



# Golden Performance



Nineteen junior members exhibit the characteristics necessary to claim gold.

Story by **Courtney Wimmer**; sketches by **Doneta Brown**

**N**ineteen members of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) earned the esteemed Gold Award in 2002. Like an Olympic gold medal, a Gold Award is proof of tremendous dedication, accomplishment and involvement.

These junior members have excelled as leaders, showmen and individuals. They have stepped up to the NJAA awards platform by first receiving Bronze and Silver awards, which must be earned before qualifying for the Gold Award.

This level of recognition requires participation and achievement in leadership, show competition, performance testing, production and marketing of Angus cattle. The skills recipients have gained will aid their quest to reach new heights of success in the future.

Members apply for the Gold Award during their final year of eligibility as an NJAA member. Complete and accurate records are vital when applying for any of the award programs. Contact the Junior Activities Department at the American Angus Association for further information.

This year's Gold Award recipients are:

## Jennifer Beck

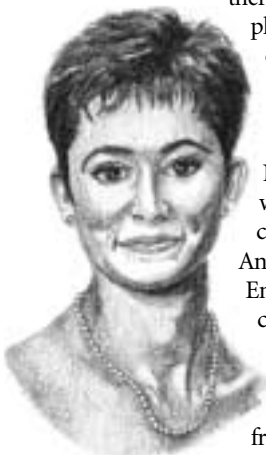
Jennifer Beck has many fond memories of the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Milwaukee, Wis. She attended her first NJAS there 11 years ago. Her final show as a junior took place this year in the same showring. And she was elected to the NJAA Board of Directors.

An NJAA member since 1990, Jennifer has been active in both the Missouri Junior Angus Association and, after moving in 1997, the North Carolina Junior Angus Association. She was a membership director in Missouri and currently represents North Carolina as the 2002 Angus queen. Jennifer also attended Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) conferences from 1995 to 1997.

Jennifer, daughter of Richard and Diane Beck, Louisburg, N.C., says her move to North Carolina has allowed her to make new friends and experience new opportunities.

"I've learned that my life takes many turns off of the main path, and I'm content to do the best I can to live day to day and await the next opportunity that will surely reveal itself in an altogether unexpected way," she says.

Jennifer currently attends the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She plans to graduate in December 2003 with a degree in political science and a minor in public policy.



## Brett Bishard

Pennsylvania junior Angus member Brett Bishard, son of Brad and Lois Bishard, York, Pa., says that being a member of the NJAA has been a rewarding experience.

"It has taught me a lot about the basics of life, including responsibility, time management and communication skills," Brett says.

When his junior career is over, he says he will miss traveling to different shows the most. He advises other junior members to take advantage of the opportunities available to them.

"Go to as many shows as you can and meet as many people as you can," he says. "Do your best and work hard."

Brett says his involvement in the NJAA has been both a privilege and a life-changing experience. He says he hopes to buy a farm and to begin raising cattle in the near future.

He is currently a private excavating contractor after working with a paving and excavating company for the past three years.



### Brittnia Carlson

Brittnia Carlson, Cherokee, Iowa, says the NJAA has taught her many valuable skills.

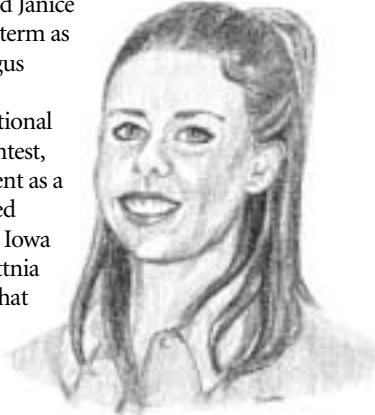
“The Association has taught me how to meet new people, help put on shows, and how to organize and hold meetings,” she says.

Brittnia, daughter of Mark and Janice Carlson, recently completed her term as president of the Iowa Junior Angus Association.

Prior to winning the 2002 National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest, Brittnia said her proudest moment as a junior member was being selected champion showman at the 2002 Iowa Junior Angus Preview Show. Brittnia was also a member of the team that won the Black Kettle Award in the 2002 Auxiliary-sponsored All-American *Certified Angus Beef*® Cook-Off at the NJAS.

