

2021

NATIONAL JUNIOR ANGUS SHOW

The Grandest Show

AMPLIFIED

National Junior Angus Association mentoring program and other events help to curate friendships for youth throughout the United States.

Sarah Harris, editorial intern

He may have been the only junior exhibitor from his state, but Roy Garrett “Tripp” Gibson III, Mountainair, N.M., was a standout exhibitor at junior nationals this year. From his cowboy hat and cuffed jeans to his Ray-Ban® shades, Gibson came to junior nationals and made a long-lasting impression on all who came in contact with him.

Gibson is 11 years old and going into fifth grade this fall. Though he’s been showing cattle for four years, the 2021 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) was his second junior nationals to attend, with the 2020 event in Tulsa being his first.

“I loved the learning experiences,” Gibson says. “By going to the different workshops, competing in different events and watching and learning from other people, I had a great time.”



His favorite event to compete in was cattle judging. On top of exhibiting cattle, he also received success in the extemporaneous speaking contest.

“He’s pretty modest,” says Vera Gibson, Tripp’s mother. “They talked him into doing extemporaneous speaking, and he placed third.”

Along with the numerous contests and educational clinics Tripp attended, he thoroughly enjoyed the Angus Mentoring



Program, also called AMP.

“New or younger members can attend as protégés, and they’ll get paired with an older, more experienced mentor,” says Dylan Denny, senior NJAA member from Lubbock, Texas. “It allows juniors who are new to the organization or



new to the industry who might not know the ins and outs to be put with someone who does, and it facilitates those connections while easing juniors' stress or anxiety of not knowing people."

Denny attended his first AMP in 2013 in Kansas City as a protégé. He attended every year after his first event, up to the 2018 program when he was elected to the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) in Madison, Wis. From protégé to mentor to junior board, AMP always was one of Denny's favorite events.

AMP allows NJAA members from all across the United States to meet other juniors from different backgrounds and of all ages. Younger attendees and first-time exhibitors are paired with an older member who helps them complete bucket-list tasks and introduces them to folks from different states, the junior board, and American Angus Association staff.

While at AMP events, juniors meet other youth in ice breaker activities and then partake in games lead by the NJAB. This year juniors competed in ninja games, a long game of telephone, racing competitions, a water balloon toss — ultimately leading to a water balloon fight — and numerous team building activities.

"The water balloon fight was my favorite part," Tripp says, adding he even got junior board members wet. "I met a bunch of people from so many different places at AMP, and I made a lot of friends."

Last year in Tulsa, Tripp made friends with some boys from Tennessee, and they kept in touch all year. Tripp plans to do the same with the new friends he met in Grand Island this year.



Tripp met Clint Strommen, Solen, N.D., a friendship the boys plan to maintain until reunited at their next NJAS.

"We were hanging out at the junior social, and Clint wanted to do a conga line," Tripp says. "Nobody else joined in, so we went to the photo booth and started taking pictures."

Tripp loves attending junior nationals and is inspired by members on the NJAB. He looks up to Cutter Pohlman, Hereford, Texas, and Avery Dull, Westminster, Md. He says he's excited to continuously learn from the folks he comes into contact with thanks to the National Junior Angus

Association (NJAA) and plans to direct the skills learned toward his future career.

"I want to be a civil engineer and keep breeding Angus cattle on our ranch in New Mexico," Tripp says. "My dad is a civil engineer and is vice president of the company. I want to work for my dad one day and be just like him."

The future for junior members like Tripp is bright, and Vera says she can't thank the NJAA enough for the experiences her family encountered at the Grandest Show.

"This year we had so much fun, and the comradery from all of

the states was so impressive," she says. "We're the only ones from New Mexico, but so many other states took us under their wing. It was our second time going to junior nationals alone, but we didn't feel like we were alone. We've made so many family friends.

We just love it."

Though Tripp was the only junior representing his state in Opening Ceremonies, he wasn't alone surrounded by his Angus family.

When asked about how it felt to walk out alone amidst a standing ovation and waves of applause, Tripp says, "It felt amazing because everybody was cheering for me. I knew I wasn't alone when I walked out there."

Tripp is excited to attend junior nationals next year in Kansas City. He looks forward to seeing his friends, meeting new people and learning more through the NJAA. 