Five students from Northeastern were in high gear polishing their skills and honing their art in the arena as they prepared to compete at the College National Finals Rodeo (CNFR) that was held in Casper June 14th – 20th. This year marked the 11th consecutive year that Northeastern has had students qualify for nationals. The women’s team from Northeastern competed in Casper led by high point earner, Paxton Segelke. Paxton is a business major from Snyder, Colorado. She finished the 2014-2015 year the Central Rocky Mountain Regional’s Reserve Women’s All-Around Cowgirl, a title she earned by having consistently good performance throughout the year, including the Regional’s Reserve Champion in goat tying. Joining her in Casper was freshman barrel racer and Ag business major Cara Jolly from Deer Trail, Colorado. The third lady on the Northeastern team was freshman breakaway roper and early childhood education major Skylar Eagles from Center, Colorado. This is the second time in the last three years that Northeastern has had a team qualify to go to the CNFR. On the men’s side, two-time CNFR qualifier, engineering major, Treg Schaack from Edgemont, South Dakota led the way with a clutch performance at the region’s last spring season rodeo in Laramie to jump up in the standings to win the Tie-Down Reserve Championship. Schaack was joined by another two-time CNFR qualifier, David Hinman, an animal science major from Hay Springs, Nebraska. Hinman, who rodeoed at Northeastern for three years, was crowned the All-Around Champion Cowboy for the Central Rocky Mountain Region in 2014, finishing second in the calf roping and third in the team roping. The year prior, he qualified for nationals in the steer wrestling. Unfortunately, Northeastern’s cowboys and cowgirls didn’t make it to the finals in Casper, but they still had a very successful year!

Through a federal grant received earlier this year, Northeastern will be offering a new program this fall called Jump Start NJC. During the fall registration days that have been taking place since late May, qualifying new freshman are being introduced to this unique opportunity designed to help them accelerate through an entire college course by arriving on campus two weeks prior to the start of the actual fall semester. Some learners enrolling at Northeastern are in need of pre-collegiate coursework. Students that do not score at a certain level on the standardized assessment test, are not allowed to enroll into degree level classes in math and English. Some of these students are very borderline, teetering on the high end of the required test scores. For them, perhaps only one remedial class could make them ready for degree qualifying courses. Students who qualify to participate in this new program will arrive on campus August 10th, enroll in one of three academic tracks and
spend two weeks brushing up on the reading, writing or math content they need in order to jump ahead and be ready to enroll in the next level course. In addition to the accelerated academic coursework, students participating in Jump Start NJC will also have access to tutors, be able to move into their residence halls and participate in a number of activities that will allow them to know the campus and the resources available. They will become familiar with the use of their iPads on the college’s network. The programming, which runs early morning to late evening also includes some community exploration, social activities and relationship building among the students. All of these activities are designed to increase the overall success rate for this particular cohort of learners. The grant funds have allowed for this program to take place and are making it very affordable for the students who sign up. Limited to the first 40 qualifying applicants, Jump Start only costs $300 per student which covers their room and meal charges for the two weeks. The cost of their course is paid for through grant dollars.

The nursing field just got a little bigger. Northeastern Junior College recognized 20 graduates at its final Practical Nursing Pinning Ceremony on Thursday, June 25th. The ceremony started with an innovation by Life Skills Coach, Casi Lewis, followed by a welcome from Julie Brower, Director of Nursing at Northeastern. This year’s ceremony will mark the last Practical Nursing ceremony at Northeastern, as the nursing program will be making some curriculum changes next year.

