

The Color Green

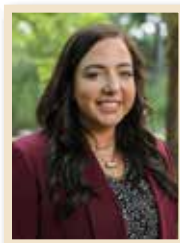
A new crop of six Angus enthusiasts joined the National Junior Angus Board.

by Megan Silveira, assistant editor

The color green symbolizes growth, harmony and freshness. It is often associated with nature or ambition, but the color green has a different meaning for Angus juniors across the country.

For many years, the evergreen shade has identified young leaders in crowds of Angus enthusiasts. Alexandria Cozzitorto, Olathe, Kan.; Cutter Pohlman, Hereford, Texas; Eric Schafer, Owaneco, Ill.; Garrett Schuering, Thompson, Mo.; Josh Jasper, Nicholasville, Ky.; and Walker McDermott, Wiota, Iowa, received their green coats as the newest six members of the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) on July 26 during the virtual closing ceremonies of the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS).

Alexandria Cozzitorto



While this Olathe, Kan., cattlegirl says she sometimes struggles to find the right words to convey just how passionate she is about the Angus industry, Alexandria Cozzitorto has one foolproof method to express herself when words aren't enough.

She turns to the Lord.

Throughout her entire life, Rick and Melissa Cozzitorto's daughter has focused on faith when the going gets tough. From her own growth as an individual to the challenges she and the rest of the industry have had to overcome in the midst of a global pandemic, Cozzitorto says the Lord has given her one word to consistently focus on — resilience.

“To me, resilience is pulling yourself up by your bootstraps when life pulls you down,” she explains. “Resilience is grace and strength in the face of adversity. When the world says you can't do something, all you have to do is say, ‘watch me.’”

Cozzitorto says every member of the cattle industry possesses this trait of resilience. She knows each person on this planet bears their own crosses, some visible and some not. It is her hope to recognize the strength of every individual in the Business Breed and push them to continue fighting for their dreams.

A past Kansas Angus Princess and third-generation Angus breeder, Cozzitorto is no stranger to the breed. Growing up Angus, Cozzitorto says the thrill of the show ring was one of her favorite parts of being a National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member. Here she could

gather with others as passionate and dedicated to Angus cattle as she was, and not only compete but forge new and lasting friendships.

In addition to serving on the NJAB, Cozzitorto is also attending Texas A&M University, where she is pursuing a degree in animal science with an industry emphasis. Eager to don her green coat for the first time, Cozzitorto will no doubt continue to inspire and support Angus youth.

“Your passion and enthusiasm for this breed is contagious,” she told delegates. “It inspires me to want to lead you into the future.”

Cutter Pohlman



For Cutter Pohlman, there are two words never said far apart — tradition and Angus. The son of Moriah and Scott Pohlman is a fourth-generation Angus breeder who says the black-headed cattle of the Business Breed have his heart, despite living in Hereford, Texas.

When Pohlman describes growing up in the world of Angus cattle, he says he has had a chance to live out his biggest passion in life for the past 15 years as an NJAA member. From



attendance at conferences like Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) and Raising the Bar to time spent competing in events at the NJAS, Pohlman has truly immersed himself in the Angus family.

Pohlman loves nothing more than spending time with his herd and consistently working to leave his mark in the industry. He says he has big plans for his future in the breed.

“My vision for continued service to this breed involves my serving on the NJAB,” he explains.

While wearing the green coat, Pohlman says he has three main outlets for giving back to the NJAA.

First, sustaining tradition. Pohlman believes this is a key part of the rich history and success within the breed. Next comes inspiring and encouraging juniors, which is one of the most rewarding aspects of being a part of the NJAB, he adds. Finally, Pohlman says he cannot wait to motivate others beginning to express an interest in future Angus breeders. He aims to share the Association’s vision to incoming members.

During his two years sporting the color green, Pohlman says he will focus on helping others find their love for and place within the industry.

He says, “I know how important it is to spark a passion for the breed in our membership.”

Pohlman will be attending Texas Tech University this fall to major in animal science with a business

option and minor in agribusiness. He says he hopes furthering his education will help him to continue serving the breed that raised him.

Eric Schafer



For the past 10 years, Eric Schafer says the NJAA has played a major role in his life. While Schafer has been heavily involved in the Angus breed

since he purchased his first heifer, he says it’s more than the Association or its many activities and events that he thinks so fondly of.

“It wasn’t the countless miles traveled in a truck with my family or the various events, but rather the people that shaped me into who I am today,” the Owaneco, Ill., native explains.

With the support of parents Aaron and Sue Schafer, this young cattleman has never missed an opportunity to give back to the industry. Helping with Association-hosted sales, promoting the Business Breed at livestock events across the nation, serving at the national and state level — Schafer has an impressive list of past involvement in the Angus industry.

Schafer says none can compare to the NJAA and the Angus breeders who support it. He has especially fond memories of a particular past NJAB member who he credits with not only

sparking his passion for the Angus breed but also his desire to one day find his spot on the junior board.

When Schafer was first finding his footing in the cattle industry, Daniel McFarland convinced him to enter the extemporaneous public speaking contest at the NJAS. This NJAB member forever changed Schafer’s life and first taught him the importance of getting involved in events put on by the Association.

From this moment on, Schafer says he became determined to one day fill the role McFarland previously had. In his journey to the green coat, he earned his Bronze and Silver awards, several scholarships, the Stockman award, and more. Schafer says he wants nothing more than to positively influence other junior members.

