

CATTLE CULTURE

by Megan Silveira, assistant editor

Future Focus

When faced with planning ahead, Angus breeders of all ages don't need to be intimidated.

Where do you want to go to college? What do you want to be when you grow up? Where do you want to live? What's next?

These are questions young adults are constantly peppered with as we get older. We're being asked to look into the future, no matter what stage in life we're currently at.

From the moment we enter a kindergarten class until the day we finally retire, we're expected to know what's next in our lives. While the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) works to give its members the skills necessary to answer these questions, the task of planning far into the future is daunting to Angus breeders of all ages.

Personal experience

Being only 21 myself, the thought of what the next step is for me is consistently in the back of my mind. I have always been a planner, so since the first time I was asked what I wanted to be when I grew up, I have constantly been trying to predict and create my ideal future.

Some answers came easily. From the age of 7, I knew I wanted to be a cowboy at Oklahoma State University (OSU). At the age of 8, I knew the

cattle industry would always play a major role in my life. By the age of 16, I realized I had no idea what I wanted to do with myself after I graduated from college.

"Find the one thing you can't live without, and pursue that wholeheartedly."
— Megan Silveira

I spent the first few days of my career as a college student stressed. I was thousands of miles away from home, faced with a world of possibilities and

felt overwhelmed by what I should do next in my life.

I was sitting in a seminar class, listening to a guest speaker talk about the importance of planning ahead, when I heard a gold-nugget piece of advice that changed my entire perspective of the future.

"Find the one thing you can't live without, and pursue that wholeheartedly."

If I had to wake up and only do one thing for the rest of my life, what would it be? What was the one thing I couldn't see myself living without?

Luckily for me, I've found the answer to the question in my current position with the American Angus Association and the *Angus Journal*.

I'm here to tell you that planning for the future does not have to be scary or stressful. Regardless of the pressure we might feel, when it comes

to planning your future, the key to answering what's next is to find your biggest passion in life.

Take your time planning for your future. It's okay to not have all the answers. When you find your passion, it will be extremely clear, and you will finally be able to answer the dreaded question, "What's next?"

Never alone

The future does not have to be scary, especially when you're a member of the Angus family.

As a part of the Business Breed, you are consistently surrounded by individuals who will support you throughout every stage of your life. Whether you've had years of experience within the cattle industry or are just starting out as a member of the NJAA, you are never alone.

The American Angus Association is built around supporting its members. While the Association might be constantly promoting forward progress and asking "what's next," its members never have to be intimidated by the future.

So don't be afraid to ask yourself what your next step is. Even if you don't have the answer, the Association is here to help you grow as both an individual and a cattle producer. Let your passion be your guide to life, and your future will reveal itself. 