

by Mark McCully
CEO, American Angus Association



A grand event

While the focus was around getting back to normal, in the end, the Grandest Show was “back to better.”

What an event! The great folks of Nebraska are fantastic hosts and put together a first-class show. Our American Angus Association staff and the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) worked tirelessly on all the details to be sure our junior exhibitors and their families had the best week possible. The kids — well, they brought their A game for sure.

For those who have never attended the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS), you might be a little surprised at everything that goes on.

Of course there's the cattle show, and this year the competition was as stiff as ever. Judges sorted through more than 1,200 head and the quality, like always, ran deep. Animals placing fourth or fifth in their class may very well go home and win their state fair or come back and win a major show this fall or winter. Fit and presented to perfection, the cattle were as good as advertised.

Showmanship and the fitting contest were once again wildly competitive, and I was especially encouraged to see the growth in the Phenotype & Genotype Show (PGS). Entries were up and so was the quality. It is exciting to see cattle that can excel both on paper and by visual

appraisal. Those who say numbered cattle can't be good-looking cattle should have been in Grand Island.

While as good as the cattle show was, the events outside the ring were equally as impressive. You can't help but be blown away by the talent and




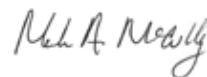
creativity coming out in contests like speech and photography, or the knowledge on display through quiz bowl and team salesmanship. There were numerous leadership and career development opportunities for young folks to explore, six impressive National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members were elected to the NJAB, and the carcass contest provided a chance to learn more about the bigger beef industry.

Always a highlight for me is the American Angus Auxiliary-sponsored All-American Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) Cook-Off. I

drew the tough assignment of being a judge this year (it's a good gig if you can get it). Learning from my prior experience, I skipped breakfast and lunch and showed up ready to enjoy the culinary creativity of young beef enthusiasts. While

the recipes were delicious, more impressive were the contestants and their skits. Each are challenged to work the CAB brand specifications into a skit and present them as if they were talking to a consumer. They all did a great job and proved to be great advocates for our brand and industry.

Yet with all the great accomplishments taking place during NJAS, the most encouraging to me is watching kids from across the country reconnecting, making new introductions, having fun, and creating memories and friendships that will last a lifetime. The Grandest Show was most definitely grand, and anticipation is already building for Kansas City in 2022. 



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