“The NJAA has taught me how to show calves, but I’ve also had the opportunity to organize shows, write for the *Iowa Angus News* and work with people,” she says.

Brittnia works as an interpretation technician for the National Centralized Ultrasound Processing Lab and Technology Center (CUP Lab) in Ames, Iowa. She currently attends Iowa State University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. She plans to graduate in May 2006.



### Michael Considine

Michael Considine says his most valuable experience as an NJAA member was serving as president of the Maryland Junior Angus Association in 1999 and 2000. “I learned a lot of leadership abilities, such as working with a group of people and how to keep everybody on task,” he says.

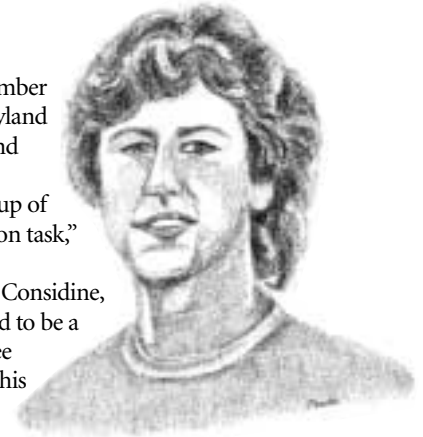
Michael, son of Brian and Robin Considine, Middletown, Md., was well-prepared to be a leader for his state. He attended three LEAD conferences and represented his state as a voting delegate at the 1998 NJAS.

The highlight of his junior career was competing in the 2000 National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest. Michael says the opportunity to represent his state was a remarkable feeling. “It was a great honor because I know not everybody gets to be at that level. And so for me, it was very special,” he says.

Michael also has participated in public speaking, photography, team sales and quiz bowl competitions at the NJAS.

As he reflects on his 10 years as an NJAA member, Michael offers some advice for other juniors. “The best thing to do is to try to be as involved as possible in your cattle. It’s easy to let mom and dad do a lot, but you will get more out of it if you do the work yourself.”

Michael plans to graduate from the University of Virginia in May 2004 with a degree in economics.



### Cortney Collins

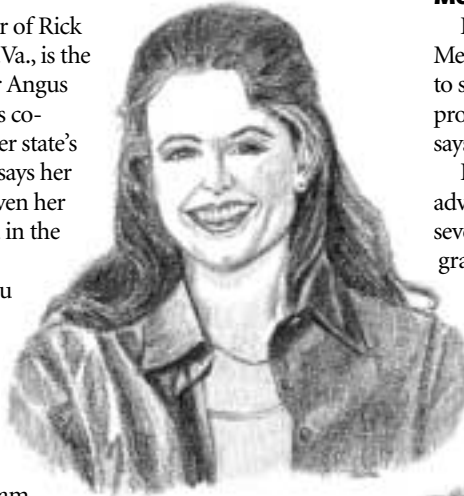
Cortney Collins, daughter of Rick and Jane Collins, Tanner, W.Va., is the current West Virginia junior Angus queen. She has also served as co-president and historian of her state’s junior association. Cortney says her leadership positions have given her many qualities she will need in the future.

“Being a leader means you also have to be part of the team — working together to keep your state organization going. In the future, whether it’s a job, my career or my family, being a good leader and a team player will always be important,” she says.

Cortney represented her state at the 2001 National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest. She says competing in the showmanship contest was a goal she set when she joined the NJAA in 1993. At the national level, Cortney has participated in public speaking, photo and poster contests and quiz bowls.

She was elected to the NJAA Board of Directors at this year’s NJAS. “My family and I spend our vacation every year going from show to show across the country, and the people you meet are lifelong friends,” she says.

Cortney is currently pursuing a degree in biochemistry from the College of Agriculture, Forestry & Consumer Sciences at West Virginia University. She plans to graduate in May 2004.



### Mercedes Danekas

Being elected to the NJAA Board of Directors is a moment Mercedes Danekas, Wilton, Calif., will never forget. “The opportunity to serve and give back to an organization that has given me so many proud moments is the highlight of my years as a junior member,” she says. She was elected Board chairman at the NJAS in Milwaukee.

