

The Road to Success

Auxiliary awards \$10,000 in scholarships to NJAA members.

by *Linda Robbins*

The American Angus Auxiliary and its supporters put 10 National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members on the road to academic success during the 2006 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) by sending them home with a total of \$10,000 in scholarships. The Auxiliary awards these scholarships annually to five young women and five young men, chosen this year from among 27 applicants representing 18 states.

Funded through programs such as the Auxiliary auction in Louisville, Ky., and the Angus Sale Barn, the Auxiliary scholarships have been awarded to beginning college freshmen for 50 years. Mary Greiman, national scholarship chairwoman, presented the awards Friday, July 14, during the NJAS. The outstanding NJAA members profiled below are this year's Auxiliary scholarship recipients.

Kyleigh Santee

Kyleigh Santee, Langdon, Kan., won the first-place scholarship in the girls' division and received \$1,200.

Before she was old enough to show, Kyleigh remembers watching her dad work with her sister and her sister's show animals.

"Occasionally I would try to help, and when I did, I loved it," she says. Her enthusiasm inspired her dad to buy her a bucket calf, and she continues to be excited about her Angus cattle today.

"This year I flushed my heifer and sold four embryos at the Kansas Angus Futurity," Kyleigh says.

From cheerleading to band, and volleyball to forensics, Kyleigh's school and community activities, plus her commitment to her cattle, made for a sometimes hectic schedule. "I don't really know how I did it all," Kyleigh says. "Everything just fell into place."

In addition to leading roles in ag-related activities, Kyleigh excels as an athlete. She is a four-year letter winner and three-year Universal Cheerleaders



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Association (UCA) All-Star, serving as captain during her senior year. She was chosen first team in the Heart of the Plains league in volleyball, lettered in basketball and track, and qualified for the state track meet.

During her junior year at Pretty Prairie High School, Kyleigh was a German exchange student and traveled with 14 other students and two teachers. The city of Keil was very different from the rural area of Langdon, and none of the students in her group spoke German. Still, she found it a positive learning experience.

"They were very open," Kyleigh says of their German hosts. "They told me anything I wanted to know, and if they didn't know the answer to a question I asked, they'd find someone who did."

Kyleigh found time to serve as a volunteer at a local nursing home, "adopting" a grandparent and serving as co-chairman of an activities committee for the residents of Prairie Sunset Home. She also volunteered at a local soup kitchen and served as co-chairman and chairman of a group who regularly read to at-risk grade school students.

The daughter of Barry and Karen Santee, Kyleigh intends to take her strong work ethic to Hutchinson Community College and then to Fort Hays State University, where she will study business agriculture or agricultural communications and journalism. After college, Kyleigh would like to work for an agricultural publication where she can continue to contribute to the Angus breed and the American Angus Association.

Whatever road she takes after college, Kyleigh credits her success to "the support I have received from all the Angus people that I have met

and friends I show with. They have all molded my vision of the future."

Emily Tennant

Emily Tennant, Greensboro, N.C., received the \$1,050 second-place scholarship.

"It is hard to describe my home as the ideal setting for any kind of livestock operation," the daughter of Stanley and Maggie Tennant says. The Tennant operation is located in a city of 220,000, in an area of urban sprawl known for subdivisions and apartments.

Opportunities for FFA or 4-H organizations in their increasingly urban community are limited, Emily says. "Our involvement in both the state and national junior Angus organizations has been invaluable."

Her neighbors wonder why, with so many other opportunities, Emily takes up so much time working with cattle. She says they have the wrong perspective.

"Working with Angus cattle doesn't take up my time. Rather, I give it my time, recognizing that none of my other activities has ever bestowed me with so many benefits," Emily says.

She has been a member of the NJAA and the North Carolina Junior Angus Association for 13 years. Emily has been a participant in the Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD)

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Conference for two years, and she has a long history as a leader with the Eastern Regional and NJAS. Though too young to show at these events from 1994 to 1996, she helped sweep and keep the stall area clean. "Before I could hold a cow, I was always willing to be the ribbon girl," Emily says.

When she's not working on the farm or showing cattle, Emily gives her time and talents to academics, sports, music and her community. The class of 2006 valedictorian and National Honor Society (NHS) member at Northwest Guilford High School, Emily played in the all-county school orchestra as first violin, taught violin to middle school students, and serves as a violin soloist at various churches for their Easter and Christmas services.

"I have played in a bluegrass gospel band at a neighboring church," Emily says. "But they say that when we play, my instrument is no longer a violin, but a fiddle."

