

September 17, 2004

## SENSE OF COMMUNITY AT CASNR

When prospective students visit the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) on East Campus at UNL, one of the most apparent attributes of the college is the sense of community. CASNR's Dean, Dr. Steven Waller, likes to say, "We're a small, close-knit college, with the advantages offered only in a large university setting." Waller recently talked to some educators on campus last week, including me, how UNL took a 10% enrollment decrease this year which will mean a \$4 million dollar budget impact. This is twice the impact of the governor's \$2 million dollar cut this past year. Despite this, some very positive things are happening.

CASNR can proudly say that it offers a strong scholarship base. Last year, over \$400,000 was awarded to students. Scholarships are awarded on numerous criteria like academics, student involvement, and leadership. CASNR has outstanding faculty advisors who help students and act as mentors during students' collegiate careers. Advisors help plan class schedules, act as references in employment situations, and are valuable sources of information. My mentor many moons ago was Jack Schinstock, in the Biological Systems Department, and I can truly say Jack is the reason why I chose a Cooperative Extension career and helped me get through a Masters Degree program.

Agronomy majors and Animal Science majors, which used to be the "bread and butter" of student enrollment on East Campus, has changed because agriculture is changing. You might be surprised to hear 96% of CASNR graduates get a job offer within six months of graduation which has led to a guarantee program. If a student does well academically, gets involved on campus, and completes an internship, CASNR guarantees that the student will receive a job offer within six months of graduation. CASNR also has a Career Fair every fall specifically for CASNR students. Over 50 employers attend looking to fill full-time and internship positions each year.

CASNR acknowledges that applying classroom knowledge to real life settings is very important to students. There are numerous classes that take teaching to the next level through faculty who have industry experience and those who use hands on approaches to applying book knowledge to real-life situations.

Part of the college experience is meeting people and having fun. CASNR helps students meet this goal through numerous activities throughout the year. Examples are Prairie Stomp, Snow Stomp, and CASNR Week.

A unique experience at UNL and in CASNR is that there are numerous study abroad opportunities for students. Students can choose to live abroad for one or two semesters in universities worldwide or partake in a three-week study tour in countries like France, Denmark, and Ireland. These opportunities are truly once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

Dr. Waller truly loves his job and loves to talk to kids about the benefit of CASNR being their first stop for UNL Freshmen. You can always switch to other quality majors and programs at



UNL. Popular majors growing right now include Biochemistry and the new Professional Golf Management program. The hospitality and tourism industry is also seeking a new major that will emphasize the study of ecosystems. Agriculture is changing and so is East Campus. High School students need to take a look at UNL and how CASNR can give you a small college atmosphere and attention but within a large land grant college. For more information, call 1-866-GROW-UNL. Go Big Red!

Randy Pryor, Extension Educator

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Saline County  
306 West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Wilber, NE 68465

Phone (402) 821-2151 • Fax (402) 821-3398 • e-mail: [randy.pryor@unl.edu](mailto:randy.pryor@unl.edu)