During her 12-year career in the NJAA, Mercedes has taken advantage of many opportunities to excel. She has participated in several contests at the NJAS, including public speaking, photography, graphic design, poster, team sales, the Auxiliary-sponsored All-American *Certified Angus Beef* Cook-Off and quiz bowl. The daughter of James and Sherry Danekas represented her state as a voting delegate in 1999 and attended LEAD in 2001.

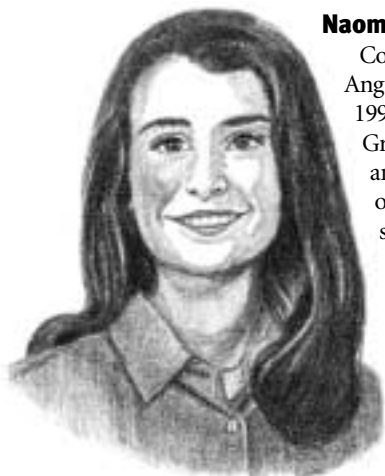
Mercedes is familiar with success in the showing. She won grand champion honors at the 2002 Western National Angus Futurity Junior Show with her owned bull and reserve grand champion honors with both her owned and bred-and-owned heifers. At the 2002 NJAS, she claimed junior champion owned heifer and reserve junior champion bred-and-owned bull. She was also among the 15 finalists in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest.

“Working with my cattle has been my most valuable experience. Through this I have learned self-reliance, responsibility and the value of hard work while doing something that I love. This process of raising, marketing, competing and caring for my animals has helped me become the person I am today,” she says.

Mercedes currently attends the University of California–Davis, majoring in communications. She plans to graduate in 2005.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 266



**Naomi Gray**

Competing to be 2001 Miss American Angus was a valuable experience for 1999 Nebraska Angus queen Naomi Gray, Harrison, Neb. "I learned a lot and developed speaking, organizational and communication skills," Naomi says.

"The NJAA has helped me learn about the Association and responsibility. I have also developed friendships that will be valuable in the future."

Naomi has served the Nebraska Junior Angus Association as first vice president, secretary/treasurer and director. She

represented her state as a voting delegate to the 2000 NJAS and attended LEAD in 2000. Naomi received an American Angus Auxiliary scholarship in 2000.

A memorable moment of her junior career was winning reserve grand champion with her bull at the 2002 Nebraska Junior Angus Show. "I was really excited, and it was a great sense of accomplishment because I raised the bull myself. And it proved I had a good, functional breeding program."

Naomi, daughter of Rod and Laura Gray, will graduate in May 2003 with a degree in nursing from Casper College, Casper, Wyo.

**Emily Hartzell**

Leadership offices have made a difference in the life of Emily Hartzell, daughter of Ken and Marilyn Hartzell, Shawano, Wis. Emily has held many offices in the Wisconsin Junior Angus Association, including president, secretary and historian. She also represented the state association twice as a voting delegate to the NJAS.

"The people I have met have made a difference in me, and I hope upon hope that I have made a positive difference in them," she says.

Emily won reserve grand champion bred-and-owned cow-calf pair at the NJAS in Milwaukee.

She is involved in performance-testing programs and has used the results to make educated management decisions. "I feel that the Angus Association has done a spectacular job of making information available to producers and having individuals available to help educate producers on initiating an effective AI (artificial insemination) program and how to enter a flushing routine," she says. "I have learned more from other producers than I could learn in any classroom."

Emily plans to graduate in December from Western Kentucky University with a degree in animal science.



**Karl Holshouser**

Karl Holshouser, son of Alton and Martha Holshouser, Gold Hill, N.C., served as the North Carolina Junior Angus Association (NCJAA) president from 1999-2001.