Approximately ten sixth through eighth grade students got a chance to learn about the wind turbines that are a common sight in northeast Colorado and what it takes to be a wind technician during a four-day Kids College class this week at Northeastern. Instructors for the Northeastern Wind Farmer class were Jason Hazlett, Chair of Northeastern’s Transportation/Wind Energy Department, and Jim Lenzen, Assistant Director of the Renewable Energy Program. The class has become a staple of the Kids College offerings, with several students who took the course last year coming back to take it again this year. During the first day, the students learned how to climb a turbine and traverse across it, first trying it on the 10-foot structure inside Northeastern’s wind energy lab and then on a taller, 25-foot structure, located on the side of the automotive technology building. The next couple of days were spent learning about rigging piping to be lifted up to the top of a wind turbine, electrical safety and what to do if someone is injured while working on a turbine, and the electrical occupations that wind energy training can help prepare a person for. Students also got to build their own circuits and create their own wind turbine, connected to a solar panel to make it run. They completed their turbines and then combined them to make a wind/solar farm. At the end of the class the students got to take their wind turbines home with them, along with a T-shirt designating them as a NJC Wind Farmer. A large portion of the course was funded by Xcel Energy’s "Safe Working for All" Grant.

Local third through fifth graders delved into the world of livestock and food preparation during one of this summer’s Kids College classes at Northeastern. The three-day Animal Science course gave students in grades third through fifth an introduction to the inner workings of livestock animals. They learned about the digestive tract of both simple and complex stomached animals, proper animal handling and animal health, as well as the
importance of smart food preparation. Randell VonKrosigk, Animal Science Instructor/Livestock Judging Coach at Northeastern, was the instructor for the course.

The National Junior College Athletic Association announced that 31 Northeastern student-athletes were named to the All-Region IX Academic list, including ten who earned National Academic Awards. To achieve All-Region IX academic status, students must have a cumulative grade-point average of 3.25 based on a 4.00 scale. For students to be considered for National Academic awards they must have completed at least three or more semesters and earned 45 credit hours while maintaining a minimum GPA of 3.60 on a 4.00 scale. The National Academic Award Winners are divided into three categories: the Pinnacle Award for Academic Excellence (4.00 on a 4.00 scale), Superior Academic Achievement (3.8 to 3.99 on a 4.00 scale), and Exemplary Academic Achievement (3.60 to 3.79 on a 4.00 scale). Northeastern had two student-athletes, sophomore Tyler Vandenbark, a baseball player from Fleming, and Jacob Piper, a golfer from Hugo, earn the Pinnacle Award for the 2014-2015 year. One Northeastern volleyball player and one Northeastern baseball player earned Superior Academic Achievement Award: sophomores Amanda Wronkoski from Greeley, and Marcus Longwell from Eaton. The Exemplary Academic Award winners for Northeastern were women's basketball player Danielle Rinaldo, of Merino; men's soccer player Zac Suazo, Fort Collins; and baseball players Lucas Lingreen, Sterling, and Trey Reineke, Aurora. Rounding out the group are men's golfers John Ottoson and Severtson Stoffel, both of Greeley.

Transform Our Own Workforce Experience

Three outstanding Northeastern educators were recognized with the Joel E. Mack Award on May 15th at Northeastern Junior College's 72nd annual commencement ceremony. This year's recipients were Mike Anderson, Celeste Delgado-Pelton and Kevin Stump. Starting in 1983, the Joel E. Mack Award honors the memory of Joel Evan Mack, a former student at Northeastern. Originally from Lyons, Mack was returning back to Sterling after a weekend off campus, when he stopped on Interstate 76 to help two young men who appeared to be having car trouble. They murdered him in what can only be described as a senseless act of violence. Because Mack spoke highly of his instructors at Northeastern, his family, in cooperation with the ASG, began giving this annual award to recognize outstanding teachers. The award is chosen by the students. All full-time instructors are eligible. Once an instructor receives the award they are not eligible to receive the award again for three years. All of this year's recipients are previous winners of the award. Mike Anderson is the Chair of the Agriculture Department. He was been a part of the Northeastern family since 1991 and in addition to teaching, is very involved with the agricultural clubs on campus. Celeste Delgado-Pelton has been teaching at Northeastern since 2004. She is a music adviser and teaches music appreciation and music history, as well as group and private voice lessons, and directs Northeastern’s Jazz and Chamber Choirs. She was the 2014-15 Faculty Senate Vice President and is the 2015-16 Faculty Senate President. Kevin Stump is a Calculus and Physics Instructor. He has been a part of the Northeastern family since 2003.
Marci Henry, Northeastern’s Athletic Director, attended The National Association of Two Year College Athletic Administrators and the National Association of College Directors of Athletics annual convention on June 13th – 17th in Orlando, Florida. Topics covered at the convention included marketing, ticketing, sports medicine, transfer issues, eligibility and athlete well-being. This is the only convention where all athletic directors come together and learn from each other as well as learn from experts in legal issues and medicine. There was also an exhibit hall with hundreds of vendors highlighting new and proven successful products.