Emily truly values the time spent and the lessons of patience and dedication learned from her daily chores on the farm. "The best part about raising livestock, especially Angus cattle, is the group of reliable and hard-working friends," Emily says. "As president of our junior association, I've met different types of people, but all share the same passion and devotion."

It's a passion Emily would like to take to college where she has an interest in pursuing a veterinary career, along with a desire to show others the "magic" she has found in farm life, a magic she wants to share with a family of her own in the future.

Haley Rieff

Haley Rieff, Bentonville, Ark., is the winner of the \$1,000 third-place award.

"Some of my best friends are old show heifers," Haley says. "I can't imagine a cattle farming operation that doesn't include Angus cattle." In addition to

her responsibilities on her family's farm, Haley is an active member of the Arkansas Junior Angus Association (AJAA), serving in leadership roles from secretary, treasurer and Miss Arkansas Angus to 2006 president.

A frequent participant in LEAD conferences and the NJAS, Haley considers these events "the highlights of the year."



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Named AJAA Exhibitor of the Year for three years, most recently in 2006, Haley has led her "best friends" to numerous grand, reserve grand and first-place showings in her years of entering local, state, regional and national shows.

What stands out for Haley about her NJAA involvement is what she learned at the LEAD conferences. "I learned how important ag is, not just in my state, but for the country, and how many career choices there are associated with it," Haley says. "I wasn't going to major in ag, but after attending LEAD I decided to major in it and pursue an ag career."

Haley is the junior co-chairman of the 2007 NJAS, which will take place in Tulsa, Okla. "Both organizations (the AJAA and the NJAA) have provided me with fantastic opportunities to meet new people, improve my leadership and communication skills, and enhance my agricultural knowledge within the beef industry," Haley says. "Many of the people I meet and network with now will probably be the same people who will be responsible for offering me a job in the future."

Haley enjoyed being a tour guide for groups of elementary students as part of the Kids & Kritters Tours during the Arkansas State Fair in 2005, where she toured more than 200 different groups "across the fairgrounds emphasizing the importance of agriculture in Arkansas."

Haley's passions aren't restricted to the agricultural world, however. She has been a member of dance companies, teaching tap, ballet, jazz and hip-hop. She is also a member of the competition team for the Fayetteville Clogging Co., winning first place as a solo performer and as a member of a group in regional competition in 2006. She has volunteered with the Salvation Army and organized a Christmas toy drive for 500 needy children through the Benton County Department of Human Services.

Haley plans to attend Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College where she will major in ag communications, with an

interest in pursuing a career with a breed association as either a media representative, youth development director or public relations manager.

Haley is the daughter of Kevin and Michelle Rieff.

Christina Egner

Christina Egner, Shelby, Ohio, won fourth place and \$900.

Christina currently owns 35 registered Angus cattle, but her first heifer belonged to her brother.

"After the death of my brother in 1994, I was given his only heifer to continue the herd he never got to start," she says. Her parents helped her learn to care for her heifer, and she learned how to care for cattle by watching her father as he did chores and moved the herd from pasture to pasture.

Christina currently assists in the overall management of her family's farm operation, handling daily chores such as feeding and watering, and seasonal chores such as breeding and calving. She has also assumed an active voice in choosing the bulls used for artificial insemination (AI) and in the advertising and marketing of sale animals.

"I have learned to understand how to use expected progeny differences (EPDs) and AI to my advantage, and the best ways for breeding my animals from Angus breeders," Christina says. "Each year after my first show, I have sold calves from my first cow to purchase more heifers to sell and expand my herd."

All of Christina's cattle have had Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIRSM), starting in 2001. "I still do chores," Christina



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explains, "but my management practices have become more important as I become an independent cattleman."

Christina says the biggest benefits of being a member of NJAA are in the area of personal development.

"I was able to meet a lot of people, which opened me up, helped me mature and made me a responsible adult," she says.

Christina says she is grateful for the mentoring relationships she has had with the many adults with whom she has worked. "I've worked with a lot of adults on all the committees I've been a part of," Christina says. "They have helped me understand what steps I need to take to achieve my goals."

Christina, the daughter of Kelvin and Jackie Egner, has been accepted at Ohio State University and intends to major in animal science with an emphasis in pre-veterinary studies and a minor in life sciences.

Lauren Schroeder

Lauren Schroeder, Clarence, Iowa, is the fifth-place scholarship winner, receiving \$850.

Lauren says she is "very fortunate" to have grown up on a farm. She works on her family's farm with the show cattle every morning and every night, helps get cattle in for AI breeding in the spring and fall, works in the fields every spring and fall, and checks cows in the summer in five different pastures.