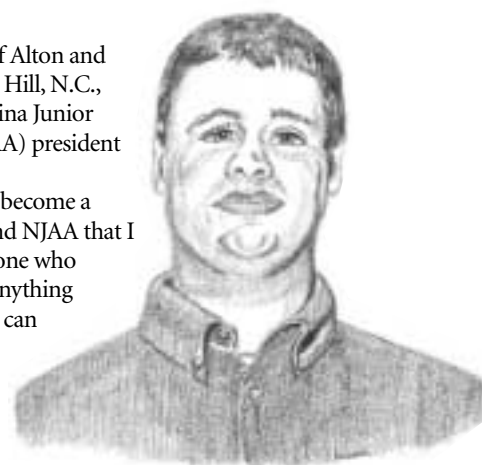
"I feel that since I have become a member of the NCJAA and NJAA that I have changed from someone who never used to talk or say anything unless I was asked. Now, I can talk to people and will get up in front of people and give a presentation," Karl says.

He has attended six LEAD conferences and he received scholarships from the American Angus Auxiliary and Angus Foundation in 1999. His team placed second in the senior division of the quiz bowl at the NJAS this year.

Karl has had a successful showmanship career, placing first at the 1999 and 2000 North Carolina Junior Angus shows. He won third place in the 2002 National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest.

He is dedicated to improving his Angus herd and his general knowledge of cattle. When he was 14 he attended AI school and then attended a pregnancy determination school when he was 15. He has also attended classes and has been certified by North Carolina to be a Certified Beef Producer.

Karl currently attends North Carolina State University and is pursuing a degree in animal science with minors in agribusiness, poultry science and feed mill management. He plans to graduate in May 2004 and pursue a job in the agriculture field.



**Brian Howell**

During his 11-year NJAA career, Brian Howell, Union City, Ind., has gained a wealth of knowledge about the beef industry.

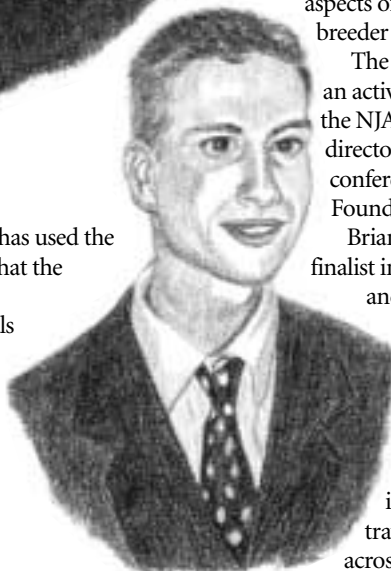
"My involvement in the NJAA has helped me obtain so much knowledge that I can use in the real world. The NJAA is not just about showing cattle, but about learning the many aspects of the beef industry — from the purebred breeder to the packer to the consumer," he says.

The son of Philip and Judith Howell has played an active role in the NJAA. He currently serves on the NJAA Board of Directors as communications director and has participated in the LEAD conference for two years. He was awarded an Angus Foundation scholarship at the 2002 NJAS.

Brian also is an accomplished showman. He was a finalist in the 2001 national showmanship contest and won the 2001 Atlantic National and Northern Preview showmanship events.

Although he has had success in the showing, Brian says he knows that is not the ultimate reward for a member of the NJAA.

"Perhaps the best thing about getting involved in the NJAA is the opportunity to travel and meet so many great people from across the country. I will always cherish the



friendships I have made through my involvement in the NJAA,” he says.

Brian currently attends Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind. He is working toward a degree in animal science with an option in animal products. He plans to graduate in December 2003.

### Jamie Hower

Jamie Hower is the current Pennsylvania Junior Angus Association president and Pennsylvania Angus queen. Jamie has been an active NJAA member since 1995, when a friend recommended she join the association.

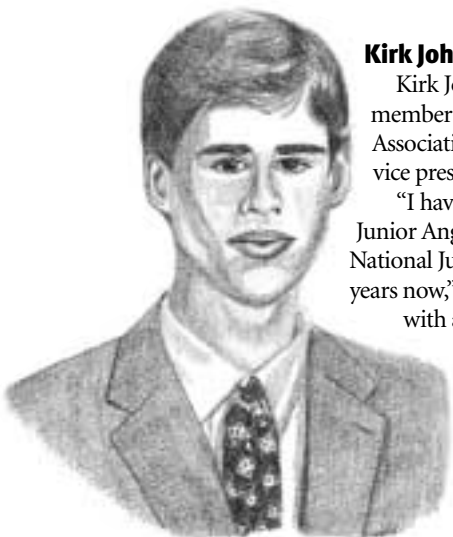
“The NJAA has truly implanted its mark on my values of life and understanding of the Angus family,” she says.

