

# Michelle Rieff Named NJAA Advisor of the Year

Arkansas advisor shows dedication, emphasizes training for future leadership.

by Julie White

**E**nthusiastic, encouraging and inspirational are words used to describe Michelle Rieff, Bentonville, Ark. She exhibits these characteristics as she serves the Arkansas Junior Angus Association in all aspects, from guidance in meetings to helping juniors make important decisions.

"Time and time again, I have watched her give to others unselfishly and without regard to her own personal cost," says Sonja Martin, Lavaca, Ark.

For her dedication and leadership to the Arkansas Junior Angus Association, Michelle Rieff was recognized July 18 as the 2008 National Junior Angus Association

(NJAA) Advisor of the Year at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Des Moines, Iowa.

During her six years as an advisor, Rieff worked hard for the juniors and helped to implement officer training, create a state awards program, compile etiquette guidelines for state queens and princesses, and host three preview shows.

"During her term as advisor, the membership of the Arkansas Junior Angus Association tripled, and the programs that she helped to put into place are still working today," says Shirley Williams, Fort Smith, Ark.

Leading by example, she promotes

proper conduct in meetings and encourages use of parliamentary procedure. Rieff makes sure officers and members understand the importance of conducting an efficient meeting.

Rieff always shows passion in working with juniors and includes even the youngest members. "She has never made them feel like they are too little to be included," says Sheri Tunstill, Fayetteville, Ark. Her daughter Katlyn was only 4 years old when Rieff started her advising term.

"She wanted us to know even though we were younger that our ideas and thoughts were important," Katlyn says. "This helped me gain confidence in myself at a very young age."

In addition to her involvement with the Arkansas Junior Angus Association, Rieff is currently serving as the 2008 American Angus Auxiliary president-elect. She continues to be active



PHOTO BY TOSHA POWELL

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in the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association and is a 4-H leader.

With a background as a school counselor, Rieff has a unique ability to encourage and teach junior members.

"It always amazed me how she could persuade a shy youngster to pick up a microphone, participate in a skit or lead an unruly heifer into the showing," Williams says. Williams's daughter, Arkansas junior member Elizabeth, enjoys Rieff's enthusiasm. "Her smile is contagious," Elizabeth says. "She makes me laugh even when things are not going my way."

Rieff also gives support to older members who need guidance in life-changing decisions. Martin described a time when her son Jarrett was working toward his goal of being a member of the NJAA Board. She, in part, credits his success to Rieff. "She taught him and guided him as an advisor and it eventually led to a life-changing experience with the NJAA," Martin says.

With advisors like Rieff, it is certain that Angus junior members are learning by example how to be a good leader and a good person. Rieff's involvement in junior programs demonstrates how young members can profit in immeasurable ways from positive influence and encouragement.



PHOTO BY AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

► Retiring NJAA Chairman Justin Brosey presents Michelle Rieff an illustrated portrait to honor her as the 2008 NJAA Advisor of the Year. The award was presented in the ring during Friday's cattle show.

