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# *My Role as an* Angus Ambassador

*by Jill Sommers*



*Jill Sommers was crowned 1994 Miss American Angus Nov. 15 at the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Ky. She will represent the nation's Angus industry at various events throughout the coming year.*

*The daughter of Dick and Sharon Sommers, Silver Lake, Ind., Jill is active in NJAA and 4-H and was second place 1993 American Angus Auxiliary scholarship winner. Winning this title has become a tradition in this family. Jill's mother, Sharon, was the first Miss American Angus in 1968.*

*Following is Jill's winning speech she wrote for the Miss American Angus contest.*

*(Left) The newly crowned Miss American Angus Jill Sommers, Silver Lake, Ind., gives a wave to the crowd of spectators at the North American International Livestock Exposition while 1993 Miss American Angus Melissa Bush helps to fasten her sash. As queen, Sommers will represent the nations Angus industry at various events throughout the year.*

**I**n elementary schools most six- to eight-year-olds look forward to show & tell time. It's a time for them to show off one of their new toys or tell a story.

One day at show & tell time I proceeded to tell my classmates how my daddy got babies out of a canister and put them into cows. For a seven-year-old, having the official job of holding the cow's tail was a big deal.

Did this qualify me as an Angus Ambassador? Well, I'm not sure, but it was a good thing my grandmother was my teacher that year because the version of artificial insemination I gave my classmates was questionable at best.

From a young age to today, I'm still spreading the word about the Angus industry.

I envision an Angus Ambassador as someone who should be proud to do more than pass out ribbons and pose for pictures. An Angus Ambassador should be knowledgeable of the Angus breed and industry. The Angus Ambassador should be an active member of the BEEF Coalition project committee. Someone who should promote and sell the breed with the enthusiasm of Tom Burke.

If chosen as the Angus Ambassador, I would like to give speeches to clubs and organizations, and write articles about the Angus industry. As a part of this program, I could provide learning and leadership activities related to production, processing, marketing, promotion and consumption of Angus products, which would result in a positive image.

The Angus Ambassador could possibly attend the National Cattlemen's Association Convention,

working in the American Angus Association booth and handing out consumer information. They could work the booth at the North American and other shows, answering questions of school children.

A future ambassador program would provide an opportunity for young women and men to become more involved in the Angus industry.

The future of the Angus industry is in our hands; not our parent's generation, but our generation. It is time for us to take control of our destiny. I think it's important that the Angus Ambassador reach out, encourage, and involve the younger generation.

Just imagine yourself as a nine-year-old boy, who at the age of two, lost his mother and unborn sister to chicken pox. Then, at the age of eight, you lost your father to a heart attack on Christmas eve, and six months later, lost your grandfather to lung cancer. Your only sources of role models are your grandmother, stepmother and next-door neighbors.

You enjoy spending many of your summer days in your neighbor's barn helping with their 4-H calves. In your first year of 4-H, you had grand champion beef heifer at your county fair.

This boy's name is Andy and he's my family's source of inspiration. He's our hope that we can make an impact on anyone's future.

Through my years of showing Angus cattle and working with people in the Angus cattle industry, I have learned that a young person with a purpose and enough confidence to stand for what they believe can make a powerful difference. I've realized you must continue to set new goals as you achieve



others because satisfaction is the beginning of failure.

Becoming an Angus Ambassador or Miss American Angus is one of many goals I want to achieve. This would possibly be a stepping stone to my ambition of being just as active in the adult association as I currently am in the junior association.

A wise man once said: "The key to a successful ambassador program is determined by the sincere desire of the ambassador to promote the industry. Make it your commitment to ask not what the ambassador program can do for you, but what you can do for the ambassador program and the industry."

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*Jill Sommers, left, of Silver Lake, Ind., received a special congratulations from her mother, Sharon, after being crowned the 1994 Miss American Angus. The award was especially meaningful to Sharon since she served as the first Miss American Angus 25 years ago.*