Jamie, daughter of Ned and Linda Hower, Bethlehem, Pa., represented her state as a voting delegate at the 2001 NJAS and also attended the 2001 LEAD conference. She was elected this year to the NJAA Board.

“The LEAD program is, in my opinion, the very best junior program I have ever participated in,” she says. “It’s a great feeling to meet new people and to learn what different parts of the country are like.”

She claimed reserve grand champion honors at the 2000 Atlantic National Show with her bred-and-owned bull. She has won several state-level showmanship competitions and was among the 15 finalists of the 2002 National Junior Angus Showmanship competition.

Jamie is currently pursuing a degree as a veterinary technician from Northampton Community College in Bethlehem, Pa. She plans to graduate in the fall 2003.



### Kirk Johnson

Kirk Johnson has been a strong member of the Mississippi Junior Angus Association, serving as secretary/treasurer, vice president and president.

“I have been involved in the Mississippi Junior Angus Association as well as in the National Junior Angus Association for many years now,” Kirk says. “It has provided me with an excellent education in agriculture, including [getting to know] a great group of kids that I enjoyed working with.”

Kirk has participated in several contests at the NJAS, including poster, photography, the Cook-Off and team sales.

In this year’s competitions, he placed third in the senior division graphic design and creative writing contests, and he won the senior division poster categories for breed or association promotion and membership recruitment.

He was recognized for his accomplishments in the NJAA during

the 2001 NJAS, where he received an Angus Foundation scholarship.

Kirk, the son of Stuart and Brenda Johnson, Corinth, Miss., says he will never forget his experience with the NJAA. “It has helped me become a better person by building character. I can truly say that it has been some of the most exciting and rewarding years of my life. I only regret I don’t have another 10 years in the program,” he says.

Kirk plans to graduate in May 2003 from Mississippi State University, where he is majoring in broadcasting and journalism.

### Jamie King

“The Angus industry has given me so much,” says Jamie King, Tiffin, Ohio. “I have learned many life lessons that have helped me develop into the person I am today.”

Jamie served as the Ohio Junior Angus Association president in 2001 and as secretary in 2000. She was a state representative to the 1998 NJAS showmanship contest. Jamie won reserve champion bred-and-owned heifer honors at the 2001 Ohio Junior Preview Show.

She placed third in the senior division Angus cattle category in this year’s NJAA/*Angus Journal* photography contest. She also was awarded an Angus Foundation scholarship and was elected to the NJAA Board.

The daughter of John and Mary Lou King, she currently attends Ohio State University—Columbus, where she is a member of the livestock-judging team. She plans to graduate in June 2003 with a degree in animal sciences and a minor in agribusiness.

After graduation her goal is a career in the beef industry. “I hope to work for a cattlemen’s or breed association in public relations or a marketing position,” Jamie says. “I would also like to continue to operate a small Angus cow-calf operation.”



### Laura Main

Laura Main, daughter of Carl and Myrna Main, Macon, Mo., was proud to serve as the 2001 Missouri Junior Angus Association queen.

“I feel that the most important role of the Missouri Angus queen is to be an advocate of Angus cattle in as many facets as possible. I have had the opportunity to attend and assist at Angus shows, encourage young exhibitors and be an ambassador for the Angus breed, both publicly and behind the scenes. These experiences have helped me to grow, not only as an Angus enthusiast, but also as a person,” Laura says.

Laura says a highlight of her career was winning the public speaking contest at the 2001 NJAS.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 268

## Golden Performance CONTINUED FROM PAGE 267

She placed second in the senior division this year. Laura was a recipient of the 2001 Missouri Junior Angus Association scholarship.

Laura began showing Angus heifers 10 years ago and says she still enjoys helping younger juniors both inside and outside the showing.

