



In his first year at McCook Community College, Vice President Andy Long has gone into the classroom to teach something he learned growing up in Grant. His new leadership class has a strong emphasis on community.

“I just want to make sure top-notch students from southwest Nebraska can attend McCook Community College and have the opportunity to develop into better leaders and have a great experience in the process,” Long said.

MCC went looking for a select group of students who met the right criteria and found them. In the fall, six students began meeting for the vice president’s Monday afternoon leadership group.

“The class is really challenging in that we are forced to think outside the box of different leadership qualities,” said Tanner Cline, freshman from Calloway. “I think the entire class loves being challenged and we love discussing different techniques or past experiences we have been through.”

Long hopes this class will develop leadership for MCC’s current crop of top students, recruit top student leaders in the future, and reach out to current community leaders to introduce and connect with current MCC students.

Several other community leaders from entities such as the city, school, hospital, bank, etc., also spoke to the class.

“By growing up in Grant I had the opportunity to learn about leadership by being involved in a wide variety of school activities and our speakers are helping illustrate its importance,” Long said.

In addition to the speakers the students read and discussed several books in class including: “Strengthsfinder 2.0” by Top Rath; “The 21 Laws of Leadership” by John Maxwell; and “How to Win Friends and Influence People” by Dale Carnegie.

One of the bonuses by being a part of the group is they will travel to Chicago over spring break for a chance for team development and to explore a major American city that will help students see the opportunities available there while still appreciating what’s available in Southwest Nebraska.

“I’ve learned that being a leader doesn’t always mean that you have to be the dominant personality. Different people can lead in different ways,” Cline said. “Change is almost always inevitable in the real world, and the ways we adapt and adjust to change are what really make

our character stand out.”

While a small group of students initiated the program, Long hopes to find even more students when the class meets again in the fall. He’s already looking at current high schools to find those students.

Students who maintain a 3.5 grade-point average or higher or have scored a 25 on their ACT exams and are actively involved in high school activities and leadership can apply.

“If there are high school seniors interested in being a part of this group for next year they should fill out the Mid-Plains Community College scholarship application and send me an e-mail,” Long said.