

# A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

*A total of 16 junior members were presented NJAA Gold Awards for 1999.*

BY JENNIFER HOTCHKISS

**S**ixteen members of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) have earned the coveted Gold Award in 1999. Qualifications for the award also serve as educational opportunities that will lead these NJAA members down the road to further opportunities in the beef industry.

We wish them success in future endeavors and hope to see them continue to take an active role in our industry as breeders and future leaders.

Outstanding NJAA members are recognized at several steps during their NJAA careers through the American Angus Association National Junior Recognition Program (NJRJ). Gold Awards represent the culmination of several years, perhaps a decade, of hard work. Intermediate steps are the Bronze and Silver awards.

Each level requires participation and achievement in leadership, show competition, performance testing, production and merchandising of Angus cattle. To qualify for the Gold Award, NJAA members must have received Bronze and Silver recognition, then apply during their final year of eligibility as an NJAA member.

Complete and accurate records are vital when applying for any of these award programs. Contact the Junior Activities Department at the American Angus Association for further information on this program.

Profiles of this year's Gold Award winners follow.

## DIANA COVELL

Maryland Junior Angus Association (MJAA) member **Diana Covell** is the daughter of Donald and Ann Covell, Frederick, Md.

A highlight of Diana's Angus career was serving as an NJAA director. She also served as treasurer of the MJAA.

As NJAA leadership director, Diana has spent many hours organizing and preparing for the 1999 Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference in St. Joseph, Mo.

In 1998 she exhibited the national champion female at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE). She also has shown division champions at many junior Angus shows, including the Atlantic National, the Eastern Regional and the All-American Breeders' Futurity.

Last summer she placed fourth in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest.

"The NJAA has been a valuable experience that I can take and use throughout the rest of my life," she says. "Most of all, it has helped me to improve myself as a person."

Diana is a senior at Kansas State University. She is pursuing a degree in agricultural economics with an animal science minor.

## JULIA CRENSHAW-SMITH

Kansas Angus junior **Julia Crenshaw-Smith**, daughter of Christine Crenshaw, Manhattan, Kan., and Stephen Smith, Parkville, Mo., has been a member of the NJAA since the day she was born.

The lessons that Julia has learned during her years as an NJAA member have influenced her to become the person she is today.

"Embrace every opportunity in this organization," she says. "By embracing the triumphs and rising above the tribulations, you can become stronger, wiser and kinder."

DIANA  
COVELL



JULIE  
DAMERON



BETSI  
EBERT



JULIA  
CRENSHAW-SMITH





**JESSE McCURRY**



She has served as treasurer and reporter of the Kansas Junior Angus Association (KJAA). As well, she has participated in LEAD conferences and was a voting delegate to the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS).

At the national level she received second place in the national prepared public speaking contest and was second in the photography contest.

Julia will graduate in May 2001 from Texas A&M University with a degree in agricultural engineering.

**JULIE DAMERON**

**Julie Dameron**, daughter of Gary and Sharon Dameron, Lexington, Ill., has strived for excellence within the Angus industry.

Two of Julie's most memorable experiences were winning Premier Breeder at the 1999 NJAS and being named top showman in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest in 1998. She also served as a director for the NJAA and was president of the Illinois Junior Angus Association (IJAA).

Julie credits her strength as a leader and communicator to the many years she was involved in FFA. She served as a section officer for two years and was president of the Lexington chapter.

Her dedication toward making herself a stronger leader didn't stop there. At the University of Illinois, Julie was the public relations director of the Hoof and Horn Club.

"I have a strong desire to communicate to the public on agriculturally related issues while expressing my interest in the Angus industry and the future that it holds in the world market," Julie says.

She plans to graduate from the University of Illinois next May with a degree in agricultural communications.

**BETSI EBERT**

**Betsie Ebert**, daughter of Bill and Jane Ebert, Lexington, N.C., says the junior Angus program is a great learning, growing and sharing experience.

"Angus cattle have been my life beyond my family and church," Betsie says. "Cattle have given me a niche in refining my life goals."

In 1998 Betsie was named the winner of the National Angus Foundation Scholarship and the National Leadership Award. She also exhibited the Roll of Victory senior show heifer of the year.

She has served as president of the North Carolina Junior Angus Association (NCJAA) and was an NJAA voting delegate for two years.

Betsie has dedicated herself to using her personal Angus accomplishments to help others achieve, including learning-disabled youth, orphaned children and limited-income families.

Betsie is a senior at Barton College. She is pursuing a degree in biology.

**JESSE McCURRY**

**Jesse McCurry**, son of Greg and Pam

McCurry of Sedgwick, Kan., is completing his 12th year as a member of the NJAA.

*Successful* sums up Jesse's experiences in the NJAA. Throughout the years he has received many awards at the national level, including the 1998 Angus Foundation scholarship, the 1996 American Angus Auxiliary Scholarship and the 1998 first-place national public speaking award.

Jesse served as president of the Kansas Junior Angus Association (KJAA) and participated in several LEAD conferences.

This past summer he interned with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) in Washington, D.C.