"Cattle showing requires numerous hours of hard work and commitment, but you truly reap what you sow. The rewards far outweigh the demands of time and energy," she says.

Laura is a senior at Truman State University, Kirksville, Mo., majoring in biology-premedicine. She plans to graduate in May 2003.

### Gina McCurry

Gina McCurry, Sedgwick, Kan., values the lessons she has been taught during her career as a junior member.

"Being involved with livestock has taught me responsibility, the knowledge needed to handle money, as well as the ability to converse well with people. The competition that comes with showing cattle is also teaching me that winning and losing are things that we have to deal with in every

aspect of life," Gina says.

The daughter of Gregory and Pamela McCurry has competed in every NJAS since 1990. She attended the LEAD conference three times and represented her state as the 1999 Kansas Angus queen.

"Being Miss Kansas Angus gave me the opportunity to represent the Angus breed for the state of Kansas at county, state and national shows," she says.

"The production and showing of cattle have taught me important qualities of leadership and sportsmanship. I have met many lifelong friends through the Angus Association, and I know that my involvement has had a very positive effect on my life," Gina says.

She is majoring in horticulture at Kansas State University (K-State) and plans to graduate in May 2004.

### John McCurry

"Champion drive" is a well-traveled path for John McCurry, son of Andy and Mary McCurry, Burrton, Kan.

During his junior career, John has exhibited cattle at many state and national shows, often winning grand, reserve and division champion honors. His bred-and-owned bull captured grand champion recognition at the 2002 Kansas Junior Angus Futurity and his bred-

and-owned heifer claimed grand champion honors at the 2001 Kansas Junior Preview Show.

"The National Junior Angus Association has been an integral part of my upbringing in the Angus world. Beyond the opportunity to showcase my bred-and-owned Angus cattle, it has provided opportunities at all levels and in various formats," John says.

John has taken the opportunities available to him to develop valuable leadership skills. He currently serves as membership director on the NJAA Board and *ex officio* for the Kansas Junior Angus Association. He was a recipient of the 2000 NJAA scholarship.

He attended the NJAS as a voting delegate from 1998 to 2000. John has competed in several contests at the NJAS, including photography, poster, quiz bowl, team sales and the Cook-Off. He won the extemporaneous public speaking contest in 2000 and 2001.

"The NJAA isn't just about showing cattle. It's about strengthening knowledge of the breed and growing as an individual," he says.

John graduated from Butler County Community College, El Dorado, Kan., in May 2002 with a degree in agribusiness/animal science. He now attends K-State, majoring in animal science and agribusiness.

### Brandon New

Brandon New, Leavenworth, Kan., says his proudest moment during his 14-year career as a junior was claiming grand champion honors in the carcass steer contest at the 2001 NJAS.

"The carcass competition success has let me know what bulls work in my program and what cow families to utilize in my own herd, as well as in my family's herd," he says. "That accomplishment proves that hard work and stacked pedigrees will perform better than one generation of hard work."

