

Kansas Junior Leads By

Esther McCabe named 2015 Outstanding Leader at the National Junior Angus Show.

by Sarah Harris, communications & public relations intern, &

Jena Wagner, events & education intern

Many kinds of leaders influence our lives. There are the leaders we see and look up to because of their role, such as those on the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB) and state association officers. There are leaders who lead silently and simply by example, who are not in the spotlight but still remain visible. Then there are the leaders we never even realize until much later in life, when we reflect and realize how much we looked up to them.

Even though there are many different types of leaders, they all seem to have common values — a work ethic anyone would be proud to have, a passion for what they do and integrity.

As former Wyoming Senator Alan K. Simpson said, “If you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don’t have integrity, nothing else matters.”

Leaders do not tell you how to do it; they



PHOTO BY RANEY LOVORN

show you how it is done.

That is certainly true of the 2015 Jim Baldridge Outstanding Leadership Award recipient Esther McCabe of Elk City, Kan.

Named in memory of a lifetime of service to the Angus breed, the award is annually given to an outstanding National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) member to recognize their contributions to Angus organizations, personal Angus accomplishments, and community involvement and achievements.

Currently a senior at Kansas State University, Esther finished out her NJAA career at this year’s show in Tulsa, Okla. She was recognized with the honor during closing ceremonies of the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) July 17 and will receive a \$2,500 scholarship made possible by Bill and Betty Werner of Werner Angus, Cordova, Ill., and their \$50,000 gift to the Angus Foundation in 2013.

“Being a part of the National Junior Angus Association, and the Angus breed as a whole, has helped me to grow up,” McCabe says. “With all the different events within the junior association, you learn about the different aspects of the breed and how to stand up and talk with people about it.”

Leader from example

An active member of the Angus community, Esther has shown leadership in many aspects. She is a third-generation Angus breeder, so saying Angus runs in her blood is an understatement.

She has been actively involved in the NJAA her entire life. She followed in her older siblings’ footsteps, learning about the industry and competing in many contests such as public speaking, the All-American Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) Cook-Off, team sales and many others. In 2013 she represented the breed as Miss American Angus.

Esther says she watched and mimicked the every move of her three older siblings, Flinton, Ethan and Hannah, benefitting from their leadership.

“Each one has their own strengths, which makes a unique combination to get insight on anything I choose to do,” says Esther. Wanting to be so much like her older sister, Esther followed in Hannah’s footsteps in more than one way. She dressed, acted and even participated in the same contests as Hannah.

This silent drive is what set Esther up to be a very outgoing and successful junior in the NJAA. She says she wishes every junior could be pushed like she was to become more involved in the NJAA and the industry.

Esther says the skills she has developed with her time in the NJAA will last her a lifetime. Her advice to younger NJAA members: “Move out of [your] comfort zone to challenge [yourself] to grow. The NJAA is set up for juniors to take advantage of what the NJAA has to offer. It is up to us as juniors to use these opportunities to build ourselves into leaders for the next generation and to advance our industry.”



PHOTO BY KASEY BROWN

Example



PHOTO BY PEARL'S PICS COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN ANGUS ASS'N



PHOTO BY KASEY BROWN

Equally important as meeting people around you, she says, is to thank each and every person who contributed to your personal development. It might be your family, friends, a junior board member or advisors, but without those people, it would all be a different story. Make sure to always say thank you, she reminds.

“It is up to us as juniors to use these opportunities to build ourselves into leaders for the next generation and to advance our industry.”

— Esther McCabe

Lucky puppy

“I know that without the National Junior Angus Association and the Foundation, I would not be who I am today,” Esther explains. Being involved in this organization has changed her life in more than one way because of the people involved in it.

Esther is a firm believer in the benefits of a handshake.

“Everyone you meet is going to have an impact on your life, and whether you realize it at the time or not, you will have an impact on their life, too,” says Esther. She has learned this to be more than true, as the people she has met through the NJAA have been placed in her life whether they helped her with advice, to meet others or get an internship. All the people she has had an opportunity to connect with have had a reason for being in her life.

Esther says she is blessed to have grown up with these programs in which to be involved. She has known this from a very young age

because her grandmother has always told her, “You’re a lucky puppy.” At first, those words did not sink in like her grandmother had hoped. As the years passed, however, Esther began to understand how those words were so true.

“Having a family that is supportive and willing to go out of their way to help each other no matter what is being asked is second to none,” she explains. “Being involved in an industry where everyone passes by and says hi with a smile is incredible. I believe that we are all very lucky to be able to be a part of such a great organization as a junior that teaches us skills that we are able to take with us long after our junior career has come to an end. Having all that means you’re a lucky puppy.”

Along with being the Outstanding Leadership Award recipient, Esther won champion owned heifer at the 2015 NJAS, an achievement she described as an incredible feeling.

“To be completely honest, it still has not

completely sunk in that my family won,” says Esther. Between her brothers, sister and herself, the McCabe family has attended 21 National Junior Angus Shows.

“Wow is all that we can say when we won the last time out,” Esther explains, sharing the victory with her family and another family she says has made a huge impact on them.

“Without the help of Prairie View Farms, I could never have accomplished this,” she says, noting she can’t thank them enough. “When we talk about people who have a lifelong impact on our lives and those we look up to, for me, personally, the Alan Miller family comes to mind. They have taken me in as if I [were] family and helped to not only develop my showing abilities but interpersonal skills that I will carry with me long after my junior career.”

Ending her NJAA career as a leader in the showing is a fitting tribute to her many years of service in many aspects of the NJAA.

