

Hager Awarded Advisor of the Year

Past Kansas Junior Angus Advisor posthumously recognized for his dedication to Angus youth.

by Karen Hiltbrand, American Angus Association

Often it is not what people say or do that is remembered; rather it is the way they make a person feel. This is the case for the late Nelson Hager. Before passing last April, he spent his time as an advisor to the Kansas Junior Angus Association (KJAA). Hager's junior Angus members were more than just members to him; they were "Nelson's kids." It is clear Hager will forever be remembered for his dedication to youth and to the KJAA, and it is his longstanding support that has earned him the Advisor of the Year honor at the 2020 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS), July 20-24 in Tulsa, Okla.

Hager was a cheerleader for Angus youth. Hager's rare soul would do almost anything if he knew it would make someone happy or help them learn. He always took time out of his day to make someone else's day brighter. His thoughtful and selfless demeanor was a clear indicator of his passion for the youth of the industry.

"This year Nelson Hager is being recognized as the 2020 Advisor of the Year," says Grady Dickerson, National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) leadership director. "But for Kansas, my family and me, he was much more than a great advisor. He was a



Nelson Hager, Great Bend, Kan., was honored posthumously as the Advisor of the Year. Pictured accepting the award is Nelson's family (from left), Tony and Susan Hager; Tammy Hager; Phyllis and Norman Hager, Nelson's parents; Grady Dickerson, National Junior Angus Board leadership director, presenting; Jenny Rutan; Colt Rutan; and Ethan Hager.

friend, a mentor, a great dad — and we all miss him dearly."

A champion of young people who excelled in the Angus business, Nelson grew up showing in the KJAA, FFA and 4-H. He was an active participant in the NJAS for many years. After his show career as an Angus junior ended, Nelson continued to be active in junior activities by mentoring many kids with a drive and passion for Angus. He instilled a sense of self-confidence, self-worth and perseverance in many.

"When new families would join the KJAA, Hager would be the first

to welcome them in and make them feel at home," says Anne Lampe, Kansas Angus Association secretary and American Angus Auxiliary member. "Nelson had one of those larger-than-life personalities, and he was absolutely the biggest cheerleader."

The members of the Angus family who knew Nelson well do not remember an NJAS where he was not in attendance. His memory will live on in our hearts for many national junior shows to come and in his young son, Aiden, whom

he wished to be involved in junior Angus activities. Nelson was a true advocate of junior Angus excellence and has forever made a mark on its future.


The NJAA Advisor of the Year award was introduced in 1980 to recognize the tremendous contributions of the junior Angus Association advisors. Any junior Angus Association advisors are eligible for the award by sending in a letter of nomination. 

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