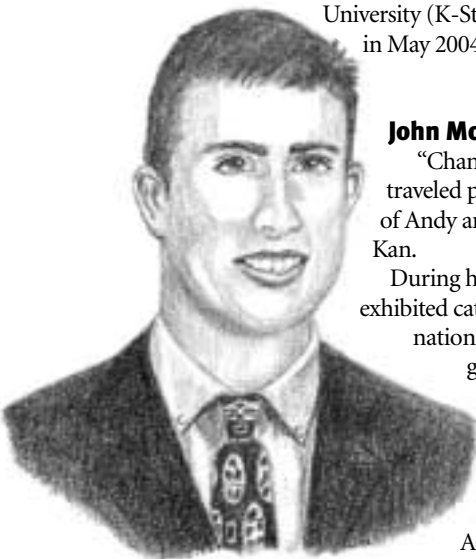
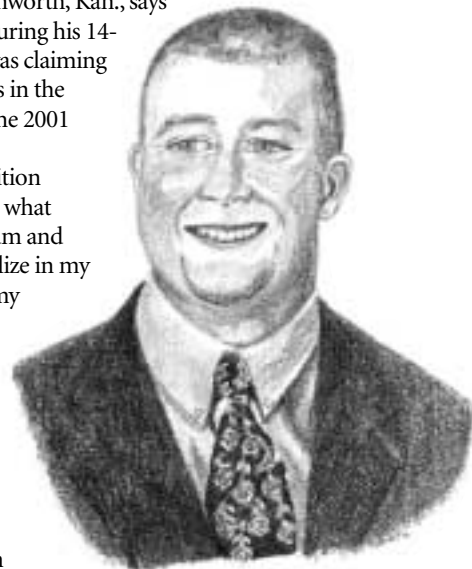
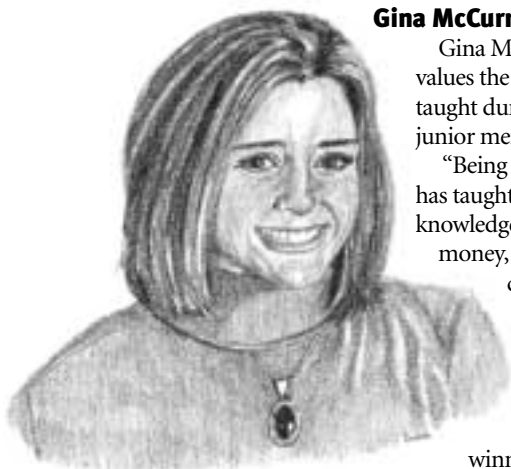
No stranger to hard work, Brandon has been dedicated to improving his Angus herd. He currently owns 65 registered Angus cows, including three Pathfinder cows.

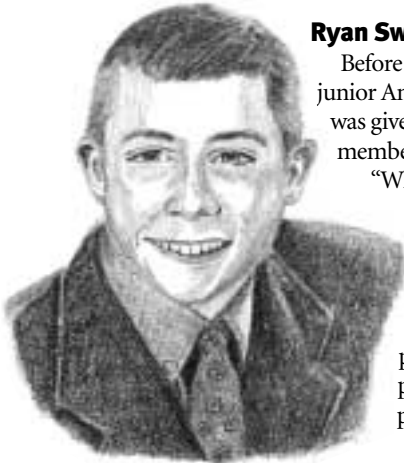
Brandon has served as first vice president of the Kansas Junior Angus Association and president of the Northeast District Junior Angus Association.

He was a recipient of a 1999 American Angus Auxiliary scholarship and a 1999 Kansas Angus Auxiliary scholarship. He also represented his state in the 2000 NJAS showmanship contest. He was awarded an Angus Foundation scholarship at the 2002 NJAS.

At the national level, Brandon has participated in public speaking, photography, the Cook-Off, quiz bowl and team sales.

Brandon, son of Bill and Loris New, is majoring in animal science at K-State, where he is a member of the livestock-judging team. He plans to graduate in May 2003 and return to the farm to raise Angus cattle.





### Ryan Sweeney

Before his first birthday, Michigan junior Angus member Ryan Sweeney was given an Angus cow and membership to the NJAA.

“While I was too young to understand the impact they would have on my life at the time, there is no doubt that Angus cattle and involvement in junior Angus activities have played a major role in my personal development and my plans for the future,” he says.

Ryan, the son of Pete and Barbara Sweeney, Mason, Mich.,

achieved one of his greatest goals at the 2000 NJAS when he was elected to serve on the NJAA Board of Directors. He was elected 2001-2002 vice chairman of the Board at last year’s NJAS.

“The experience has been unbelievable, and I am especially grateful for the many opportunities I have had and the tremendous support that is provided for junior Angus programs,” Ryan says.

Ryan has received many honors during his junior career. He served as president of the Michigan Junior Angus Association from 1998-2000. He was a recipient of the 2000 American Angus Auxiliary and National Angus Foundation scholarships. He also won the 2000 NJAA Leadership Award.

Since he joined the NJAA, Ryan has been an active member and says that will not change. “Although my membership in the NJAA is coming to an end, my involvement with Angus cattle and junior programs is far from over,” he says.

“There is no question that my Angus experience has helped chart my course for the future. For me, Angus cattle and Angus people will always rank No. 1.”

