

HERE COME THE NEW SIX

New faces added to the 2022-23 National Junior Angus Board.

by Faye Smith, editorial intern

Waiting for the announcement of a lifetime, six anxious junior Angus members sit through what feels like an hours-long awards ceremony. Name after name, contest after contest, the nerves begin to rise as the time gets closer to revealing who will be awarded the iconic green jacket.

A new group of six officers means new ideas and inputs for the betterment of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA). Welcome Jack Dameron, Jayce Dickerson, Lauren Gilbert, Lani LeBeouf, Avery Mather and Colter Pohlman to the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB).



Elected to the National Junior Angus Board (from left) are Jayce Dickerson, Paradise, Kan.; Colter Pohlman, Hereford, Texas; Jack Dameron, Towanda, Ill.; Lauren Gilbert, Oldfield, Mo.; Lani LeBeouf, DeRidder, La.; and Avery Mather, State Center, Iowa.

2022-2023 National Junior Angus Board of Directors

Also announced at the 2022 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) were the newest directors of the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB).

Nicole Stevenson, Montana, chairman

J. Gordon Clark, Virginia, vice chairman

Kathryn Coleman, California, events director

Kinsey Crowe, Ohio, communications director

Avery Dull, Maryland, education director

Marcie Harward, North Carolina, foundation director



JACK DAMERON

Family is where it all began for Jack Dameron, Towanda, Ill. Looking at his family's

investment into the Angus breed gave Dameron encouragement to become more involved in the NJAA.

His parents weren't the only ones who had an influence on Dameron's Angus experience.

"I wasn't always the most outgoing or outspoken individual. I could definitely say early on that the junior board directors really gave me a lot of support, inspiration and confidence," Dameron says. "Knowing that they had my back in that really pushed me to propel myself forward and to try new experiences and opportunities."

This support meant a great deal to Dameron, as it shows him what good leadership can do for NJAA members. He says he was extremely involved as a student in high school and now at the University of Illinois Urbana-

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Champaign (U of I). As a current animal science student with a concentration in pre-med to pursue a career in the medical field, Dameron appreciates how his extracurriculars are helping him to become more knowledgeable about the industry and working with other people.

“These experiences prepared me to communicate with young people and try to inspire them to have a passion of their own,” Dameron says.

Running for the NJAB gave Dameron the opportunity to network with several juniors in the NJAA. He learned about their unique perspectives and other issues pertaining to the association.

Giving a voice to juniors is one of his biggest goals as an NJAB member, Dameron says. He also has plans to continue marketing the NJAA through social media to grow the Angus family.

“I hope to continue to at least innovate with our association, continue to progress forward, continue to be the leaders of the beef industry,” Dameron says. “I hope to be able to inspire and give confidence to juniors to put themselves in uncomfortable situations similar to how the board had done for me.”



JAYCE DICKERSON

A sea of white T-shirts with the phrase “VOTE FOR PEDRO” extended throughout

the crowd at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) Awards

Ceremony. What began as a joke poking fun of Dickerson’s resemblance to Pedro from Napoleon Dynamite became a symbol of support for the Paradise, Kan., NJAB candidate.

Growing up on his family’s Angus operation, Bar S Ranch, Dickerson watched one of his older brothers become a competitive showman within the Angus breed, and fellow NJAB member.

“I just want to be better than Grady,” Dickerson laughs.

Showing cattle was all Dickerson could think about when it came to being a part of the NJAA. But after one of his biggest influences, Brody Fitzgerald, showed him the true value of his membership, Dickerson knew he needed to strive to be that influence for other juniors.

“Brody really pushed me to get involved in the NJAA. After seeing that, I want to be that for someone. I want to be that person that gets at least one kid involved, if not many,” Dickerson says.

After a serious injury to his hand in 2015, Fitzgerald helped Dickerson gain his confidence back. Not only that, but the Fitzgerald family helped him create a special show stick similar to what Fitzgerald uses — the stick he still uses to this day.

“It just really meant a lot to me that the Angus people are here for you,” Dickerson says. “They’re ready to support you whenever you need it.”

Now as a new member of the NJAB, he plans to incorporate his strength of working on a team with



his new board. However, his most important goal is getting young kids involved in the NJAA.

“I just want a lot of people to get involved early on because it really does change you. Angus is their future. There’s many people that you can trust and can help you out in your future if you need it,” Dickerson says.

As a current student at Butler Community College studying agricultural business, Dickerson plans to continue his passion for Angus cattle by coming back to the family ranch after graduation.



LAUREN GILBERT

“Don’t follow the crowd; let the crowd follow you.”

It’s a quote from Margaret

Thatcher and Lauren Gilbert’s inspiration.

Making a positive difference is what Gilbert strives for — just like Thatcher. The Oldfield, Mo., native’s biggest accomplishment to date was hearing her name called as one of the new six NJAB members.

Gilbert and her family went from last place in the showing at her first NJAS to hanging banners. The experience of working her way up from the bottom gave Gilbert many opportunities to grow as a person and appreciate the positive encouragement provided by other

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the BIGGEST show ON DIRT

NJAS 2022

Angus breeders and juniors.

“My background is what made me so appreciative of getting on the NJAB,” Gilbert says. “It was something that I really had to work hard with my family, and it was really rewarding to see that someone who knew nothing from the beginning could finally get on the board.”

Gilbert looks forward to being a helping hand to juniors like her throughout her term. Taking the big step to be involved and learn something new can be challenging, but she feels it is rewarding.