"Growing up in this business has been an awesome experience," Jesse says. "I am optimistic about the future of agriculture and will always contribute to the beef industry."

Jesse plans to graduate from Kansas State University in December 2000, majoring in agricultural journalism and political science and minoring in animal science.

**DAWN MILLER**



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West Virginia junior **Dawn Miller**, daughter of George and Brenda Miller, Hedgesville, W.Va., is better prepared for the future because of her experiences in the NJAA.

"I am who I am because of the NJAA," says Dawn. "My Angus experiences have helped me become a better leader and organizer."

Dawn served as vice chairman of the Atlantic National in 1998 and was a merit award winner. She also attended a 1999 regional LEAD conference.

She has exhibited Angus cattle since she was 8 years old. Since then she has traveled to many Angus activities and shows, including the Atlantic National, Eastern Regional and West Virginia State Fair.

Dawn will graduate from Kansas State University in December 2000 with a degree in animal sciences and industry. She plans to pursue her master's degree in animal reproduction.

**CYNTHIA MOFFITT**



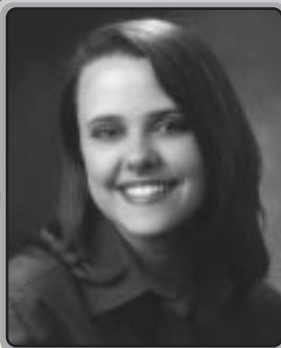
**CYNTHIA MOFFITT**

Angus enthusiast **Cynthia Moffitt**, daughter of John and Deena Moffitt, Kirksville, Mo., has made many lasting memories through the junior Angus program.

"I've had some wonderful opportunities to meet new people and travel during my years as a junior Angus member," she says.

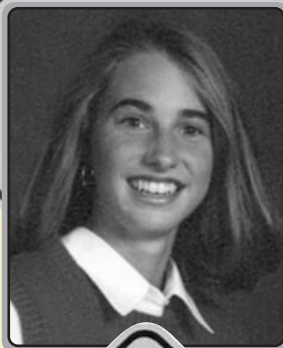
Since becoming a member in 1992, Cynthia has held many offices in the Missouri Junior Angus

**TANYA PEEBLES**





**ALLISON PORTER**



Association (MJAA), including secretary and treasurer. She was an active committee member when Missouri hosted the 1993 NJAS in Kansas City.

Cynthia attended the 1998 LEAD Conference in Washington, D.C. She also traveled throughout Missouri during her reign as the Missouri Angus queen.

In May 2000 Cynthia will graduate from the University of Missouri-Columbia with a degree in human development and family studies.

A pre-nursing student at Mercer University, Allison plans to graduate in 2002.

**NICKI RECHTIN**

**Nicki Rechtin**, daughter of Charles and Carole Sue Rechtin, Brooksville, Ky., has found the NJAA to be a great learning opportunity.

Nicki has been actively involved in the Kentucky Junior Angus Association (KJAA) since 1992. She has served as president and secretary.

During these years she has developed her leadership skills by attending Angus leadership conferences and by representing her state as a voting delegate at the NJAS.

Currently Nicki is the 1999 Kentucky Angus queen. She also has participated in the national team sales competition for two years.

"I've enjoyed meeting people through the junior Angus program," Nicki says.

"Hopefully these contacts will help me later on in life."

Nicki plans to graduate in December 2000 from the University of Kentucky with a degree in agricultural education.

**NICKI RECHTIN**



**TANYA PEEBLES**

**Tanya Peebles**, daughter of John and Cheryl Peebles, Lawrenceville, Va., still remembers the excitement she felt during her first NJAS in Wichita, Kan.

Tanya served as Virginia's voting delegate for two years and held various offices in her state association. She also was the 1995 Virginia Angus queen and received the Virginia Junior Angus Association scholarship in 1996.

In the showing, Tanya has led many cattle to division championships at the NAILE, the Atlantic National and the Eastern Regional. She also placed third in the 1999 National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest.

"Some of my most rewarding experiences in the NJAA have been working with new members as they start their Angus careers," she says. "As I have become one of the 'older' members, I have tried to set a good example for our association."

Tanya is a senior at Virginia Tech and is pursuing a degree in animal and poultry sciences.

**ALLISON PORTER**

Georgia Junior Angus Association (GJAA) member **Allison Porter** is the daughter of Melvin and Donna Porter, Jefferson, Ga.

Allison has left a lasting impression on Georgia junior members. She has been an active leader in her state association since 1991. She has served as president for the past two years. She also was Georgia's Angus queen.

At the national level she was elected to the NJAA Board at the 1999 NJAS and served as Georgia's voting delegate for two years. She also received third place in the national Auxiliary scholarship contest.

In the 1998 national photography contest, Allison took home first place and an honorable mention.

"I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to be involved with the NJAA and the GJAA," she says. "The responsibility, dedication and discipline that I have learned will be beneficial to me as I strive to reach my future goals."

**JULIE SCARLETT**

In the beginning, showing cattle was an opportunity for **Julie Scarlett** and her parents, Jim and Elaine Scarlett, Snow Camp, N.C., to spend time together. Now showing cattle is Julie's way of staying close to the many friends that she has made in the NJAA.

