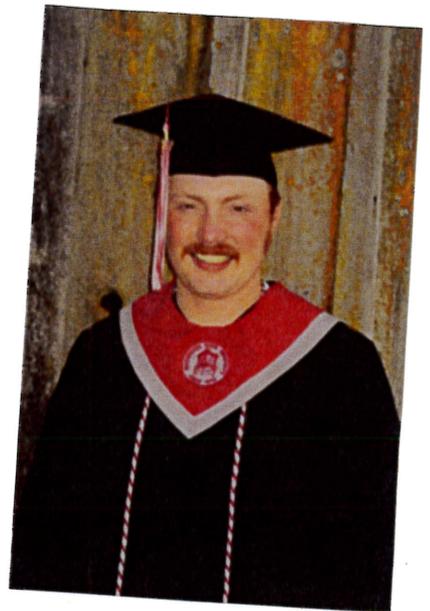


11040 Thorp Highway North
Thorp, WA 98946
April 26, 2014



State of Washington
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
P.O. Box 43105
Olympia, WA 98104-3105

Dear Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board:

Back in 2009 when I graduated from high school, I was graced with the WAVE scholarship from you to help pay for college. Now graduation from college is just a couple weeks away, I would like to thank you once again as well as provide a little update on what I've done over the past five years and where I'm headed. This all wouldn't have been possible without your support and I am deeply grateful.

After high school I went to Walla Walla Community College, enrolled in the John Deere Technology program. As part of the program I needed a sponsoring John Deere dealership where I could go back to and work as part of an internship after every quarter of school. The dealership in Ellensburg was kind enough to offer to be my sponsor. I was able to work with and learn from some of the smartest people in the business; as well as have the great opportunity of hands on experience applying what I learned in school. In the program we covered theory of how systems like hydraulics, electrical, and engines worked. But we also were hands on, disassembling and reassembling components of not only tractors but all kinds of equipment. What I learned in my two years in the program has stuck with me and provided many opportunities. While in the Tech program I met people from all around the northwest and into California and Montana. I still keep in touch with several friends I met in the program. In August of 2011, I graduated from the Tech program and as a class we were able to go back east and tour the John Deere factories in Illinois and Iowa. While in school, we completed work projects to help pay for the trip. It was a great experience and a lot of fun. Although I did find out that high humidity is not for me.

While I was in the Tech program, I was completing higher level general education courses than were required for vocational programs. I did this to set up and to complete another degree at Walla Walla in John Deere Dealership Management. This degree was a mix of Agri-business classes and some technical John Deere courses. Unlike the Tech degree, the Dealership Management degree was transferable to Washington State. In this program I took economic and business classes as well as crops and soils classes. I really enjoyed these courses. I got involved with the Postsecondary Ag Students (PAS) club at the school and was fortunate to go to Des Moines, Iowa and compete at the national level. I was part of the Ag Service Machinery competition, the college bowl team, and competed in job interviews. Our college bowl team made it into the top eight teams. While going to school during my third year at Walla Walla, I

got a part time job at the local John Deere dealership. I worked in the lawn mower shop servicing mowers. Between the full time technician and me, we serviced over 600 mowers that winter. I know more about lawn mowers now than I ever thought was possible. Every once in a while I got to help the combine technician with an overhaul or hillside leveler installation. I stayed on with the dealership through the summer after graduating in June of 2012.

In August of 2012 I started at Washington State University. I will be graduating with a Bachelors of Science in Agriculture Technology and Production Management and a Minor in Business Administration Cum Laude on May 10th. WSU was a culture shock from community college. At Walla Walla my largest class had almost 40 students; my first chemistry class at WSU had 350. It took me a couple weeks to get settled in to the new environment. When I first got to Pullman I intended on getting a part time job but after realizing how large my new work load was going to be I decided to focus on my studies. As a transfer student it was a hassle trying to get classes to count for credit but ultimately it got sorted out. Luckily I had a friend who was transferring at the same time into the same program so we helped each other out quite a bit. At WSU a student needs 120 semester credits to graduate; I will be leaving here with 160 credits between transfer credits and the courses I have taken at WSU. It has been a lot of fun becoming a Cougar and I have met lots of great people here.

This past summer I had an internship at Precision Seed Production (PSP) in Moses Lake. This was my first job outside of a dealership and it was really interesting to be operating a tractor instead of working on one. PSP contracts with large seed companies to grow sunflower and canola seed. They also sub contract to growers throughout Washington. We had fields from Ritzville to the Columbia River and from Tonasket to Boardman, Oregon. The company supplies specialty equipment to growers and I spent a lot of time hauling equipment all over the state. I also worked with one of the agronomists with planting and taking care of our parent line sunflower fields. These were up to five acres each with most of them being less than three acres. The seed off of these fields will be used this year with our growers in their production seed fields. They were a great company to work for and I had fun working with such a variety of crops and equipment.

This past January I flew out to Racine, Wisconsin for an interview with CNH. They are the company who owns Case IH as well as New Holland. They offered me a job that same week and I accepted. The position is in the Rotational Development Program (RDP). It is a training period at the operations headquarters in Racine where I will work under all the different departments and learn how the company operates. This is to set up my skills for a Manager of Field Service Operations (MFSO) position. As a MFSO, I will have a territory of dealerships in which I work with their service departments. I will be evaluating warranty claims, helping set up business plans, and making sure that the dealership is able to adequately provide service and support the products they sell. Traditionally the RDP lasts for one year and upon completion assignment will be to wherever there is a need for an MFSO in North America. A couple weeks ago I found out that I will actually be doing a shortened RDP between two and six months and will be assigned to Washington and Oregon due to their imminent need for an MFSO. So I will be working with Case IH dealerships all the way from the Canadian border down to Eugene and as far east as Pasco and Hermiston. I was excited at the prospect of going anywhere in North America, but the company thought I would be a better fit out here. I am glad to be going to a

place where I know what kinds of crops are grown and how. But Washington is second to California in the diversity of crops grown. There will definitely be a learning curve but I am sure I will be able to handle it. I feel this position is going to be a great fit for my skills and I am super excited to start working.

Once again I would like to thank you for your support, without it I may not have come as far as I have. Your belief in contributing to young people's futures has helped make a difference in my life. I appreciate that fact and will remember it when it is time for me to help others. It would not have been possible for me to accomplish what I have without your help. Thank you once again.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Travis Matthews". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "M".

Travis Matthews