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POSTCARD FROM A JUNIOR



Lauren Gilbert

More than me

One time my brother and I showed at a small county fair close to home. That year, Paden and I had heifers in the same class. Throughout the year my heifer had done better than my brother's. Going into the show, I was confident my heifer would beat my brother's heifer.

We walked our heifers into the small county fair show ring. The judge looks over the heifers and points to my brother before me. I was so mad, my brother had beat me.

However, showmanship was at the end of the day, and it was my last opportunity to beat my brother. I walked into the packed show ring with around 25 other juniors, wanting to win and, specifically, beat my brother.

Finally, the judge took the microphone and began speaking. The nerves began to kick in and I was so ready.

Finally, the judge says, "Today, the champion showman goes to this young man in the cowboy hat."

Paden won showmanship. I was so beyond mad at my failure, and jealous of my brother beating me. I never told him "good job" and acted sour the rest of the day.

I am not sharing this story because I am proud of it — because trust me, I am not. I would not even use the excuse of "being competitive" for the way I treated Paden. My poor attitude was a result of being selfish. Throughout the whole day, I only thought about myself and did not

even consider the fact my brother worked hard with his heifer and was a better showman.

That day taught me a lot of valuable lessons I needed to learn.

1. It is not just about you.

Selfishness is the root of all bad things. Philippians 2:4 says, "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." Meaning, we cannot live a happy life if we only care about ourselves. Instead of only considering ourselves, it is essential to help, care for and celebrate others. If I would have been happy for my brother for his successful day, it would have been a better day for him, my parents and me.

2. **Know your team.** Instead of continuing to think of my brother as my competition, he eventually became my team. We spent countless hours working in the barn. Instead of thinking we were working against each other, we began working with each other. This was pivotal moment for me, and I wish I would have realized it sooner.

The people on your team are those who you should keep the closest to you. The people on my team are those I can count on no matter what, such as my family and closest friends. My team is always there for me through success and failure — I strive to be the same for the people on my team.

3. **Healthy competition.** Healthy competition is important. We all want good things and to be good at whatever we do. However, entitlement and being a sore loser in competition is a result of being selfish and having a lack of confidence. If I would have understood this at the time, I would have been happy for my brother's success and thought about ways I could improve on my skills. Having a healthy competitive mindset is essential for self-improvement and maintaining friendships.

When I began to think about more than myself, my entire perspective changed for the better.

— Lauren Gilbert

Bronze and Silver Awards

Erin Driscoll, Williamsburg, Iowa, has earned the National Junior Angus Association's (NJAA) Bronze and Silver awards, according to Caitlyn Brandt, events and education director of the American Angus Association in Saint Joseph, Mo. Daisy Plaschke, Hallsville, Texas, has earned the NJAA's Silver award, and Bradley Carlson, Hereford, Texas; Ben Forbes, Zachary, La.; Roy Gibson, Los Lunas, N.M.; Kade Meacham, Connell, Wash., have earned the NJAA's Bronze award.

The Bronze and Silver awards are the first two levels of the NJAA Recognition Program that began in 1972. Junior Angus breeders must apply for the awards, then meet point requirements in many areas of participation before receiving the honors. Applicants are evaluated in areas of junior Angus association activities and leadership, participation in showmanship, contests and shows, using performance testing to improve their herd, and their progress in producing and merchandising Angus cattle.

Seventeen-year-old **Erin Driscoll** is the daughter of Dawn Driscoll. The Williamsburg, Iowa, native attends Williamsburg High School. She previously served as secretary for the

Iowa Junior Angus Association.

Stepping into the show ring at the state and national level, Driscoll attended the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). There, she competed in the photography, quiz bowl and livestock judging contests and the mentoring program. The young cattawoman also participated in the Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) and Raising the Bar conferences.

Daisy Plaschke is from Hallsville, Texas. The 15-year-old is the daughter of Brandon Plaschke and attends Hallsville High School. The Texas Junior Angus Association (TJAA) member currently serves as director.

The junior competed in shows at the local, state and national level. In addition to the team sales and team fitting contests at the NJAS, Plaschke participated in the CAB Cook-off. She also attended the LEAD conference.

Hereford, Texas, local **Bradley Carlson** is the 12-year-old son of Brent and Joanna Carlson. He is a member of the NJAA and the TJAA.

At the NJAS, Carlson participated in the mentoring program. He has shown at the local, state and national level.

Seventeen-year-old **Ben Forbes** is from Zachary, La., and is the son of

Melanie Forbes. He is serving as the Louisiana Junior Angus Association president and is a student at Central Private School.

State, regional and national shows all grace Forbes' show career. He participated in the team fitting and livestock judging contests at the NJAS.

From Los Lunas, N.M., **Roy Gibson** is the 12-year-old son of Roy Gibson and attends Saint Mary's Catholic School. He balances his time with staying active in the NJAA and the New Mexico Junior Angus Association.

Gibson has shown at the local, state and national level. At the NJAS, he competed in the livestock judging, Skill-a-thon and auctioneering contests, as well as participated in the mentoring program.

Washington Junior Angus Association member **Kade Meacham** is from Connell. The 14-year-old is the son of Toni Meacham and attends Old Junior High School.

Having shown at the state, regional and national level, Meacham also attended the NJAS, where he participated in the mentoring program and the team sales, quiz bowl, livestock judging and Skill-a-thon contests.

Pennsylvania Angus Breeders' Junior Angus Show, June 15-17, Huntingdon



Melinda Stoltzfus (left), Coatesville, received champion, and Hayden Weaver, Ephrata, reserve champion, in senior showmanship.



Madison Bowen (left), Centre Hall, won reserve champion, and Kolton Grim, East Berlin, champion in intermediate showmanship. Grim also won overall champion showman.



Mackenzie Brooks (left), Airville, and Abigail Heineman, New Freedom, participated in novice showmanship.