Schafer will serve the junior membership while also attending Butler Community College, where he is double-majoring in agribusiness and animal science. There Schafer will have the opportunity to further promote the Business Breed and grow as an individual and a student.

During his campaign for the NJAB, Schafer shared with his fellow NJAA members that “This Cowboy’s Hat” was one of his favorite songs. While the tune ends with a line about donning a cowboy hat, Schafer starts his own journey by putting on a green coat.

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Garrett Schuering



For this Thompson, Mo., cattleman, the Angus breed is all about memories. Garrett Schuering says he looks back

on his time as a member of the agriculture industry and can't help but smile, even when he remembers some of the more challenging times.

Schuering says one of his first memories of the agriculture industry is when he was sitting on a torn-up tractor seat, listening to his grandfather explain how to drive. While this moment in time is one he treasures for sentimental reasons, he says it has a deeper lesson hidden within.

Changes can come all at once or few and far between, but the son of Brent and Melanie Schuering encourages Angus cattlemen and women to prepare for the unknown and enjoy the ride.

"When these rides come, there's always a life lesson behind them," he says. "You have to build yourself as a person."

Schuering says his grandfather taught him to step out of his comfort zone, and it was this lesson that allowed him to find his passion for the cattle industry. During his time as a member of the NJAA, Schuering says he learned to appreciate the social skills he learned while attending Angus-related events.

Whether it was attending leadership conferences or catching

up with old friends in the show barn, Schuering says every moment he experienced as a junior Angus exhibitor allowed him to forge lifelong friendships and perfect his communication skills.

To help further develop himself into a leader within the Angus industry, Schuering will be attending Moberly Area Community College and then transferring to Oklahoma State University, where he will major in agribusiness and minor in animal science.

As a newly elected NJAB member, Schuering says he has plans to push himself and the rest of the junior membership. He has hopes of introducing members across the nation to the multitude of opportunities available to them through the Association.

Schuering believes there is truly no other place like the Angus family, and aims to spend his time in green helping others find their place and learn to enjoy the ride of being an Angus member.

Josh Jasper



While six is a small number when it comes to selecting the new NJAB members, Kentucky native Josh Jasper says six seems awfully big

when you're talking about staying feet apart from one another.

Jason Jasper's son says the Angus breed is built on two fundamental traits — hard work and diligence.

Jasper says the Association and its members display these qualities, along with commitment and flexibility. These characteristics have been put to the test with the current pandemic, but Jasper says Angus breeders nationwide have prospered.

"Being adaptable is the name of the game," he explains. "When adversity comes our way, those who are passionate preserve and pursue their goals."

It is this shared passion amongst Angus breeders that drew Jasper to the opportunity to serve on the NJAB. With past attendance at the LEAD conference and having served as the president of the Kentucky Junior Angus Association, this third-generation Angus breeder is ready to work with members of the NJAA in his green coat.

Jasper says growing up, he learned the value of surrounding yourself with great people and knows there is no better place to be than the Business Breed.

"I love this Association. I love all of the members and juniors within it," he adds.

Jasper has studied auctioneering at the Worldwide College of Auctioneering, and real estate at the A-Pass-Weikel Institute. Jasper says these experiences have helped him find himself as both an agriculturist and an individual. As a part of the NJAB, Jasper says he will be able to give back to the like-minded individuals who helped him grow into the young man he is today.

He knows a love for livestock binds the Association's members together,

and he is grateful for the chance to help other juniors both discover and cultivate their own passion for the Business Breed.

Walker McDermott



Despite having lofty goals while growing up, Walker McDermott says it took many years of convincing before he and his

family started their journey within the Angus industry. Once he finally was able to enter the industry, the Iowa native says things didn't get any easier for him.

His first heifer, Carmen, was not as keen to prance around the show ring in a neat circle as McDermott and his mother, Beth McDermott, would have hoped. He says the heifer's behavior might have ruined his love for the show ring if it had not been for the NJAB member wearing a green coat and a smile who came to his rescue.

The first-generation Angus cattleman admits he was scared to show his first heifer, and his younger self relied upon those green coats to give him the support and courage he needed to pick up the lead of the show halter. McDermott says he has always viewed the team that is the NJAB as second to none, and hopes he can give others the same helping hand he was offered.

"From my moments of downfall and watching others in the ring,



The newly elected NJAB directors' first event representing the NJAA was Camp Angus in August. Pictured (from left) are Garrett Schuering, Thompson, Mo.; Josh Jasper, Nicholasville, Ky.; Cutter Pohlman, Hereford, Texas; Alexandria Cozzitorto, Olathe, Kan.; Walker McDermott, Wiota, Iowa; and Eric Schafer, Owaneco, Ill.

I want to be one of those green coats who gives encouragement to the junior members," McDermott explains.

His passion for the agriculture industry stretches beyond the Angus industry, as McDermott will be attending Iowa State University to double-major in agricultural communications and animal science with a minor in agriculture business.

In and out of the green coat, McDermott promises to emphasize the importance of leadership in the junior membership. As an active member of the Iowa Junior Angus Association and the Iowa FFA Association, McDermott certainly possesses the skills needed to serve NJAA members. Since he says his

favorite Angus events are the LEAD and Raising the Bar conferences, it is no surprise why he is so dedicated to individual growth in Angus juniors.

This new NJAB member is eager to help junior members discover their ambition for the Angus industry. His time in the green coat will undoubtedly be dedicated towards helping juniors find the confidence they need to thrive as a member of the Business Breed. **AJ**