

# CATTLE CULTURE

by Megan Silveira, assistant editor

## You've Made It

*How to properly encourage others and teach yourself to enjoy challenges in life.*

Six years ago, people liked to ask me where I was going to college. I'd pride myself on the speed at which I threw up a "Go Pokes," but my answer was quickly followed by another inquisition. The question of my major would again be answered rapidly, but that's where my confidence would fail. Because then, without a doubt, the next question was about career goals.

Fast forward to my present self, and you might think I've now learned to handle the interrogations with ease — after all, I've been here at the *Angus Journal* for a year and a half, so clearly the career questions are handled.

Unfortunately, that's not quite the case. Now the questions have shifted to being about what comes next. Where will I be going? When will I start my own family? When will I make it to the next step?

As a former National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member, I can tell you no matter your age, I understand that sometimes it feels as if what you're doing is never enough for anyone else.

How do you know when you've made it? When you're constantly trying to climb the ladder and turn the corner, how can you possibly know when you've reached your goals and finally found your destination?

Success is actually pretty dang hard to measure, and for young Angus breeders (or any young adult for that

matter), the expectations placed on us can be overwhelming.

### To those watching

#### **Perspective.**

I think perspective is the most important thing to keep in mind when you're commenting on someone else's journey.

Remember that a small hill in your eyes may be a mighty mountain to another. Remember to help people face the challenges in front of them before reminding them of the other mountainous tasks ahead of them. Remember every journey starts with a single step, and we all have our own paths to forge.

While sometimes people do need a little extra encouragement to continue forward, I think often what our young people — in and out of the cattle industry — are in need of is encouragement. Plain and simple.

Praise them for the heights they've already reached and celebrate each step with them. Being a mentor is just as much about acknowledging the victories as it is about helping achieve personal growth.

### To those climbing

#### **Problems in life are a bit like mountains.**

They are definitely large in appearance, but with a little training and determination, they can be conquered.

With that being said, don't try to take on Mount Everest if you've never been hiking before.

Set achievable goals for yourself. There's no shame in starting small and working your way up to the more challenging tasks. The view at the top of the mountain is only impressive because of the distance you had to climb to get there.

Write down your goals. Put them in a place where you have to see them every day. The climb can be difficult, and having a consistent reminder of your motivations can help you push through the hard days.

When all else fails, turn to someone stronger than you. Whether that be your parents, peers, mentors or the One who made you capable of climbing those seemingly impossible mountains you're trying to conquer, never be afraid to seek out support. We're only as strong as the people we surround ourselves with, so find your Angus family and lean on them.

Set high goals, and climb high mountains. You are capable of so much more than you know. Never forget that it's not when you put your flag at the mountaintop that you win. It's when you find the courage to start climbing that you realize you've already made it. 