

Alternative Care

After aspirations of becoming a veterinarian were put to rest, Lisa Norton's caring for animals and people comes full circle.

by Shelia Grobosky, BioZyme Inc.

Information is power. Having enough information is vital no matter if you are making breeding decisions, planning your future or doing something simple, like trying a new recipe. If you don't have all the information you need, you won't be able to make the best decision.

That was the case for a young lady who entered the University of Missouri-Columbia with the determination to become a veterinarian.

A dream for the compassionate animal lover since she was very young, Lisa Norton had not gathered proper information to know exactly what being a veterinarian entailed. She had seen the veterinarian come care for her horses and dogs. She knew she loved animals, and she wanted to care for them.

Her dreams changed that first semester of veterinary school, after three years of taking classes as an animal science major.

"I had loved animals my whole life — dogs and horses primarily. But the first thing I wanted to do — whether it was a sheep, goat, dog, cow,



Though Lisa Norton didn't become a veterinarian, she still cares for animals and people. "These animals teach us more than anything else," she says. "They teach responsibility, compassion and how to care for others."

horse, pig, donkey — I wanted to pet it," Lisa said. "I wanted to be a veterinarian since I was 4. When I spent more time that first semester of vet school crying than anything else, my advisor suggested that being a vet and a love of animals were not as aligned as one would have thought."

Today, Lisa is caring for animals in a much bigger way, and impacting both animals' and peoples' lives.



She is president and COO of BioZyme Inc., a Saint Joseph, Mo., based company that develops and manufactures natural, proprietary products focused on animal nutrition, health and microbiology. BioZyme offers a complete line of feed additives and high-density, highly available vitamin,

mineral, trace mineral and protein supplements for a variety of animals, including cattle, pigs, poultry, sheep, goats, horses and dogs.

Taking care of business

However, Lisa didn't just arrive at BioZyme. After that one semester in veterinary school, she earned bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting, following her father's footsteps and advice. She then qualified as a certified public accountant (CPA) and became a professor in accounting at Missouri Western State University.

After 14 years as a professor and additional time spent as the director of the Small Business Institute, a government-funded program that helped a variety of small businesses, Lisa started her first business, Quantitative Resources, in 1998.

It was after she started her second company, LAN Resources LLC, that she became involved with the Angus breed, the American Angus Association and its entities.

LAN Resources is a full-service research company that specializes in quantitative research, marketing research, consulting, and helping businesses and organizations gather and process data to make improvements.

“Data is information that you can’t exist without. We need data to make useful decisions. That is one of the foundation principles of accounting,” Lisa said.

In 2007 the American Angus Association approached LAN Resources and Lisa for her professional assistance, and Lisa said she was excited and proud to be part of the two-part study her company conducted.

Her husband, Bob, was on the Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) Board of Directors, and she had become fond of the Association since meeting some of the Board members and staff. As a “numbers person” she was impressed with the Angus breed.

“You can’t be involved in data and research like I am, and not be awestruck by their market share. It would be impossible,” Lisa said. “I was very excited to do that project because the Association has always been committed to doing things well. To be that intimately involved with this

organization was fun and amazing to me. I was always proud that they did the research because it shows that they are always striving to be better.”

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The research and analysis Lisa conducted had two parts. The first included a member-satisfaction study. The second was a purchasing-power study for the Angus Foundation as it developed its *Vision of Value* campaign to discover where members purchased products and equipment to add potential value to the campaign.

More than a decade later, Lisa still praises the Association for its research and use of the data to make improvements. As a researcher, there are two things she reminds people about data. First, don’t ask if you aren’t willing to hear the answer and

adjust. Second, there is definite value to having consistency in your data collection, so you can prioritize what is possible and most desired by the respondents.

