

New Beginnings

The seven American Angus Association interns embark on a journey to gain industry experience.

by Faye Smith, editorial intern

April may bring spring showers, but May brought the arrival of seven new interns to the American Angus Association. With anticipation in the air, these individuals are learning from the best within *The Business Breed*.

AJ Knowles, Chelsea Langley, Rudi McEwin, Lindsey Sawin, Faye Smith, Jentry Squires and Sierra Walter are spending their summer at the office in Saint Joseph, Mo.

A.J. Knowles



A.J. Knowles, Dallas, Texas, native, joins the Angus Genetics, Inc. (AGI) team as one of its two interns.

Being raised around cattle in the Texas prairie gave him the curiosity to want to get involved in FFA and 4-H and eventually own and exhibit cattle.

Knowles began his educational journey at West Texas A&M (WTAMU), majoring in animal science. He transferred to Texas A&M University to graduate with his bachelor's in 2017 in animal sciences and a Master of Science in animal breeding. Knowles then began his doctorate at Virginia Tech and is finishing at the University of Missouri in animal sciences.

In his position at AGI, Knowles says he is gaining increased technical knowledge while assisting with a summer project that focuses on heifer fertility and production.

"It's mostly on heifer fertility. We're trying to figure out how to increase heifer production," Knowles says. "If we can get a female pregnant earlier, she can get into production earlier. That way she's not costing money to develop, she's not costing breeding resources."

After this summer and postdoctoral, Knowles plans to work in international development to collect phenotypes and developing new traits from collected phenotypic data. Knowles says one of the most important pieces of this internship outside of increased industry knowledge is a larger network.

"Taking away from this summer, I'd like to have a big network and a lot of understanding of where the industry is going because it's driven by Angus," he says. "In the research world, we're looking for the next thing instead of what's here today."

Chelsea Langley



From sweet home, Camp Hill, Ala., Chelsea Langley is serving as one of the events

and education interns.

Growing up showing cattle and rodeoing, Langley had fallen in love with Angus cattle. As a sixth-generation cattle rancher and a 12-year National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member, she knew the American Angus Association was where she wanted to be.

Langley graduated from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College this past May with her bachelor's in agribusiness. She plans to use her degree to manage her future Angus operation, as well as become an events coordinator.

"I've always wanted to be an events coordinator. Not exactly just junior events, but any events in general," Langley says. "I love getting to communicate with others in the industry, learn about their passions and how they got started and grew their operation."

Langley assisted with the planning and execution of the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS), and also attended regional shows and the annual Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) conference. She says her past involvement in the NJAA is what led to her desire to learn from the Association.

"The foundation that I have built through my involvement in not only the junior livestock programs, but also my active participation in the

daily operations of both the family cattle and timber businesses, will be invaluable to my success in future endeavors,” she says.

Rudi McEwin



Growing up in Adelaide, South Australia, Rudi McEwin is the second AGI intern.

McEwin is no stranger to the agriculture industry. Active

in her family’s commercial Angus operation, McEwin found her passion for animal breeding and genetics.

“I have always been surrounded by the practical application of EPDs (expected progeny differences) in herd mating decisions,” McEwin says. “I really enjoyed learning the theory behind the genetic tools I have been exposed to my whole life.”

McEwin earned her bachelor’s, honors and doctorate in animal breeding from the University of Adelaide. McEwin is a current postdoctoral researcher at the Davies Livestock Research Centre at the University of Adelaide, where she works with a Wagyu breeder on marbling and marbling characteristics.

McEwin will participate in a research project focused on building a base for the evaluation of udder and teat scores. Her summer will be spent discovering how heritable these traits are, how udder and teat scores are related, and how the selection of these traits can affect others.

“This internship was going to be a really good test of my skills and really stretch me to think outside the box working with larger data sets while

still keeping the producer in mind,” McEwin says.

Building off her doctorate in a new environment is an incredible opportunity, McEwin adds. She also recognizes the importance of building her network and research repertoire.

Lindsey Sawin



Lindsey Sawin of Vernon, Texas, is the *Angus Beef Bulletin*® intern.

As a current junior at WTAMU studying agricultural media and

communications with a minor in broadcast journalism, her passions lie in storytelling and producer-to-consumer communications.

