

by Ellie Kidwell, Miss American Angus



## Breaking Barriers

*The Angus breed certainly has a reputable history and has affected the lives of generations of cattlemen and women around the world.*

Associations, family legacies, brands and so much more have been built on this breed of cattle. With that, the breed is one of the few constants in our long-standing history. Breaking barriers and making changes is what has allowed the Business Breed to develop into the powerhouse that it is today.

Our association continuously showcases the facts, figures and data that emphasize the barriers we have overcome.

Continued genetic progress, the demand for high-quality beef and our ever-changing breed organizations allow us to reach new heights.

The Angus breed has collected so much data and done extensive research when it comes to creating a better breed of cattle. Time and time again the Angus breed has proven it holds true to its name, the Business Breed, because making business happen relies on overcoming obstacles with constant progress.

We are constantly topping our own records and producing a vast assortment of superior genetics within our breed to satisfy any

cattlemen's needs. Pushing boundaries and breaking barriers is part of what makes the Angus breed so special.

As a junior member, the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) has provided so many opportunities that

have allowed me to break barriers in my life. For many members like myself, the NJAA helps to break those initial barriers that might be holding us back. For me, NJAA has brought


me out of my comfort zone when it comes to introducing myself to others, starting conversations and making new friends.

This experience I have had as Miss American Angus has been one of the single most changing experiences in my life. It has been amazing since the beginning — not only because I got to meet so many new people in the industry and further develop my public-speaking skills, but because it has also brought me out of my comfort zone when it comes to making new friends my own age. This role has helped break down some of the mental barriers I had about

socialization among my peers.

In other cases, the contests hosted at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) provide the perfect opportunity for juniors to try something new and break those initial barriers they face. Participation in these contests can crush the fear, anxiety and apprehension of trying something new because the NJAA provides a perfect, welcoming learning environment for young Angus enthusiasts.

The NJAA assists juniors to overcome many barriers when it comes to the level of inclusion they provide. There are countless ways to get involved with the organization, regardless of whatever level you may think you are on. The NJAA provides so many ways to grow and develop beyond what you may have ever dreamed of for yourself.

It is safe to say in the Angus industry, we are no strangers to breaking down the barriers we face. The Business Breed is always overcoming new challenges that face our cattle, our youth and even our industry as a whole. 

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— Ellie Kidwell