

Velisek Takes Junior Herdsman Title

Second-ever award presented at 2011 NJAS.

by **Katie Gazda**, editorial intern

A junior member's final year of eligibility frequently comes with some baggage. Years of memories, triumphs and disappointments come flooding back all at once, oftentimes at the place where most past experiences have taken place: the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS).

For one retiring junior member, however, looking back on his final NJAS, while

nostalgic, will also be gratifying. In addition to receiving the highest level of recognition within the National Junior Recognition Program, the Gold Award, Bobby Velisek, Gaithersburg, Md., was also the recipient of the Junior Herdsman of the Year Award.

Created in 2010, the Junior Herdsman of the Year Award was designed to honor an outstanding National Junior Angus

Association (NJAA) member who displays a strong work ethic, is dedicated to his or her animals, and has the skill to prepare his or her cattle for exhibition to the best of their ability. The ability to work with customers and fellow junior members to help them prepare their animals is also considered.

All cattle exhibitors at the NJAS are eligible to vote for the Junior Herdsman of the Year

Award. They are asked to evaluate their peers throughout the week, and then vote accordingly for who they believe best exhibits the qualities of an ideal junior herdsman.

“Winning Junior Herdsman of the Year means so much to me,” says Bobby, who has been showing Angus cattle since he was 9 years old. “I am so thankful that my fellow juniors in and out of my state were thinking about me.”

Bobby was recognized with the honor at the closing ceremonies of the 2011 NJAS in Harrisburg, Pa. He received a belt buckle donated by the American Angus Association to recognize his hard work and dedication to



► **Left:** Bobby Velisek, Gaithersburg, Md., was selected by his peers to receive the Junior Herdsman of the Year Award.

the junior program both in and out of Maryland.

“It is an awesome feeling receiving such an honor, especially with it being my last year in the junior association,” Bobby says. “I wouldn’t be where I am without my parents and wonderful advisors. Angus cattle and people will always be a part of my life. I can’t wait to see what the future brings.”



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