Having a positive attitude and leading the way is what Gilbert wants to be remembered for her time on the NJAB — serving the members as someone who has the ability to show up and dedicate their time to the association members.

Gilbert has a livelihood of agriculture in front of her. Currently studying agricultural communications and leadership in agricultural policy at the University of Missouri, she plans to take her love for agriculture to the world of politics.

For current and future members, Gilbert wants all juniors to know she plans to get to know as many of them as possible on a personal level.

“I wish that members would come up to me and introduce themselves to me while I’m on the board. I really want to meet the most members that I can, and that’s something that I look forward to. I encourage members to reach out to me if they have any questions whether that be through social media or just at

a show or anything in between,” Gilbert says.



LANI LEBEOUF

From the bayou, Lani LeBeouf of DeRidder, La., began her Angus experience at 8

years old.

The LeBeoufs have never missed an NJAS since 2012. By traveling all over the United States, LeBeouf furthered her experiences with the NJAA and made connections to last a lifetime.

At the first NJAS LeBeouf attended, her mentor, Daniel McFarland, ran for the NJAB. She didn’t realize what the purpose was behind the green coats until another Louisiana Junior Angus Association (LJAA) member, Katelyn Corsentino, made it onto the board. LeBeouf now can see how

much of an influence these NJAB members had on her life.

“I was old enough to understand what it entailed, and being able to see her flourishing in it and all the life

experiences she got to have really impacted me,” LeBeouf says.

“I wanted to be the person that the past green coats were for me, and to be the person that impacted them and made being a part of the NJAA memorable.”

As she grew her passion for the Angus breed during her experiences through the LJAA, LeBeouf finally

made the decision to run for the NJAB.

The NJAA

is more to

LeBeouf than just the green jacket.

After her family was affected by back-to-back hurricanes in 2020, the Angus family came to their aid.

“They would send us feed and fencing supplies — making sure that we had everything we needed after the hurricane,” LeBeouf says. “The fellowship really stuck with me.”

Involvement is her biggest goal as an NJAB member. One of the ideas she brought to the association was a potential “mini LEAD,” where families can send kids to a regional-sized leadership camp. Like the annual Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference, she hopes this can help families from smaller and farther states get the most out of their membership.

After her graduation from Northwestern State University, she plans to receive an associate degree and move to Texas A&M University to continue her degree in nursing with a minor in agricultural communications and agricultural business.



AVERY MATHER

Traveling and Angus cattle run through Avery Mather’s veins. The State

Center, Iowa,

native is a current student at Iowa State University studying agricultural

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business with a minor in event management and leadership studies. This year, however, she plans to study in a much warmer location.

“This fall I’m studying at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. As I ran for the board and started discussing with delegates throughout the week, many people realized how passionate I am about traveling,” Mather says. “I believe kids can grow their overall confidence as a person being able to travel by themselves within the United States.”

During her younger years, the fifth-generation Angus breeder wasn’t sure if she was fit for a spot on the board. After years of experience through NJAA leadership conferences and NJAS, she was finally ready for the opportunity to run.

“I didn’t run for the board because that’s what I’m supposed to be doing or because that’s what everyone else did — I did it because I really see myself fitting,” Mather says. “This is where I saw my life going, and an opportunity to impact juniors and share my experience.”

Following in her grandfather’s footsteps, Mather’s role model, she says learning how to work hard, make an influence and be intentional with everything you do has been an important lesson.

Mather has big goals for herself during her term on the NJAB. She states how honored she is to represent the NJAA over the next two years to fulfill goals and help build the next generation of Angus leaders.

“We’re here to produce great livestock. Everyone’s goal is to produce elite livestock,” Mather says. “However, we also need to remember that we’re also creating elite leaders

in the process. I want to be a part of raising good kids and future leaders.”

Frozen in time after hearing her name called; hugging her brother and sister with teary eyes; and running towards her friend, Walker McDermott, Mather could finally take a deep breath as she stood alongside her other five board members with one thought in her head.

“Let’s do this.”



COLTER POHLMAN

A family full of green coats, Colter Pohlman, Hereford, Texas, brings home another

green jacket back to his family. The fourth-generation Angus breeder credits his parents and his grandfather, Steve Olson, for giving him the inspiration to run for the NJAB.

Throughout his youth, Pohlman always looked forward to seeing his NJAA friends every year at the NJAS. As a homeschooled student, this was where he got to live to the fullest with his closest friends.

“Growing up, the NJAA was really my only form of social life. I always look forward to attending the NJAS every year. I got to meet a lot of kids from similar backgrounds, so they’re easy to talk to, and we always had a ton of fun,” Pohlman says.

Watching the green coats interact

with juniors at every event he attended confirmed his decision to run, as well as the opportunity to give back to the NJAA in this leadership role.

“Watching my parents and my brother do it was inspiring, but it always seemed like a great leadership opportunity,” Pohlman says. “Partially, I wanted to do this because when I get older, I won’t be as involved in our culture whenever I graduate. So this is a great way of giving back before I become more secluded in my future career.”

Sharing the win with his brother, Cutter, the night of the awards ceremony was a feeling Pohlman says was hard to describe. Moving forward, Pohlman has several plans for the NJAA he presented to delegates throughout the week.

His most important is being focused on state associations. Pohlman spent time throughout the week speaking to delegates about how he wanted to help smaller states organize to create a stronger association nationwide. He plans to work with regional managers, state advisors and state junior

boards to solidify their associations.

Pohlman will be attending Texas Tech University this fall, where he plans to dual-major in agricultural applied economics

and business administration. This will enable him to have a career in investment banking or personal finance. 