Throughout the last seven years, Julie has grown to be an active NJAA member. She has served as an NJAA director and has held numerous offices in the NCJAA.

Julie has represented her state in other ways, including her role as the North Carolina Angus queen. She also received first place in the Auxiliary-sponsored *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>TM</sup> Cook-Off twice. In 1998 she led her cow-calf pair to a grand champion finish at the Atlantic National show.

"Through the NJAA I have learned responsibility, hard work and that no matter what happens, I will only grow stronger from my experiences," she says. "I've accomplished more in this organization than I ever dreamed I could."

A senior in biological sciences, nutrition concentration, at North Carolina State University, Julie plans to become a registered dietitian.

**JULIE SCARLETT**



**CAROLINE SMITH**



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**Caroline Smith**, daughter of Lewis and Barbara Smith, Pendleton, S.C., never imagined how great an effect her first Angus heifer, purchased by her parents in 1992, would have on the rest of her life.

Caroline has been an active member of the South Carolina Junior Angus Association (SCJAA). She has



**SONYA SMITH**



served as president and in various other offices in her state association. She also was a voting delegate at the NJAS. In 1998 Caroline was secretary of the Atlantic National junior board.

She has led many great Angus through shows such as the Atlantic National, the Eastern Regional and the All-American Breeders' Futurity.

"Showing Angus cattle over the years has been a memorable experience," she says. "After graduating from college, I plan to continue raising and showing Angus cattle."

Caroline will graduate in May 2000 from Greenville Technical College with a degree in surgical technology. She plans on completing her registered nursing degree in 2001.

**SONYA SMITH**

**Sonya Smith**, daughter of Quintin and Vicki Smith of Lebanon, Tenn., can't believe how fast her years as a junior Angus member have gone.

Sonya was elected to the NJAA Board at the 1999 NJAS. She has been an active member of the Tennessee Junior Angus Association (TJAA) since 1992. She has served as president and sergeant-at-arms. She also was a voting delegate at the NJAS for three years.

On the national level Sonya placed third in the 1998 National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest and first in the Auxiliary-sponsored *Certified Angus Beef* Cook-Off. She exhibited the champion and reserve champion owned heifers at the 1999 Western Regional in Reno, Nev.

"Showing Angus cattle has been a great experience for me," she says. "Not only have I had the opportunity to meet some of the best people around, but I also have been able to travel around the United States."

A senior in criminal justice and mathematics at Cumberland University, Sonya plans to attend law school or obtain her master's degree in mathematics following her graduation in May 2000.

**JANELLE SOMMERS**

*Dedicated* only begins to describe 1999 NJAA Board chairman **Janelle Sommers**, daughter of Richard and Sharon Sommers, Silver Lake, Ind.

Janelle has exhibited great dedication to the NJAA during her years as a junior Angus member. Not only has she served as Board chairman, but she also has held numerous positions in the Indiana Junior Angus Association (IJAA).

She has received second place in the national extemporaneous public speaking contest two times and has participated in the photography and poster contests.

"From county fairs to national junior Angus shows,

from learning to use a pitchfork to proudly representing the Angus breed and youth, I have grown tremendously as a person," she says. "The leadership, public speaking and work-ethic abilities I have learned through being an NJAA member have prepared me to become a productive adult."

Janelle will graduate from Purdue University in May 2001 with degrees in animal agribusiness and agricultural communications.

**WILLIAM WALTHER**

Since his decision to enter the Angus business 11 years ago, **William Walther**, son of Bo and Marie Walther, Mount Crawford, Va., has learned many valuable lessons about Angus cattle and life.

"My years in the Virginia Junior Angus Association (VJAA) have guided my entire lifestyle," he says.

A finalist in the National Junior Angus Showmanship Contest, William has exhibited class winners and division champions at the Eastern Regional and the NJAS. He also served as a director for the VJAA.

William's Angus herd relies greatly upon artificial insemination (AI). He has used AI to enhance his cattle herd in order to create a higher-quality, more marketable animal.

He is a certified auctioneer and has been involved with the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR) program.

William attends Oklahoma State University, where he is pursuing a degree in agricultural business.

**COURTNEY WHEELER**

Alabama Junior Angus Association (AJAA) member **Courtney Wheeler** is the daughter of Bill and Brent Wheeler, Flat Rock, Ala.

"The junior program has taught me responsibility and developed within me a great appreciation of the breed," Courtney says. "I've learned that winning in the showing is not as important as the knowledge that you gain through those experiences."

Courtney has been an influential leader in the AJAA, serving as president and vice president. She also was an NJAS voting delegate.

In 1996 Courtney was awarded both the American Angus Auxiliary scholarship and the Alabama Ladies Auxiliary scholarship for her hard work and dedication in the Angus industry.

Throughout the years Courtney has exhibited cattle at many junior shows such as the NJAS, the Eastern Regional and the NAILE in Louisville, Ky.

Courtney attends Samford University. She plans to graduate in 2001 with a dual degree in business and pre-law.

**JANELLE SOMMERS**



**WILLIAM WALTHER**



**COURTNEY WHEELER**

