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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Local High School Students Join CVTC Ag Skills Event**

### ***Field trip includes farm show, competition, tours***

**Eau Claire, WI** – When it came to one task at the Ag Skills Competition at Chippewa Valley Technical College March 5, Jaydeen Ellifson of Eleva-Strum High School found herself at a disadvantage. She reached into the back end of a simulated cow, going in all the way up to her shoulder, in a move not at all unfamiliar to people on the animal science or veterinary care end of the ag industry.

“We were supposed to feel the ovary,” Ellifson said. “But my arm wasn’t quite long enough.”

Ellifson was one of nearly 300 students from area high schools attending the competition, which included dairy, floriculture and agronomy divisions. The students also got a look at the agriculture program facilities at CVTC’s Energy Education Center, interacted with CVTC students in agriculture programs, and visited the nearby Eau Claire Farm Show in the afternoon.

CVTC holds the Ag Skills competition each year so high school students from a wide area can come to Eau Claire for a day of agriculture education. The dairy competition, for example, involves teams of students completing tasks at multiple stations, like evaluating feed rations, determining a proper medicinal dosage for a cow, and identifying common animal science tools.

“This is our largest Ag Skills event ever,” said Adam Wehling, dean of CVTC’s agriculture, energy and transportation programs. “This is also a culminating activity for our dual credit classes with our high school partners. The students learn material in the classroom, apply it here, then go to the Eau Claire Farm Show and talk about job opportunities in the industry.”

Neillsville teams finished first and third in the Forage category, with a Greenwood team tying with Menomonie and Spring Valley teams for second place. Gerhardt Dawson of Neillsville placed first in Agronomy Skills with a score of 97 out of 106.

A team from Loyal evaluated various tools typically found on farms at another station. “We’re identifying pieces of farm equipment,” said Trevyn Wilke.

“This is part of a Dairy Science class we have with CVTC,” added Kobe Delis.

“We are learning what everyday farm life is like. It broadens your horizons in the dairy industry,” said Courtney Frese, president of the Thorp High School FFA chapter. “We have an Animal Science class

through CVTC at Thorp, but we also do this to prepare for the career development contest in River Falls in April.”

“This is a really good learning experience,” said Mary Rose Pedersen of Eleva-Strum. “We come in not knowing everything, but we’re learning.”

At another station, the Augusta team was picking up handfuls of forage.

“We’re looking at the forages and seeing which ones you feed to a lactating cow, a dry cow or a heifer,” said Kayleen Strauch. “I like competing in these kinds of events. We have a large animals program through CVTC and this is our practice for the livestock judging team.”

“This is a great partnership with CVTC and the local high schools,” said CVTC Animal Science Instructor Adam Zwiefelhofer. “These are our future students. It gives them a quick snapshot of what we do on a daily basis. It allows them to get to know the faculty.”

With over 95 programs and both online and on-campus classes, Chippewa Valley Technical College delivers superior, progressive technical education which improves the lives of students, meets the workforce needs of the region, and strengthens the community. CVTC programs are designed with input of business and industry to prepare graduates for today’s jobs, with 93 percent employed within six months of graduation and associate degree graduates earning an average annual salary of \$44,000.

Cutlines:

### **ES Main**

Eleva-Strum High School student Jaydeen Ellifson feels around in a simulator for a cow’s ovaries during the Ag Skills Competition at CVTC in Eau Claire March 5. Her Eleva-Strum classmates looking on are, from left, Ally Schick, Mary Rose Pedersen and Kayla Converse.

### **Loyal**

Working to identify some farm tools are member of the Loyal team at the Ag Skills Competition at CVTC March 5. From left are Kobe Delis, Mason Malm and Trevyn Witke.

### **Thorp**

Examining samples of forage at the CVTC Ag Skills Competition March 5 are members of the Thorp team, from left, Carley Ciolkosz, Sami Ciolkosz and Courtney Frese.

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