

TAKING *the* HILL



Junior Angus leaders from 24 states and Australia ventured to Washington, D. C., to develop and witness leadership in its highest form.

Washington, D.C. — the nation's capital. Every day America's most influential men and women make decisions affecting the lives of millions. What better place for National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members to learn the fundamentals and importance of leadership? More than 100 NJAA members, the largest group ever, gathered at our nation's capital Aug. 4-7 for "Capitolize on the Future," the sixth annual Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference.

"It was a self-assuring motivational conference that allowed me to realize my full potential and that we juniors in the Angus breed will be the leaders of tomorrow," said Travis Lathrop, Nevada, Mo.

During the conference several speakers informed NJAA members about the future of the beef industry -from the fundamentals of yield and quality grades and food safety to their roles in government as beef producers.

The leadership conference kicked off with "Your Role in Government" by Chandler Keys, vice president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Center for Public Policy. He

*Story & photos by
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"Whether you like it or not, you are the

(Right) Lora Porter, Jefferson, Ga., and Amy Dyar, Crossville, Ala., viewed the many names on the Vietnam Memorial.



(Above) Workshops conducted by NJAA Directors focused on both personal and team development. Rhonda Nida, NJAA Director, gave resume tips during one of the workshops.



(Left) Speaker Matt Lohr challenged participants through a humorous presentation to "lift the limits." Lohr explained the three steps necessary to be successful and reach goals: select a destination; take a stand; and learn to try new things.

encouraged participants to become active in promoting the beef industry.

"Whether you like it or not, you are the leaders of the agriculture industry," he said. "You must participate every day. These issues are not out of sight, out of mind."

On Wednesday LEAD participants viewed national monuments, including Arlington National Cemetery, the Vietnam Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.

The highlight of the day was a private tour of the Capitol,

which included a visit to the conference room and plenary of House Speaker Newt Gingrich. In addition, NJAA members witnessed the U.S. House of Representatives in actions they participated in a vote.

"The 1998 LEAD conference allowed young people involved in the Angus industry to see their government in action," said James Fisher, American Angus Association director of junior activities. "From meeting congressmen to seeing the House in session, they developed leadership skills that will better equip them for taking on leadership roles themselves. The conference

leaders of the agriculture industry.”

— CHANDLER KEYS



(Left) LEAD participants listened intently as **Mark Duffell**, general manager of Whitestone Farm, pointed out the highlights of the Angus operation.



(Above) State association advisors did more than supervise LEAD activities — they actively participated in teamwork events. **Josh Tennant**, Greensboro, N.C.; **Jean Gillig**, Missouri advisor; and **Daniel Donati**, Oroville, Calif., learned you can get more done as a team than as an individual.



(Above) To get acquainted, NJAA members participated in "body surfing," in which one participant rode the "rolling waves" of fellow members.

gave them many practical skills they can use to enhance their state associations and become better citizens.”

The NJAA Board of Directors conducted workshops to teach junior members skills such as resume writing, interviewing dos and don'ts, and team-building activities. The workshops also included brainstorming sessions about state association improvement and success.

“I liked the workshops the best,” said Kaci Pennington, Russell Springs, Ky. “They taught practical lessons and things you need to know in life.”

Thursday featured a trip to Whitestone Farm, Aldie, Va.

NJAA members toured the historic Angus farm and were treated to a Certified *Angus Beef* steak dinner. It wasn't the same old song and dance that evening as members danced the night away, with the bravest exhibiting their vocal talents at the karaoke machine.

“My favorite part of the week was the evening at Whitestone,” said Amy Wolfrey, Frederick, Md. “They have an awesome farm in beautiful northern Virginia.”

Friday morning Stewart Kennedy entertained and informed participants with “everyday choices for extraordinary people.” Every day each person is faced with decisions — either good or



(Left) "This year's LEAD conference combined team-building exercises and motivational activities to help further the development of young people in the Angus Association," said Brett Spader, Rosendale, Mo., not pictured. "This development was also fueled by the positive role models of the NJAA Board and James Fisher, who provided an organized and interesting setting to facilitate the learning of these leadership skills."



(Above) Even through an activity-filled week, NJAA members found the time to build friendships and share special memories that will last a lifetime.



(Above) LEAD participants, including Jesse McCurry, Sedgwick, Kan., molded their favorite childhood toys out of Play-Doh® during one of the LEAD activities designed to help participants realize common interests and goals.

bad choices can be made. It is up to individuals to prioritize their lives and make the right decisions, Kennedy said.

The week in Washington, D.C., was more than a sightseeing trip for NJAA members. It was a chance for the future of the Angus industry to meet, learn from each other and witness leadership in the highest form.

"I think it was a unique experience for many of our members

as they viewed sights they may not have seen otherwise," said Janelle Sommers, NJAA Board chairman. "But I don't think that sightseeing was the highlight of the week. Developing leadership skills, meeting new friends and taking the emphasis off of just showing cattle and placing it on the beef industry as a whole is important for their future as Angus breeders."

