



Movin' Forward

► by **Bryce Schumann**, CEO, American Angus Association

In the heartland

The National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) this summer in Indianapolis, Ind., went straight to the heart of what it means to be in the Angus cattle business.

Stalls and the showing

More than 700 Angus youth and their families met in “Indy,” July 6-12 to compete in the showing and in numerous other life-skills competitions during “Angus in the Heartland.”

There was an impressive 1,071 entries exhibited during the event, but what really struck me — and, no doubt, the hundreds of other observers there — was the enthusiasm and kindness these young individuals showed each other and, of course, their animals. A general feeling of positivity and the promise of new opportunities remained in the air throughout the week.

The camaraderie was present in the showing, but even more evident during a walk through the barns, where visitors were able to witness the true beauty of this event — the early friendships formed over a mutual love for the Angus breed.

While technically competitors, these youngsters display a sense of respect and community that we can all enjoy. It's in everything they do, year after year, from

opening to closing ceremonies. Thankfully, you also can witness it in the numerous online videos and coverage available on our videos page at www.angus.org, and throughout the pages of this issue, which is devoted to raising the next generation of Angus leaders.

My heartfelt congratulations to everyone who participated in the 2014 NJAS, and a special thank you to the host state, Indiana; the Association's Events and Education Department; and the numerous staff and volunteers who coordinated and carried out such a tremendously successful experience for all involved. My hat's off to you.

Tomorrow's leaders

Summertime is also prime time for other youth leadership activities through the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA), including the ever-popular Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) conference.

The hundreds of Angus youth who travel to LEAD every year walk away with new friendships, experiences and inspiration for serving in youth leadership roles in their individual communities. NJAA members, ages 14-21, who attended this year's LEAD in Philadelphia, Pa., also received a healthy dose of U.S. history — a lesson in leadership through “Forefathers and Farms.” They also learned how agriculture is so closely tied to the origins of this country, its early riches and most valued assets.

Regardless of population and demographic shifts, we will always remain a people tied to the land — a country dependent on agriculture for its survival.

It will take many more young agriculturalists to provide for such needs if we are to remain a land of the free. Events like the NJAS and LEAD are the first steps in fostering that next generation, a generation of which we can all be proud.



Bryce F. Schumann
EMAIL: bschumann@angus.org

AMERICAN ANGUS ASSOCIATION

3201 Frederick Ave., Saint Joseph, MO 64506-2997; phone: 816-383-5100; fax: 816-233-9703; Office hours: (M-F) 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Central)
email: angus@angus.org • home page: www.angus.org • facebook.com/americanangusassociation • twitter: @AngusAssoc

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