

# YOUR VIEW

by Maddie Fugate, Angus Ambassador



## On target

*The coronavirus has dramatically changed our lives, or at least mine. A couple of months ago, hundreds of thousands of youth across the country faced uncertainty as livestock show after livestock show continued to be canceled.*

Amidst all of this chaos, the leadership of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) persevered. At a time when it would have been easy to throw in the towel and give up, neither the leaders nor the youth of the NJAA were ready to admit defeat.

But why did they remain so resilient? Because all of us involved in the NJAA know the value of being raised in a barn.

The youth involved in the organization are learning invaluable life skills and can practice these skills at events like the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). Some of these acquired skills include interviewing, public speaking, decision-making, learning to sell, and résumé and cover-letter writing, just to name a few.

### Virtual environment

While the NJAS may have been a modified format this year due to the pandemic, it didn't mean those skills were left uncultivated. Instead, these life skills were combined with an opportunity to practice another new normal: operating in an entirely virtual environment.

Several previously in-person contests were moved online, which not only allowed the youth to hone their professional

skills, but also provided a chance to practice participating in virtual events.

### Set apart

So, you may be asking how this relates to this month's theme of being on target. The answer is easy.

The youth who go through the NJAA and take advantage of the opportunities available to them are more prepared than those who are not involved in a junior livestock organization.

There is no better way to be "on target" for the future than to be involved in the NJAA. While all our bull's-eyes are a bit different, the skills taught in the barn, on the ranch, online and in the ring prepare you for life better than a classroom ever could.

Where else can you learn

- the value of hard work,
- humility,
- the circle of life,
- to balance books,

- to analyze contracts,
- to calculate break-evens,
- to drive a stick shift,
- there are no participation ribbons in life,
- responsibility for another living creature,
- to close a sale, or
- to administer a vaccine ... and all within a day's work?

While these are all very diverse and different traits, they are skills we learn growing up around livestock. They are skills that help us stock our toolbox of life. These are skills that will help ensure the success of the next generation.

### Look in a barn

At a time where motivation, drive, and willingness to work seem to be at an all-time low, look in a barn.

What will you find?

You will find a young person who refuses to give up, who has learned to overcome and adapt, who is working hard to create their success. If this doesn't put the next generation of youth within the Angus breed on target for their future, I don't know what will. **AJ**

