

JERA PIPKIN CROWNED

In her red jacket and sparkling tiara,
Pipkin will represent the breed in the year ahead.

by Jena McReil, digital editor

As the fifth-generation on Clearwater Farm near Springfield, Mo., a passion for the Angus breed has been with Jera Pipkin her entire life.

With a giant smile and enthusiastic personality, she captivated the judges and was crowned the 2016 Miss American Angus during the American Angus Association's Awards Recognition Breakfast Nov. 5, held as part of the National Angus Convention & Trade Show in Overland Park, Kan.

"The red jacket is an opportunity for me to tell my story," Pipkin said. "It's an opportunity for me to connect with breeders and younger kids to tell them my own experiences, and how Angus can change your life."

A freshman at Oklahoma State University, Pipkin studies animal science and agricultural communications. She is the daughter of Jim and Joann Pipkin. Founded in 1933, Clearwater Farm has been recognized as a Historic Herd by the American Angus Association, and that family history and heritage is something Pipkin treasures.

"Angus is truly the business breed," Pipkin said. "The Angus breed has functional, quality cattle, but also the people behind it."



► Jera Pipkin will represent the Angus breed as 2016 Miss American Angus.

There's nothing like my Angus family, and there's nothing quite like what the breed can provide for you."

Each year, five outstanding young ladies compete for the prestigious title of Miss

American Angus and an opportunity to serve the Angus breed as a spokesperson across the country. Hosted by the American Angus Auxiliary, the program provides one Angus junior the opportunity to serve the breed and assist with shows, educational events and field days to educate others about the beef industry and benefits of Angus genetics.

An active member of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) and competitor at multiple National Junior Angus Shows (NJAS), Pipkin says connecting with younger NJAA members and other Angus breeders is what she looks forward to the most in the year ahead.

"In the red jacket, you are ultimately a role model for everyone else," Pipkin said. "It's a multi-level position where you can interact with everyone, and that's what I love to do. It's a tremendous opportunity."

Competing for the title

Five finalists were chosen for the Miss American Angus Contest through the Auxiliary's scholarship application process.

While in Overland Park, Kan., for the National Angus Convention, the young women completed a written test, delivered a speech and interviewed with the panel of three judges. Amy Cowan, Kansas City, Mo.; Barbara Ettredge, Pilot Point, Texas; and Lance Burditt, Saint Louis, Mo., served as judges for this year's event.

It's not an easy process, but it is something hundreds of young NJAA members have looked forward to throughout the crown's nearly 50-year history.

"This is something I've wanted since I was 5 years old," Pipkin said. "I'm really thankful for this opportunity; it's once-in-a-lifetime."

Additional finalists during this year's competition were Cassandra Garcia, Renton, Wash.; Claudia Hissong, Greencastle, Pa.; Katelyn Holmes, Benton, Iowa; and Jordyn Wagner, Billings, Mont.

Pipkin succeeds 2015 Miss American Angus Madison Butler of Vincennes, Ind. To learn more about the Miss American Angus program, visit www.angusauxiliary.com.

PHOTOS BY LEANN SCHLEICHER, ANGUS MEDIA



► Competing for Miss American Angus this year were (from left) Jordyn Wagner, Jera Pipkin, Katelyn Holmes, Claudia Hissong and Cassandra Garcia.



