

College Students Discover Opportunities at Kansas Corn Careers Events

Kansas Corn continued its Careers in Corn college tour with a recent stop in at Kansas State University. The tour's purpose is to connect current students with professionals and possible future employers in the Kansas corn industry. The tour stops, sponsored by Kansas Corn and co-sponsored by Western Plains Energy, LLC and Farm Credit Associations of Kansas, provide relaxed, social atmospheres where industry professionals can share their career stories and students can ask questions about their career paths. The Careers in Corn tour is part of Kansas Corn's Collegiate programs.

K-State student Halle Sparks recently changed her major from biology to food science and attended the event looking for information about possible careers.

"This is a really new field for me. I don't come from an ag background. Tonight, I just want to network with people. I want to know where they come from and how they are involved in Kansas corn," she said. "Hopefully I can use information from what I've learned tonight to help me better determine my career path."

Derek Peine, CEO of Western Plains Energy, LLC, is one of the industry professionals highlighted through the program. He spoke with students at the Colby Community College and Fort Hays University tour stops earlier this year.

"I believe that the Careers in Corn Program provides students with a unique opportunity to hear first-hand from professionals from various industries related to the agricultural community," Peine said. "The discussions are centered around how agriculture encompasses a wide range of technical and professional roles. As Kansans, most of us are involved, either directly or indirectly, with the ag sector. This program hopefully shows students that they can pursue the college studies of their choice and apply those learnings in a professional career that allows them to maintain their connection to agricultural."

Peine said that from an industry standpoint, he believes one of the greatest benefits of the program is the chance to interact directly with young adults who have an interest in the ag sector.

"We get to share our passion for our various industries," Peine said, "and the discussions will hopefully engage the students in a way that will help them to want to stay in Kansas, remain active in our ag community, and maybe even join our industry."

The Careers in Corn tour has also stopped at Hutchinson Community College and Pratt Community College. To continue the spring tour, Kansas Corn will visit Fort Scott Community College on April 25 and Allen County Community College on April 26.

The Careers in Corn program is component of a larger Kansas Corn Collegiate Program which offers more opportunities for students across the state to get involved in the corn

industry. The first opportunity is a student membership rate. For \$25, students can become members of both the Kansas Corn Growers Association and the National Corn Growers Association and receive the regular membership benefits as well as some additional benefits.

Student members of KCGA will be eligible for the Next Generation Scholarship program. This new scholarship program is available by application and is focused on students who are currently enrolled in college in the spring of 2017 and planning to be enrolled in the 2017-2018 school year. Scholarship applications are now available and will be awarded in February 2018.

Students with KCGA memberships will also receive the chance to participate in the new Kansas Corn Collegiate Academy. The program encourages college students to dive deeper into the corn industry and gives them insights into the opportunities and hurdles that lie ahead of the corn industry and how their future career paths may fit in the corn industry. Participating students will create a capstone project that will relate the information they have learned back to their area of study. Students will participate in a day at the Statehouse in Topeka and Corn Congress in Washington DC. Applicants must be currently enrolled in post-secondary school and still in school through spring semester 2018. This program is now receiving applications through October 31, 2017.

For more information about any of Kansas Corn's collegiate programs or to download applications please visit www.kscorn.com/collegiate