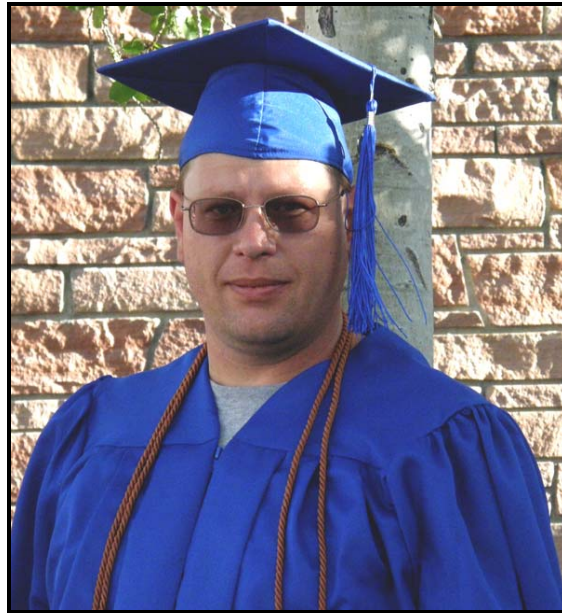


TSJC AQUACULTURE GRADUATE HEADS FOR AZERBAIJAN



For non-traditional college student, Dave Nastley, entering the Aquaculture Program at Trinidad State Junior College, Valley Campus was “kind of a fluke.” His girlfriend, at the time, had been born and raised in Alamosa but was living in Denver where she met him. Nastley had been employed as a heavy diesel mechanic for years, but a back injury forced him to discontinue that line of work. He decided to move to the San Luis Valley with his girlfriend when she decided to move back home. They rented a place from Deb Haverfield, the EMS Coordinator at TSJC. Nastley was looking for a new line of work, compatible with his physical limitations. Haverfield suggested he talk with Ted Smith, the Director/Professor of Aquaculture at the Valley Campus. One thing led to another and on May 9th, 2009, Nastley proudly graduated with Honors *Cum Laude*, successfully earning his Associates of Applied Science Degree in Aquaculture.

With Smith’s vast connections in the Aquaculture Industry, he gave Nastley a lead on a job possibility in Azerbaijan, a country independent from Russia only since 1991. Located just south of Russia and next to Armenia, whom it is still at war with, Azerbaijan promised to be a

challenging and interesting place to work – *“not to mention the paycheck,”* said Nastley. Professor Smith has often told his students, *“Aquaculture, the growing of plants and animals in water-managed systems, is the world’s fastest growing Agri-Industry... therefore the world is your job market.”* *“Dave is the first student to take me up on the job-market concept”*, Smith later added.

When he was only 17, Nastley joined the Army and trained as a mechanic. After four years with the Army, he left the service and contracted with the Department of Defense and the State Department to work as a mechanic for the government. He worked on larger machinery such as back-up generator sets and large trucks and buses. In addition to the U.S., Nastley has lived and worked in Italy, Germany, Russia and Saudi Arabia. Mr. Nastley has traveled extensively worldwide but has never been to the country of Azerbaijan. He is looking forward to assisting fish farmers by helping them update and better themselves thereby increasing their fish production. USAID, the United States Agency for International Development, is the agency hiring Nastley. A United Nations and State Department Agency, USAID has provided U.S. economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide for over 40 years. Nastley’s new job will last a minimum of four months or as long as the assistance is needed.

Regarding the TSJC Aquaculture Program, Nastley said, *“The program couldn’t have been better. Ted Smith is a teacher that cares about his students even after they’ve graduated.”* At 41 years of age, Dave Nastley is looking forward to beginning his new career in Aquaculture, the fastest growing agricultural industry in the world.

Nastley leaves for Azerbaijan on Saturday, June 13th.