

# Juniors Aim For 'Sweet Success'

Annual LEAD Conference teaches Angus youth to dream big.

Story & photos by **Brooke Byrd**



**T**he word “Hershey” usually brings to mind the sweet taste of chocolate, but junior Angus leaders discovered the smell of success to be just as sweet at the 2004 Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference July 29-Aug. 1 in Hershey, Penn. The conference was attended by more than 140 National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members and advisors from more than 20 states.

During the four-day event, juniors learned more about the Angus and beef industries and were given tips for success. Emily Lehning, Westmoreland, Kan., spoke to the group three times during the course of the conference.

Through personal anecdotes and fun, engaging activities, Lehning taught LEAD participants to “Dream Big.” Using each letter in this phrase to explain an important principle, juniors and advisors were given advice on how to achieve goals and were challenged to achieve them.

Lehning began on Thursday by asking participants to set aside preconceived notions of each other. Each LEAD attendee was given a playing card and instructed to treat others according to the value of the card. Participants then

CONTINUED ON PAGE 68

► **Left:** Newly elected NJAA Director Alicia Kramer (right), Farina, Ill., introduces herself to a conference participant. LEAD provides a chance to meet new friends and reconnect with old Angus friends from across the United States.



► Speaker Emily Lehning encouraged LEAD participants to dream big, live life to the fullest and apply their gifts to make the world a better place.

► During a day in Philadelphia, LEAD participants tour America’s birthplace and visit Constitution Hall and the Liberty Bell. The unique opportunities available in the United States were featured in many of the speeches throughout the conference.



## Juniors Aim for 'Sweet Success' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 67

explained how it felt to be treated according to their number.

Through a personal anecdote of snubbing a roommate for robbing her of the precious "59 minutes of listening enjoyment" she needed to fall asleep each night, Lehning explained that the mark of a great leader is someone who sees everyone as a king and treats him or her as such. Years after rooming together, when their paths crossed again, Lehning recognized the other girl's better treatment of others, and Lehning learned from the experience. "At the end of the day, the king and the pawn go in the same box," she said.

On Saturday, Lehning challenged LEAD participants to construct paper cranes in order to encourage them to take risks and try new things. Relating a bungee-jumping story, she said, "Sometimes you have to do things that scare the feathers out of you."

Lehning also encouraged "this-is-it" thinking so juniors would live life to the fullest. "This is your chance to make this contribution and take it back to your state," she said.

Lehning ended by engaging everyone in a game to remember the different principles she had taught. She encouraged junior members to apply their gifts to make the world a better place, adding that she hoped to "create a network of young leaders who have ideas."

### A new way of thinking

Courtney Rump, Galva, Kan., said Lehning's many group activities were especially beneficial. "It makes us do things we haven't done before, and it gets our brains rolling," she said.

Elizabeth Williams, Van Buren, Ark., said she felt encouraged to succeed and enjoyed hearing Lehning's roommate story. Developing good communications skills and meeting new people were the aspects she most

CONTINUED ON PAGE 70

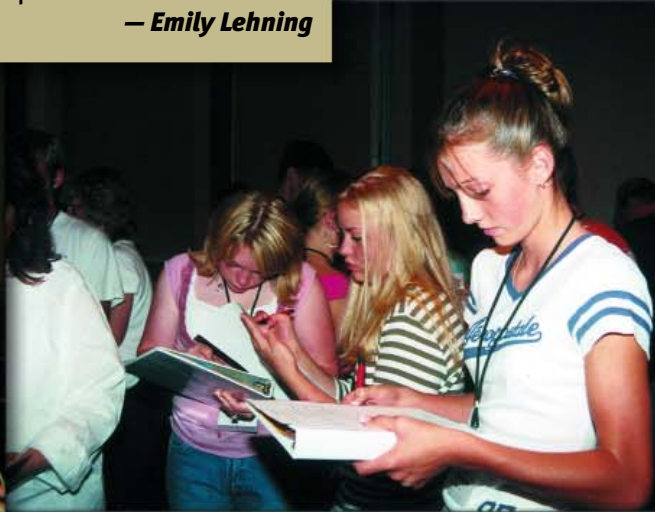


► Courtney Rump (left), Galva, Kan., is signed in by NJAA Membership Director Jarrett Martin and Leadership Director Tyler Grissom. A record 141 junior members and advisors attended this year's conference, representing more than 20 states.

