

## YOUR VIEW

by Eva Hinrichsen, Miss American Angus



## Beacon of knowledge

*Being a role model is more than just being smart — it's about passing on wisdom to others.*

Knowledge is powerful. Knowledge is empowering. We look up to those known to be more knowledgeable, or more advanced in their career.

People are constantly learning and pushing themselves to gain new skills and acquire more information every single day.

Industry professionals, college professors and strong leaders are all examples

of the types of people I look to for guidance. However, we cannot forget about the people who may not be in the spotlight all the time, but are constantly teaching and learning, as well.

### Classroom and beyond

As a student at Oklahoma State University (OSU), I am surrounded by intelligent, hard-working professors. These professors provide the knowledge to not only understand the way certain topics associate with one another, but also how to be successful in an industry.

One faculty member I look up to in particular is Gretchen Mafi. I have been in two classes with Mafi, and I

have learned more than just what is in the textbook. She strives to teach her students how to actually be influencers in the livestock industry, and she shares her knowledge of how

to be successful in whatever career we choose to pursue.

Mafi explains how the lessons we learn in classroom and the connections we make can come

together to determine how we can make a difference around us.

### Turning the tables

Although I am still gaining experiences and learning, I have also stepped into the role as an influencer and leader. I have grown up showing cattle my entire life, and I have observed sometimes the best way to learn is to just watch others.

I find this especially important with fitting and clipping. Watching other talented fitters, I gained these skills myself, and I will continue to improve by watching those around me. I was humbled while fitting a heifer, when a 9-year-old boy asked if he could sit beside me and just watch. Of course

I said yes, because I remember when that was me sitting there taking it all in — glue and paint fumes included.

I could tell this boy was eager to learn when I saw his eyes light up as I was explaining what and why I was doing certain things, and then showed him how to work the comb and apply the glue.

In that moment, I was reminded of how I felt when someone took the time to show me how I could improve my fitting skills. Yes, purple banners are great, but having a lasting effect on someone else's life is the bonus I can take away from showing livestock.

I have learned I love teaching others and inspiring them even more. The influence of the professors at my college, as well as the professionals in the livestock show industry, are helping me determine what I do in the future. Finding those knowledgeable influencers and teachers will be helpful in gaining the understanding and information to become successful in the personal and professional segments of my life.

I know I will have more opportunities to find those willing to help me gain more knowledge to successfully pursue my goals. I hope I can become the person to return the favor. **AJ**

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