From the onset of his experience as a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of a former mentor, Matthew Zimmerman, Ph.D. in the UNMC Department of Cellular and Integrative Physiology, Dr. Case devised a plan of action toward achieving success in academia.

Dr. Case accredits much of his success to his former postdoc mentor, Dr. Zimmerman. He emphasized an exceptional mentor can impact the lives of a trainee’s career and expressed gratitude for having great mentorship during his postdoctoral time at UNMC. He shared the importance of understanding productivity with a plan vs. poorly designed activity as his way of working toward his career goals. Dr. Case stated he reflects on his postdoctoral days as a learner and teacher to provide rewarding experiences to other trainees.

Dr. Case’s trajectory toward success is paved with many accolades such as; the 2014 UNMC Pathway to Independence Award, one of only four investigators in Nebraska to receive the K99/R00 Pathway to Independence Grant from the National Institutes of Health in 2015, the Michael J. Brody Young Investigator Award in 2016 (American Physiology Society: Neural Control and Autonomic Regulation Section), the Star Reviewer Award in 2017 (American Journal of Physiology–Heart and Circulatory Physiology), the Early Career Investigator, Research Recognition Award (American Physiology Society: Neural Control and Autonomic Regulation Section) in 2018, and most recently the Distinguished Graduate Student Mentor Award.

Dr. Case shared his initial career choice: to work with kids with cancer. However, his initial path of being a combined MD/PhD trainee took a different turn focused on research, teaching, and mentoring as opposed to clinical work. He spoke about his passion for working with trainees to improve their presentation skills and other professional development aspects to help them with their future career goals. “Many trainees believe that the key to success in research is working
at the bench 24 hours a day, but that simply is not true. While productivity is absolutely essential, having a well-rounded education and training is much more attractive to future employers,” said Dr. Case.