry Department**, will lead his graduates to the platform.

(See list)

Congratulations to you. Applause

Dr. Steve Danielson, Associate Professor in the **Department of**

Entomology, will now bring his graduates in Diversified Agricultural Studies to the platform.

(See list)

Congratulations. Applause

Battery break = = = =

While we again pause a moment for our photographers to refresh battery packs, I'll share with you a couple of little known facts about the College from which your student is receiving a degree. This College has a history of developing acclaimed graduates and cutting-edge research. The Institute for Scientific Information in their Essential Science Indicators Report looked at articles on agricultural sciences published by 298 institutions around the world. And it found that UNL ranked 16th in the world and eighth among American universities in the number of citations, meaning that the work of UNL researchers is highly cited by other scientists. This speaks so highly of the quality of the faculty with

whom your students have been working. So along with you, we take great pride in seeing our graduates achieve their educational goals and find challenging endeavors in which to apply their learning. Their education will be of benefit in every aspect of their lives and to the society in which they will live and work. We'll now return to our ceremony.

Begin third group -

Dr. Mark Kuzila is Director of the **School of Natural Resources** and will be presenting graduates in Environmental Studies and Fisheries and Wildlife.

(See list)

We applaud your success. Applause.

Dr. Michael Zeece is a professor in the **Department of Food Science and Technology** and will lead his graduates to the platform.

(See list)

Congratulations to you. Applause.

Dr. Jack Schinstock, a professor in the **Department of Biological Systems Engineering** and associate dean of the College, will present his Mechanized Systems Management graduates.

(See list)

Congratulations on your success. Applause.

Dr. David Hardin, Associate Dean of the College and head of the **Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences** will lead his graduates to the platform.

(See list)

Congratulations to you.

Conclusion:

On behalf of the IANR faculty and staff statewide, not only on the East Campus but also in the 83 UNL Extension offices serving all 93 Nebraska counties, I want to extend our congratulations and best wishes for every future success to each of tomorrow's graduates who have been recognized this afternoon.

And, we want to thank you, as parents, families, and friends who are significant in the lives of each of these students, for your support in helping them achieve this important educational milestone.

I will now turn the podium back to Dr. Waller.