### Ways to "Dream Big"

- D**o something that scares the feathers out of you.
- R**emember your roots.
- E**mbrace "this-is-it" thinking.
- A**sk open-ended questions.
- M**ingle with those most different from you.
- B**attle for your beliefs.
- I**mprove your balance.
- G**ifts and passions.

— Emily Lehning



► **Above:** Juniors learn more about each other in an informational scavenger hunt. The leadership conference exposed juniors and advisors to different Angus points of view.

► **Left:** Angus juniors use teamwork to try to fit as many people as possible on a blanket, balancing Krista Wilcoxson, Harrisburg, Mo., on their shoulders. Icebreakers are an important part of LEAD, meant for juniors to have fun, meet new people and learn new things.

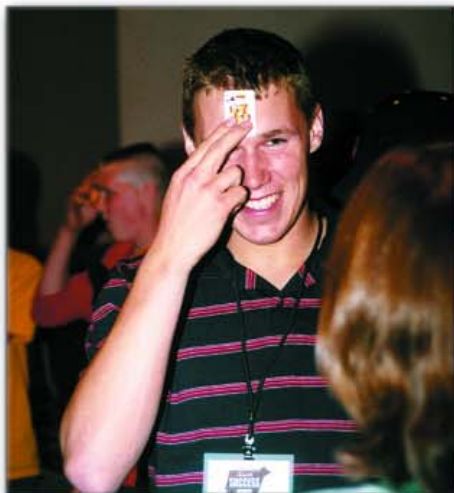


► **Above:** Angus members explore the sweet side of success in a tour explaining how Hershey's chocolate is made. Each LEAD Conference exposes participants to new activities and places.



► Joseph Groce (right), Yadkinville, N.C., succeeds in getting a smile from his father, Greg, in "Baby, I love you, won't you please, please smile." In addition to junior Angus members, LEAD gives advisors the chance to learn new skills.

► **Right:** The Beverly Hillbillies' cow, Bessie (former NJAA Board member Jamie Hower, left), proudly shows off her newborn Angus bull calf (Grissom).



► **Above:** Cody Montgomery, Carrington, N.D., is treated like a king during this activity. Lehning distributed playing cards to each participant to demonstrate that "the mark of a great leader is someone who sees everyone as a king and treats them as such."

► **Right:** Retired and current NJAA Board members (from left) Joanna Olson, Trevor Kuipers, Jennifer Beck and Kyle Conley, acting as the Beverly Hillbillies, prove that the real cause of their fame and fortune was Angus cattle, not oil.



## Juniors Aim for 'Sweet Success' CONTINUED FROM PAGE 69

appreciated, she said, adding, "That way I can get connections to the future."

Rump said Lehning helped her to reach beyond her comfort zone. "She . . . inspired me to do more than what I would have done if I would have just gone on my own and not come to this conference," she explained. "We've got a small herd, and it's hard to inspire yourself when you start from something so small."

Roy Petteway, Zolfo Springs, Fla., said Lehning gave him great hopes of success. "Just knowing that you can always follow your dreams, and if you stick to them, you'll succeed," he said of what he learned from LEAD.

### More motivate, educate

The LEAD program featured a host of presentations to inform, educate and inspire LEAD attendees.

Milford Jenkins, Angus Foundation director of development, kicked off the conference by explaining the role of the Angus Foundation. He explained how achieving sweet success was a mutual goal for both LEAD and the Angus Foundation through education, youth and research. Jenkins advised participants to "have grand dreams for the causes in which you invest yourself?"

Erskine Cash from Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) welcomed everyone to Pennsylvania and gave a quick introduction to the Keystone State's role in the world of agriculture. He was followed by former NJAA Board member Lori Voight, who detailed her own personal ABCs of success, which included attitude, dependability, judgment, responsibility and zest for life.

Chandler Keys from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) emphasized the freedom and opportunities available in the United States and offered advice for success. "Life motors along at a constant pace," he said. "Either you go along with it, or it moves by you."