“I see a growing need for people to advocate for our industry,” Sawin says. “I think there is a huge need for farmers’ needs to be met and their stories to be shared and heard by the general public. I also feel that there needs to be a liaison between producers and consumers.”

Sawin grew up exhibiting livestock and rodeoing across the state of Texas. Although she did not have a background in beef cattle, Sawin says she knew Angus was the right fit for her summer internship.

“Coming to Angus was an easy decision because they’re one of the largest breed registries in the world,” she says. “So coming to learn from them and share the stories of Angus producers was somewhere where I felt I would get to learn a lot.”

In addition to writing for the *Angus Beef Bulletin*, Sawin is assisting with the production of the *Angus*

at Work podcast and social media management. She is traveling to different conferences and ranches across the United States.

Sawin says the biggest takeaway will be networking with producers and learning from those cattlemen to help her with her future career. She plans to stay within an agriculturally based editorial, strategic communications or broadcast position after graduation.

Faye Smith



As the *Angus Journal* editorial intern, Faye Smith of Walton, Kan., says she is excited to strengthen and build on her knowledge of communication

within the beef industry.

Smith is a Kansas State University senior, studying agricultural communications and journalism. With hopes to work for a beef publication in the future, Smith says this internship aligned with her career and personal goals.

“I think that Angus Media’s mission to support breeders and inform audiences from a seedstock and commercial perspective is incredible,” Smith says. “I have always been fond of the *Angus Journal* in terms of story-writing quality and overall appeal of their magazine, so I have always wanted to be able to work with the *Angus Journal* team at some point in my career.”

Smith says she has always been invested in the cattle industry. Her family operates a purebred and

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appendix Shorthorn herd. Smith has been involved in the American Junior Shorthorn Association (AJSA) and will be serving as president her final year on the AJSA board of directors.

Throughout the summer, Smith is writing articles, proofreading and compiling multimedia components. She says she is most looking forward to networking with co-workers and Angus enthusiasts.

“I was excited to be a part of a media team that is able to produce such high-caliber publications, but overall the relationships I built with people along the way made this internship so fulfilling,” Smith says.

Jentry Squires



Kingfisher, Okla., native Jentry Squires, is one of the Association’s events and education interns.

Squires says youth activities

and education through livestock have molded her. As an avid swine showman and livestock judge, her background led her to apply to for this position.

“Growing up we showed livestock, and I was always judging or doing something that was youth-oriented,” Squires says. “For me, being able to give back and do the youth route and give to the youth and do my part in return has attracted me most to that position.”

Squires says the largest priority in her position will be assisting with the execution of the NJAS. She oversaw

contests, assisted the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) and helped organize class breaks. She also attended regional shows to assist the events team.

While a large part of her background was in swine, Squires grew up on an Angus ranch. She says although her family had connections within the breed, planting her roots and establishing herself independently is why she wanted to come to Angus.

“I will always stand behind networking, and those connections and relationships you build will always propel you no matter what direction you’re going toward,” she says.

Squires recently graduated from Butler Community College, where she was a member of the livestock judging team. She will be transferring to Oklahoma State University (OSU), where she will dual-major in animal science and agricultural communications.

Sierra Walter



Sierra Walter is the Angus Association’s communications intern. Growing up in Hydro, Okla., Walter found her passion within

the equine industry.

She grew up on a small cattle operation and began showing horses at the age of 9. Walter attended events through 4-H, the National Reined Cow Horse Association (NRCHA) and the American Quarter

Horse Association (AQHA), where she served as the national youth president.

“Although my main activities have been within the horse industry, advocating and serving agriculturalists of all sectors was a passion instilled in me from a young age,” Walter says.

This passion to advocate for the agricultural industry led Walter to study agricultural communications, minoring in agricultural economics at OSU. She says she was excited to be able to diversify herself and learn more about the cattle industry with this summer position.

As the communications intern, Walter is involved with all communications efforts with the Association. Walter is refining her skills in several areas of communications by traveling to the NJAS and Ag Media Summit to assist with content creation, and gain confidence in her work.

“Angus is a very prestigious association,” she says. “They do a lot of things well; their communications department is stellar. I just wanted to work with the best, so this is what led me to the Association.”

Walter hopes to work within communications at an agricultural organization in the future, and she says the skills and experiences she learns at Angus will align closely to her future career. 