

OUTSTANDING LEADER NAMED

Keegan Cassady recognized for outstanding leadership at the National Junior Angus Show.

by **Morgan Marley**, communications intern

The National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) recognizes one of its young leaders each year by presenting the Jim Baldrige Outstanding Leadership Award at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). Awarded during the NJAS closing ceremonies July 14 in Des Moines, Iowa, this year's recipient is Keegan Cassady of Normal, Ill.

"To me, one of the most important things about being a leader is leading by example," Cassady said. "I try to lead by example by being very involved in all of the contests at junior nationals, being a respectful competitor and a team player."

Entering her sophomore year at Oklahoma State University (OSU), Cassady is studying animal science with a business option. As part of the award, she will be awarded a \$2,500 scholarship.

Each year the outstanding NJAA member is recognized for contributions to Angus organizations, personal Angus accomplishments, and community involvement and achievements. In 2014, the award was titled the Jim Baldrige Outstanding Leadership Award in memory of a lifetime of service to the Angus breed.

"Our many thanks to Bill and Betty Werner for their generous gift of \$50,000, which in 2013 established a permanent endowment in memory of Jim Baldrige," says Milford Jenkins, Angus Foundation president. "His legacy will be carried in perpetuity in the Angus breed through this prestigious award and scholarship."

As an active member in the Angus community, Cassady has held many leadership roles, both in her state and on a



► **Keegan Cassady**, Normal, Ill., receives the Outstanding Leadership Award.

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national level. Currently she is serving as the 2017 Miss American Angus. She recently started a Sigma Alpha chapter at OSU. She is an active member in Block and Bridle, Collegiate Cattlewomen and is the junior chair for the 2018 NJAS.

"I was very fortunate to have so many amazing juniors come before me," she said. "I wouldn't be Miss American Angus if it weren't for them, and I wouldn't have received this award. I've been involved in a lot of other organizations, but this one is second to none at developing leaders to go out and be strong advocates in the Angus industry and be change makers."

Cassady has been involved with the NJAA for many years, making this the eighth junior national show she has attended. Some of the contests she has competed in are photography, the All-American *Certified Angus Beef*[®] Cook-off, prepared and extemporaneous speech, team sales, quiz bowl, career development and the judging contest.

"I definitely think, other than just the contests helping develop my skills, building this network of people is so important," Cassady said. "There are so many people to network with, whether you need someone for advice or need a job in the future. The Angus family mentality is so true and I'm happy to be a part of it."



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► **Keegan Cassady** leads by example. In addition to serving as the 2017 Miss American Angus, she participates in many contests throughout the NJAS.