

Here for the Summer

The summer months bring the latest group of interns to the American Angus Association.

by Sarah Harris, Angus Journal intern

The sun rises earlier, the days are hotter and the building along Frederick Avenue is home to a few new faces. The American Angus Association welcomed seven young Angus enthusiasts to the team as summer interns.

Amanda Alvarenga, Carson Gilleland, Sarah Harris, Riley Reep, Jim Stickley, Bree Taylor and Jessica Wesson are out of college classes for the next few months, but are eager to start their work in Saint Joseph, Mo.

Amanda Alvarenga



Amanda Alvarenga joins Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI), where her internship entails studying the genetic and genomic modeling for foot scores. Alvarenga is originally from Minas Gerais, Brazil, famous for its cheese and coffee.

Alvarenga received a bachelor's degree in animal science from Federal University of Lavras, UFLA, Brazil, a master's in quantitative genetics and genomics from University of São Paulo, USP, Brazil, and is currently a doctoral student in quantitative genetics and genomics at Purdue University.

Alvarenga grew up on a small family-owned and-operated dairy farm in southeast Brazil. Because of



American Angus Association 2021 summer interns are (from left) Sarah Harris, Riley Reep, Jim Stickley, Bree Taylor, Jessica Wesson and Amanda Alvarenga. Not pictured is Carson Gilleland.

her cattle background and passion for quantitative genetics, an interest that began in her undergraduate studies, she says she is thrilled to work on behalf of AGI.

"I am looking forward to working with the enormous data set of the American Angus Association with data collaboration from Australia," Alvarenga says. "I am excited to learn more about beef cattle operations in the United States and industry-level genetic evaluation."

She also hopes to be at the Association's headquarters to celebrate the milestone of studying one million genotyped animals within AGI.

Alvarenga aims to work with

quantitative genetics and genomics as a geneticist or researcher to optimize genetic evaluations. Simultaneously, she hopes to share knowledge regarding the field and her experiences.

"Working on the largest beef cattle data set in the United States will be a unique opportunity as a quantitative geneticist," she says. "This internship will be a great introduction to how the beef industry and genetic evaluation work in comparison to the academic setting."

Carson Gilleland



Taylorsville, N.C., native, Carson Gilleland also joins the AGI team. Gilleland grew up on a farm with broiler

chickens and around 50 cow-calf pairs.

Gilleland attended Western Carolina University for her undergraduate career, studying biology with a minor in chemistry. She is currently pursuing her master's degree in animal science at North Carolina State University.

Gilleland credits her time at Western Carolina University for her passion for genetics work.

"I really enjoyed all of the genetics courses I had to take for my degree in biology," she says. "When I graduated, I thought I would combine my background with animal agriculture with my interest in genetics that sparked during my undergraduate studies."

Having grown up around Angus producers, Gilleland says she is happy to be in Saint Joseph for the summer, learning more about the organization those breeders proudly call home.

"It's a great opportunity to learn how a breed association works," Gilleland says. "I'm excited to see how the genetics field works in an industry setting, and it's nice to work with experienced geneticists."

Gilleland's internship will focus on gestation length data, and she says she is eager to explore the world of genetics outside of an academic setting. She hopes to continue to work in the genetics sector of the agriculture industry in the future.

Sarah Harris



Sarah Harris joins Angus Media as the *Angus Journal* editorial intern. She is a fifth-generation Angus breeder from

Springwood, Va., where her family's roots run deep in the cattle industry.

Harris graduated from Northeastern Oklahoma A&M studying animal science in 2019, and Oklahoma State University (OSU) with a bachelor's degree in agricultural communications and a minor in agribusiness in 2021.

She will attend New Mexico State University (NMSU) in the fall, studying agricultural extension and education with a focus in communications. Harris plans to focus her thesis on the seedstock marketing sector, specific to print publications and visual content creation.

"Ultimately I want to live a life that upholds our family's heritage in raising Angus cattle and utilizing Angus genetics in a commercial setting," Harris says. "I look forward to developing my talents in the agricultural communications profession so I can target marketing techniques for seedstock operations. This internship in its entirety will give me a foot in the door to do so."

Working with the Angus Media team, Harris will develop print, web and audio content while tapping into photography and videography.

