

Representing the Breed

Past and present delegates discuss the importance of the role of selecting new National Junior Angus Board members.

by Madi Baughman, editorial intern

Serving as leaders, ambassadors and role models for the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA), being elected to the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) is one of the highest honors an NJAA member can achieve. Since they lead the NJAA in all its efforts and endeavors for two years, it's extremely important the six "green coats" selected each year are truly the cream of the crop.

Responsible for electing the six new members to the NJAB each year and representing a state as a delegate is one of honor and distinction. Junior members elected for this position are often highly involved and admired within their state associations.

Ranging from ages 14-20, delegates spend their week at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) networking with NJAB candidates, reviewing their résumés and interviewing them at the annual meeting of delegates, an event that is private to delegates, candidates and NJAA staff.

Because the board members have such an influence on what the NJAA can achieve, it is also important the delegates selecting them exhibit

integrity, impartialness, a passion for the Angus breed and most importantly, the desire to see the NJAA succeed.

How to serve

If interested in serving as a delegate one day, Amelia Miller, a junior member from Gridley, Ill., and delegate for 2020, says it's important to begin getting involved at a state association level. Particularly in

her state, serving as a delegate is a competitive process.

She says they gather everyone who

is interested in serving as a delegate at their annual meeting in February each year, and they each give a speech about why they are interested in the opportunity. Then the junior members in attendance vote for the two people they want to represent their state in the process.

Kaydee Free, a former junior member and delegate from Salado, Texas, says her state also looks to someone with experience to serve as a delegate, so they typically choose someone who is on the officer team or has been a director for two or three years.

"It's usually someone who is older, who has been in the association for a decent amount of time," Free says.

"There has got to be a true, pure love for Angus cattle, the people and the breed." — Lindsey Decker



National Junior Angus Board members check delegates in during the annual NJAA meeting.

“Someone who really understands the importance of the role of being a voting delegate and selecting your new six for the National Junior Angus Board.”

The role

Once selected to represent their state, the delegates have an extremely busy schedule at NJAS.

Lindsey Decker, NJAA member and delegate from Philo, Ill., says the most important part of being a delegate is getting to know the NJAB candidates one-on-one.

“They can say things in their speech and you can read their résumé, but I don’t think you get a genuine vibe off of people or really get to know them until you speak to them in person,” Decker says. “I might not know them well now, but they might be a fantastic board member, and they might be the best person for our association.”

Along with speaking to the candidates individually, Miller says

delegates also receive the candidates’ résumés in advance to the show to review, and they attend the annual delegate meeting, hosted in conjunction with NJAS every year, to listen to the candidates’ speeches and roundtable interviews.

It is also at the annual meeting where they cast their votes for who they feel would best represent the NJAA as a board member.

The decision

Free says she didn’t truly understand the gravity of serving as a delegate until she witnessed the process firsthand. It is vital they choose the best candidates possible because NJAB members attend events and meetings throughout the year.

“The NJAB, they represent the juniors,” Free says. “They truly are our voice on a national level.”


Because the NJAB has their platform, Grant Cash, a junior member and delegate from York, Pa., says they have the influence to make the Association better and ultimately the Angus breed.



Delegates participate in roundtable interviews with candidates during the NJAA annual meeting.

“As a delegate, you have the responsibility of picking people that will extend the Angus breed,” Cash says.

Since attending her first NJAS in 2012, Decker says the impact former NJAB members have had on her time as a junior has been tremendous. Seeing how important the “green coats” are to younger members of the NJAA, she says making sure the right candidates are chosen is critical.

“It’s a huge time commitment, it’s a huge part of their life, and they have to truly love the Association to serve for those two years,” Decker says. “There has got to be a true, pure love for Angus cattle, the people and the breed.” 



Delegates gather to enjoy a meal before listening to candidate speeches and interacting with them.