Data leads to relationships

As their involvement with the Association evolved, it seemed natural for Lisa and Bob to invest in the Angus Foundation’s *Vision of Value* campaign. BioZyme Inc., where Bob is the CEO and chairman of the board, is listed as an “Angus Leader” in the lifetime giving report of the Angus Foundation, with lifetime financial contributions of \$250,000-\$499,999. However, to the Nortons, investing in the young people is just as important.

“Writing checks is the easiest thing to do. We view our involvement with the youth as part of our investment in the campaign,” Lisa said.

That involvement began with interactive booths at National Junior Angus Shows (NJAS) that allowed the Nortons to network with the juniors, give away prizes and help educate them on nutrition. Another relationship that was important to Lisa was one she had with former

Junior Activities Director Robin (Ruff) Hughes. The Nortons would host the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) for a dinner at their home when it was in Saint Joseph for meetings.

“I am a perfect example of what not to do. I never realized what I was saying when I said, ‘I want to be a vet.’ I didn’t know that meant emergency

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Norton has an open-door policy. Director of Nutrition & Regulatory Support Kevin Glaubius discusses an item of business with her.

situations and putting animals to sleep. So that is why it is important to Bob and me to share anything they want to know about our work and our company culture,” Lisa said. “We know these young people are looking for direction, and they will have to work, but isn’t work more fun when you love what you do?”

She realizes that not every National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member wants to work for an animal nutrition company like BioZyme, but she wants to share her story and provide information about the company in case there are young people looking for opportunities. She is especially proud of the passion that young people involved in the cattle industry have.

“They can send their résumé here and address it to Bob Norton or Lisa Norton, and we know them and they know us,” she said.

That is how two former NJAA board members became area sales managers (ASMs) with BioZyme.

Britney Creamer, Montrose, Colo., remembers meeting Lisa and Bob at the NJAS in 2009 in Perry, Ga. She was running for the junior board and met Lisa at the Sure Champ® (BioZyme) booth. They maintained contact and visited with each other at other industry events. At the

2013 NJAS, Lisa asked her what she envisioned as her future.

“It wasn’t the 8-to-5 job I was working at the time,” Creamer said. “I wanted to get more involved in production agriculture and work more with producers.”

After Creamer sent her cover letter and résumé to the Nortons and accompanied Lisa on a business trip to France and Italy, they created a position for her in the marketing department. A year later, she became an ASM in western Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, allowing her to move home and work with producers daily.

Lindsey Grimes-Hall had a similar experience getting to know Lisa, both on the junior board and as the budget and finance chair of the 2012 NJAS. Lindsey had worked with Lisa as a sponsor and was impressed that an influential person in the industry was so genuine and really cared about the juniors.


When Grimes-Hall was finishing graduate school at Kansas State University with a master’s degree in nutrition, she sent her résumé to Lisa. The Grimes family in Hillsboro, Ohio, had used the BioZyme products for years. Lindsey was familiar with them, and remembered how genuine Lisa had been.

The company created a position

for her — nutrition coordinator — and she helped with ration balancing, wrote articles, and helped provide education and support for producer meetings. After some time in that position, a role as an ASM opened in Ohio, allowing Lindsey to move closer to home, and she now covers Ohio, Indiana and West Virginia.

“I turned down a job for substantially more money,” Lindsey said. “The thing that sold me on BioZyme is that Lisa said, ‘We want our employees to be happy and enjoy what they do. What do you want to do? What is your passion? I want people in roles where they feel like they have a purpose.’ I wanted to work for the place where I was valued as a person and not just a number.”

Treating numbers as numbers and people as people is something at which Lisa Norton has excelled. No, that 4-year-old’s dream to become a veterinarian didn’t come to fruition, but today she cares for animals and people.

“These animals teach us more than anything else,” Lisa said. “They teach responsibility, compassion and how to care for others.” 

Editor’s Note: Shelia Grobosky is a public relations coordinator for BioZyme Inc.



Through their participation with the Angus Foundation and support of the National Junior Angus Association members, the Nortons have forged relationships with juniors that have resulted in careers with the company.