Ryan is currently a senior at Michigan State University. He plans to graduate in 2003 with a degree in animal science/agribusiness management.

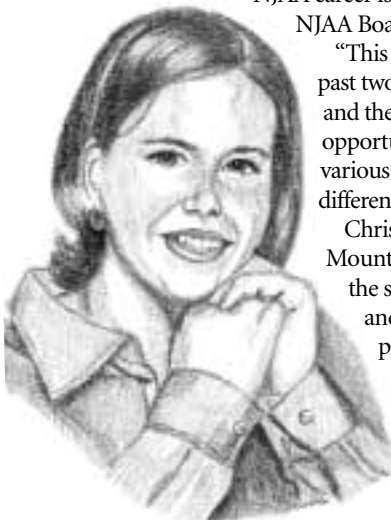
### Christy Walther

The highlight of Virginia junior Angus member Christy Walther’s NJAA career is the time she has spent serving on the NJAA Board of Directors.

“This was my most valuable experience, these past two years serving the NJAA as a director and then Foundation director. I have had the opportunity to travel across the country to various Angus events and meet people from different backgrounds,” she says.

Christy, daughter of L.L. and Marie Walther, Mount Crawford, Va., represented her state in the showmanship contest at the 2001 NJAS and was a top-15 finalist. She has also participated in team sales and Cook-Offs at the NJAS. She attended LEAD conferences from 1999 to 2001.

Christy was awarded an Angus Foundation scholarship at the 2002 NJAS.



At the completion of her junior career, she says she will miss the camaraderie she has developed with fellow members. “I will miss the friends and families that I have established great friendships with across the country. I have many great memories of time shared with my fellow members.”

Christy will graduate in December 2003 with a degree in animal science and livestock merchandising from Oklahoma State University.




## NJAA Members Earn Bronze and Silver Awards




The Bronze and Silver awards are the first two levels of the National Junior Recognition Program (NJRP), which the American Angus Association began in 1972. To receive these honors, junior Angus breeders must apply for the awards and meet point requirements in many areas of participation.

Applicants are evaluated in the areas of junior Angus association activities, participation in showmanship and leadership events, using performance testing to improve their herds, and progress in producing and merchandising Angus cattle.

While the Bronze and Silver awards are presented to members throughout the year, Angus Productions Inc. (API) publishes summaries of the award winners in the May and September youth-focused issues of the *Angus Journal*. James Fisher, director of activities and junior activities for the American Angus Association, announced the following Bronze and Silver recipients since publication of the May issue.

<p><b>Bronze and Silver awards</b></p> <p><b>Tyler Grissom, 18, Prague, Okla.</b> He is the son of Vic Grissom.</p> <p><b>Jeana Sankey, 18, Council Grove, Kan.</b> She is the daughter of Chris and Sharon Sankey.</p> <p><b>Casey Rump, 18, Galva, Kan.</b> He is the son of Craig and Marci Rump.</p> <p><b>Erika Boehmer, 12, Olivet, Mich.</b> She is the daughter of Earl and Kris Boehmer.</p> <p><b>Evan Boehmer, 16, Olivet, Mich.</b> He is the son of Earl and Kris Boehmer.</p> <p><b>Danielle Foster, 12, Niles, Mich.</b> She is the daughter of Scott and Elaine Foster.</p>	<p><b>Julie Thelen, 14, Saline, Mich.</b> She is the daughter of Steve and Nancy Thelen.</p> <p><b>Renee Thelen, 18, Saline, Mich.</b> She is the daughter of Steve and Nancy Thelen.</p> <p><b>Jessica Scrimger, 18, Clifford, Mich.</b> She is the daughter of Joseph and Kay Scrimger.</p> <p><b>Bronze Awards</b></p> <p><b>Shane Clary, 12, Brodnax, Va.</b> He is the son of Randy and Susan Clary.</p> <p><b>Katy Satree, 10, Montague, Texas.</b> She is the daughter of Doug and Jane Satree.</p> <p><b>Ricka Boehmer, 16, Williamston, Mich.</b> She is the daughter of Janel Horrocks-Boehmer and Merle Boehmer.</p>
---	---