Kelly Huenink, Northeastern Ag Professor, was awarded the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) Teaching Award of Excellence, a recognition given to one individual who demonstrates excellence in post-secondary instruction in agriculture. Huenink is an Associate Professor of Ag Business. She is an Agriculture Economics Instructor and also teaches farm and ranch management related courses. She co-sponsors the Aggies Club on campus. Huenink is also the sponsor of the Crossroads student organization at Northeastern. Huenink has held several positions on campus including several years as the Director of Residence Life and Student Activities. She serves as a missionary in Africa during the summer months and each semester break during December and January. Huenink is also a proud alumna of Northeastern, originally attending here as a student from Eagle, Colorado.

Create Education Without Barriers Through Transformational Partnerships

It didn’t matter if you were a teacher, coach, bus driver, foster parent, daycare worker or just someone who needed certification or recertification on your first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skill set, Northeastern offered two classes this summer to accomplish this for you. These were Red Cross sponsored classes. These Community First Aid and CPR classes were offered on two separate dates, Tuesday, July 14th and another on Saturday, July 25th. This was a community level course designed for individuals who are required to have this training for the work they do, volunteer areas they may serve in, or if they just had a desire to know how to help others when emergency situations arise. Instructor for the class was Tracy Yahn, who is the Coordinator of Emergency Medical Services/Fire Training at Northeastern.

Redefine Our Value Proposition Through Accessibility, Affordability, Quality, Accountability, Resource Development and Operational Excellence

Northeastern received a History Colorado Grant for $35,000. These History Colorado grant funds will go towards the repairs and updates in one of Northeastern’s Residence Halls, Dowis Hall.

Northeastern received a $10,000 Xcel Energy Grant. This Xcel Energy Grant funds are directed towards the costs associated with offering two PLC courses designed to teach students how to build controllers that will actually build a control circuit. It also helps cover the costs related to the Wind Kids College where students build a robotic arm and work on electrical projects. The Wind Kids College helps engage local high school students in STEM methodology by involving them in an automation and control competition.
Northeastern received word in mid-July that we once again received the SSS Grant through the U.S. Education Department. The U.S. Education Department announced that they awarded $270 million to 968 institutions of higher education to provide thousands of students with academic and other support services they need to succeed in college. The grants are aimed at helping increase the number of low-income college students, first-generation students and those with disabilities to successfully complete a program of study at the postsecondary level. SSS is one of seven Federal TRIO Programs, which provide outreach and student services for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, low income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities, foster care youth or homeless children and youth, to help them progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post baccalaureate programs. Northeastern will receive $240,174.

Renovations on Northeastern’s E.S. French building is on schedule to be finished in November 2015. While the State of Colorado put money forward to renovate the building which had been on the capital improvements list for more than 15 years, the higher cost of construction now versus then did not leave any dollars for new furnishings in the building when it reopens. The college’s Foundation has taken on the task of finding donors who will help cover the cost of new furnishings. Northeastern recently received a donation of $9,500 from a local family that will be put towards one of the music practice rooms. In addition to the monetary donation, this family also donated an electric piano for student use and a large collection of sheet music, some pieces dating back to the 1920s. In addition to the money and the piano and the sheet music, the family also donated a very nice collection of rock fossils which were collected in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and elsewhere. These fossils have been placed in the college’s science department and will be used as teaching tools in several disciplines.