Finally, John Stika from Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) discussed "branding success" in order to show the importance of brands and what they offer. This brought the concept of success into a real-world surrounding, showing LEAD participants the development and progress of CAB.

This year's conference inspired and advised the attendees. More than just fun, "LEAD just inspired me," Rump said. She added that she intended to take everything she learned about being a leader back to her state to help step it up to be the best.

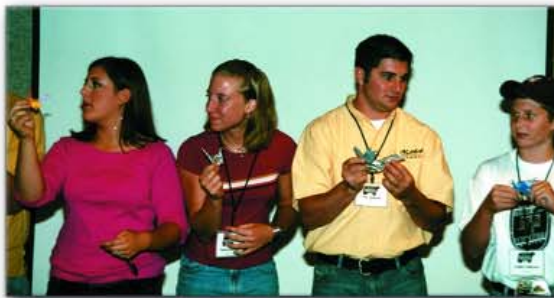
"Every year I learn something, especially this year," Petteway said. "I learned that if you dream big, you can succeed in anything."



► **Above:** Vespers are conducted by the newly elected NJAA Board members with the backdrop of Valley Forge's fog and fireflies. LEAD marks the changing of the guard of NJAA leadership, with six directors retiring as six newly elected directors begin two-year terms.



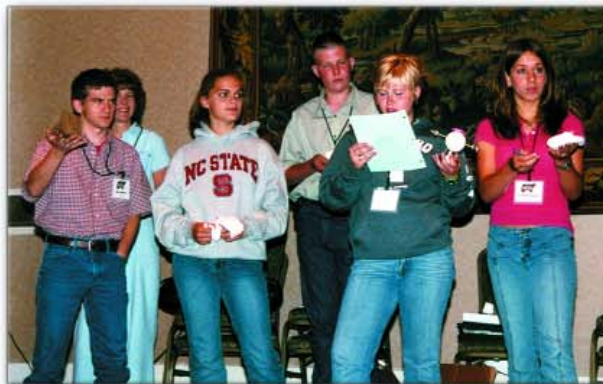
► **After a long day of touring, a dinner at the Philadelphia Hard Rock Cafe provides a satisfying end.**



► **From left, Allyson McGuire, Fort Smith, Ark.; Tammy Ertredge, Pilot Point, Texas; Grissom; and Logan Lastovica, Fredericksburg, Texas, show off their paper cranes. Lehning asked LEAD participants to create paper cranes to encourage them to step out of their comfort zones, take risks and try something new.**



► **Above:** CAB's John Stika explains there's more to a brand than simply a name. Even though diet and regular Pepsi appear similar, one floats in a pitcher of water, while the other sinks.



► **Left:** From left, Mark Gleason, Midlothian, Texas; Miriam Lewis, Walstonburg, N.C.; Danny Ulmanis, Koshkonong, Mo.; Sara Short, Romance, Ark.; and Christina Egner, Shelby, Ohio, show off their product created during one of the workshops. "The Sound of Success" had participants work together to create and market a product to better their communication skills.



► LEAD participants toured the Marietta, Penn., feedlot where most of Monkton, Md.-based Roseda Farms' cattle are fed. Tour-goers learned about different methods of feeding and the logistics of such an operation.



► Above: NJAA Chairman Jennifer Ourso (center) leads a political workshop, encouraging Elizabeth Williams, Van Buren, Ark.; Patti Hymel, Vacherie, La.; Clayton Lampe, Scott City, Kan.; and McGuire to stay informed of political events. Juniors enjoyed learning about different ideologies and issues.



► After a hayride tour of the farm, Ohio juniors Danielle Brosey (left), Hamilton, and Egner are ready for dessert.



► Above: From left, Frank Feeser, Taneytown, Md.; Doug Full, Mount Airy, Md.; Julie Feeser, Taneytown; and Donna Full, Mount Airy, help out after dinner. Roseda Farms hosted the annual dinner and dance.



► The dance provides the opportunity for both juniors and advisors to relax and have fun with new friends.



► Below: From left, Emily McCurry, Burrton, Kan.; Mallory Trosper, Hamilton, Mo.; and Claire Taylor, Lavaca, Ark., practice being a bird to reinforce Lehning's lesson that sometimes you have to do things that scare the feathers out of you.