"I'm honored to intern with Angus Media this summer," Harris says. "Giving back to the breed organization that built me has been my goal for years, and now that I am able to do so, I am ecstatic to see how

this internship and the relationships with breeders and youth developed this summer will play a role in future endeavors."

Riley Reep



The American Angus Association's communications team welcomes Riley Reep of Ropesville, Texas,

to their ranks. Reep is a junior studying at Texas Tech University (TTU), where she is majoring in agricultural communications with a minor in animal science and international agribusiness. Reep intends to pursue a master's in agricultural communications following graduation from TTU.

Reep is eager to take on the tasks associated with the communications intern position. As she continues to work on behalf of the Association, Reep will build upon her knowledge of the cattle industry while further developing professional communication skills.

"This internship touches on aspects of communications that I have not had the chance to experience," Reep says. "Specifically this internship allows me to learn more about public relations, which have always interested me."

As the communications intern, Reep will work with print stories, photography, videography, graphic design, social media content creation and other aspects of the communications field.

"During my summer with the American Angus Association, I will have the opportunity to learn more about the cattle industry while

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learning from some of the most respected professionals within the industry,” she says. “I am grateful for this opportunity, and I cannot wait to see how it unfolds.”

Jim Stickley



Jim Stickley, Saint Paris, Ohio, is one of two events and education interns. Stickley graduated from Lincoln Land

Community College in 2020 and is a senior at The Ohio State University, where he majors in agricultural business and applied economics and minors in political science. Bridging the gap between agriculture and politics is Stickley’s passion, and his future plans include lobbying efforts and running for public office.

“I believe my experience learning about the inner workings of the cattle industry will give me practical information when talking with politicians and lobbyists within the agricultural policy realm,” Stickley says. “My passion and love for the industry stems from a strong family background within agriculture.”

Stickley’s duties throughout this internship will entail traveling the country for national and regional shows, working with the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) and the industry’s youth, meeting breeders and forming countless networking opportunities. He is excited to play a role in the experiences of junior members and hopes to grant them an unforgettable National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) experience.

“The American Angus Association is the premier membership organization,” Stickley says. “This opportunity to work alongside

industry leaders while serving youth will produce a network of remarkable connections as I commence in my professional career.”

Bree Taylor



Bree Taylor of Kingfisher, Okla., is one of two events and education interns. Taylor is a senior at OSU, where

she majors in agribusiness and minors in agricultural real estate appraisal. Taylor plans to remain in the youth livestock sector by working on a collegiate campus with youth livestock events or on behalf of a breed association’s junior members.

Taylor’s interest in youth livestock programs and events supplemented her desire to intern with the events and education team.

“I absolutely love getting to work with kids who are passionate about the livestock industry,” Taylor says. “I can only hope to learn from them as much as I will the staff this summer.”

Taylor looks forward to witnessing the passion and drive of livestock exhibitors. She embraces the challenge of learning how to coordinate shows and events with firsthand experience at a national level. She says she admires the individuals she will be working with because of their experience and involvement in the industry.

“I know how much showing livestock impacted who I am, and I can only hope to impact Angus youth as much as my peers did me,” Taylor says. “This summer, I will learn more than I can even begin to imagine by going to youth livestock shows and to the office with staff on a day-to-day basis.”

Jessica Wesson



Jessica Wesson of Searcy, Ark., joins the Angus Media team this summer as the *Angus Beef Bulletin* editorial intern.

Wesson graduated with dual degrees in agricultural communications and agricultural leadership May 2020 at the University of Arkansas, where she will continue her second year of graduate studies in agricultural extension and education with an emphasis in agricultural communications in the fall.

After obtaining her master’s, Wesson plans to begin communications work on behalf of a livestock association or another agricultural organization.

“I’ve always admired Angus Media and the work they do,” Wesson says. “They are the best in the business, and by learning from their talented team, I will advance my skill set while building industry-related relationships throughout the country.”

After touring American Angus Association headquarters with the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) organization, Wesson was inspired to apply for an internship with Angus Media, and she is excited to travel to events and assist with media coverage while networking simultaneously.

“I am eager to see the process of producing a magazine — writing, photography, design, print and everything in between,” Wesson says. “This internship will help give me a unique perspective on the cattle industry.” 