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(Neb.)-Butterfield Leaving CSC After 14 Years



By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 03/28/2013 08:54 AM

(Chadron)-Dr. Charles "Chuck" Butterfield is moving to Wyoming after 14 years at Chadron State College. The professor and department chair of Applied Sciences said he plans to begin work as a senior consultant with a private environmental/engineering consulting firm based in Jackson, Wyo.

"I'd like to think I'm leaving the range program a little better, a little more diverse, with CSC having earned respect in this field. Our teaching mission is strong here and working directly with students is why I came here," he said.

Butterfield said it's very satisfying when CSC Range Management graduates are well sought-after by employers such as the National Forest Service and other similar agencies. "Our graduates are well-prepared and that's no accident," he said. He gives credit to others like Dr. Jim O'Rourke who founded the range management program at CSC.

O'Rourke said, "In my mind, Chuck has been a very important part of the growing process. When I arrived in 1988, I started the range program. Dave Carlson had taught a range class before me. From 1988-1992 we added more classes, and then we finally got approval to offer a degree. Our first graduate, Rick Peterson, is now the state range conservationist for Wyoming."

"When you get that phone call, text or email every once in a while from a student you spent extra time and effort helping, it's very rewarding. As a freshman in Powell, Wyoming, I was probably a 'project'. My GPA was below 2.0 and one advisor said, 'you'll never amount to anything.' So I can say to a student who is struggling, 'I know exactly what

you're doing and where you're headed' because I've been there. Some students just take more mentoring," said Butterfield.

Dustin Luper, CSC rodeo coach and fellow faculty member, said, "When I think of Chuck, I think of him as a champion for the students. There's not a person who would go more out of their way to help a student at ChadronState than Chuck, in my opinion, just being around him. I've seen him under stress, in the fire and he's like a duck - smooth above the water and kicking a hundred miles an hour under the surface. He's been a pleasure to work with. We're going to miss him. There's not a better mentor out there for students."

"I've beat the bushes. One student turned down a state FFA office in South Dakota because it meant that would have had to attend college in that state rather than coming to CSC. Some people say I'm the program. One person does not make a program - it is a 'we' program. I'd like to see somebody new come in maybe take things in their own direction," Butterfield said.

"The Range program had 122 majors in the fall of 2012. There were 32 majors when I got here. Some of our graduates will go into wildlife management and some will go back to the family ranch. Others will be involved in education and public agencies. The future of the CSC ag program is strong and bright. Part of leadership is knowing when to walk away. I feel like I'm leaving things in good shape," he said.

—*Tena L. Cook, Interim Marketing Coordinator*