

Leading Angus Youth

Association selects new youth Angus Ambassador.

*compiled from releases by
JD Rosman, communications intern*

The National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) announces Cassandra Garcia, Renton Wash., is the 2016-2017 Angus Ambassador. Garcia will serve a one-year term as spokesperson for the organization's nearly 6,000 junior members at cattle industry events across the United States and Canada.

"I look forward to pursuing involvement with consumers, as well as producers in the industry," Garcia says. "As Angus Ambassador, it is important to serve as a resource to consumers in order to bridge the gap."

Garcia, a junior at the University of Washington studying business administration and marketing, was named the Angus Ambassador July 21 in Saint Joseph, Mo.

Ready to serve

Growing up surrounded by Angus cattle, Garcia has experience through her state association building junior programs. She believes it is important to connect across generations in the Angus breed, encouraging leadership from both youth and adults.

"We are in an industry that has always been progressive," Garcia says. "Encouraging the older generation to share their stories with junior members and consumers will help us remain leaders in the business."

Garcia's presentation focused on Angus advocacy and how producers can connect with consumers. Garcia is working toward forming a new student organization, Agriculture Council, at the University of Washington to build awareness within the predominantly urban demographic. Through the organization, she hopes to connect with consumers and students to bridge the consumer-producer gap.

"We talk about the people who aren't associated or involved in the cattle industry, and Cassandra will be able to connect and relate to them," says Angus Ambassador Judge Callie Mullins, associate professor of animal science at Northwest Missouri State University. "She is very open-minded, and I think she is going to educate, but also learn so much in the next year."

Funded by the Angus Foundation, the 2016-2017 Angus Ambassador will represent the breed at industry events throughout the United States and Canada, including the 2016 Angus Convention in Indianapolis, Ind.; a Certified Angus Beef LLC Building Blocks seminar in Wooster, Ohio; the Cattle Industry Convention & National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Trade Show in Nashville, Tenn.; the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) Annual Research Symposium and Convention; and the



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► Cassandra Garcia, Renton Wash., is the 2016-2017 Angus Ambassador.

Guiding Outstanding Angus Leaders (GOAL) Conference in Canada.

Stiff competition

To be considered for the ambassador position, each junior member submitted a cover letter, résumé and two essay responses.



► The top finalists for the 2016-2017 Angus Ambassador were invited to the American Angus Association where they each gave 5- to 8-minute presentations followed by 5 minutes of questions.

The top candidates were invited to the American Angus Association, where they each gave a 5- to 8-minute presentation followed by 5 minutes of questions.

Other finalists invited with Garcia to the Association to compete for the ambassador role were Haley Throne, Lexington, Ga.; Dakota Lovett, Bladen, Neb.; and Sierra Day, Cerro Gordo, Ill.

Throne received her lifetime membership to the American Angus Association when she was born, her first cow at 3 weeks old and attended her first National Junior Angus Show in 2007. She is a junior majoring in agricultural communications and animal science at the University of Georgia.

Lovett is a third-generation Angus producer. He is active in the NJAA and considers it a privilege to have grown up raising Angus cattle. Lovett is a sophomore at Southeast Community College in Beatrice, Neb.

Day raises purebred Angus cattle on her family's operation and believes it is vital to have strong marketing and communication skills in order to be successful in the agricultural and beef industries. She will attend Lake Land College in Mattoon, Ill.

Judging the competition, along with Mullins, were Shelby Mettlen, Angus Media assistant editor; Ryan Ruppert, Association



► The four finalists invited to the Association to compete for the ambassador role were (front row, from left) Cassandra Garcia, Renton Wash.; Haley Throne, Lexington, Ga.; (back row, from left) Sierra Day, Cerro Gordo, Ill.; and Dakota Lovett, Bladen, Neb.

director of special projects; Dave Nichols, Association Board member; and Kelli Retallick, Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) director of genetic service.

For more information about the NJAA or

the Angus Ambassador program, visit www.angus.org.



Editor's Note: JD Rosman was the summer communications intern for Angus Media.