"I haul a lot of manure," Lauren says. "I have learned to work hard for my achievements, and I appreciate the discipline it has given me."

The daughter of Douglas and Glenda Schroeder, Lauren has been a longtime member of five different Iowa junior Angus associations, serving as treasurer and historian of the Iowa Junior Angus Association (IJAA) and as vice president and treasurer of the Eastern Iowa Junior Angus Association. She has been a participant in a variety of contests at the NJAS, including the photography and poster contests and the Auxiliary-sponsored All-American *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) Cook-Off.

As captain of her high school basketball, volleyball and softball teams, Lauren led all teams to conference championships, and to first place in all-district, all-state and first-team conference in softball. Due to



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her exceptional athletic ability, Lauren was named in "Who's Who Among American High School Athletes" in 2004.

Lauren plans to attend Simpson College where she will major in business and minor in math. She then intends to go to law school, planning on internships throughout her college career to help prepare her for success as a lawyer.

"It will be a lot of hard work because I plan to play softball," Lauren says. "But that will make me work harder to achieve my goals."

Waco Phipps

Waco Phipps, Kearney, Neb., is the first-place winner in the boys' division, receiving \$1,200.

Waco says his Angus cattle have molded him into the young man he is today.

"Over the years, I have attended sales, tours, helped serve meals, sold cattle, showed cattle, gave speeches, wrote stories and made posters," he shares. In addition to "a strong work ethic," these experiences have been instrumental in "teaching me responsibility, connecting me with fellow Angus breeders and giving me a strong foundation in sire selection, marketing and recordkeeping."

An honor roll student at Sunrise Christian Academy, Waco has won local, state and national recognition for his community service activities. He helped develop a brochure about all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safety to hand out during his safety presentations as a youth ambassador for Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, a nonprofit organization that promotes farm safety for



children throughout the United States and Canada.

Waco is dedicated to promoting farm safety awareness and thinks peer-to-peer education is important and effective, particularly when he can share his own involvement in a couple of ATV accidents.

"I realized how lucky I was to be alive," he explains.

Waco is also an award-winning business entrepreneur as one of 10 students from across the country to receive a National Agri-Entrepreneurship Award from the National FFA Organization in October 2005. He owns and operates Sandhills Fencing, a business that offers custom fence-building, repair and removal services.

While his Angus herd is small and there are limited opportunities for expansion due to size and labor restrictions, Waco says he is thankful his parents gave him the freedom and responsibility to care for his cattle himself.

"I learned valuable skills from raising my own cattle, covering all aspects from breeding to marketing," Waco says. "My parents allowed me to make decisions and to help in all areas. Replacement selection, EPDs and AI are all essential to the success of our operation."

Though his family does not show a lot, Waco has been successful in the showing on a local, district and state level. He especially enjoys fitting and showmanship. He was selected reserve champion beef showman and showed the reserve champion Angus steer at the Ak-Sar-Ben regional show in 2003. He has also conducted clipping and fitting clinics for junior members in Kansas and Nebraska.

"I've also gotten to help other members groom their cattle at the regional and junior nationals," Waco says.

Waco will attend the University of Nebraska, Kearney, to study industrial

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"I learned valuable skills from raising my own cattle, covering all aspects from breeding to marketing."

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distribution. "I plan to remain active in my state and national Angus associations and activities," Waco says. The son of William and Robin Phipps, Waco sees himself in the future as "established in my career, married, active in agricultural issues, involved in a church and in improving my community."

Jordan Hunter

Jordan Hunter, Fair Grove, Mo., is the winner of the second-place \$1,050 award.



Most of the dedication Jordan has for Angus cattle comes from a long family heritage. "My family has shown me the importance and the history of the Angus cattle industry since I was old enough to talk," Jordan says. "My brother and I are both fifth-generation Angus breeders." On his family's farm Jordan is responsible for show and sale cattle management, breeding selection, calving and nutrition management.

Jordan takes his family's history with the breed seriously, with a longtime membership and participation in NJAA activities and shows. He has served the Southwest Missouri Junior Angus Association as vice president and president, and the Missouri Junior Angus Association as ambassador.

Winning multiple awards at county, state and regional shows, Jordan's heifer was a class winner at the NJAS in 2004. Active as well in 4-H and FFA, Jordan attended a Washington Leadership Conference in 2005 and has served as reporter, chairman and editor of the Fair Grove FFA chapter.

Jordan says the most important things he's gained from his NJAA experiences are "the friendships that are made and the career opportunities." Currently working for an auction service as his off-farm job, Jordan intends to pursue a career as an auctioneer and sale manager. "Just being around the cattle has helped me in my career choice," he says.

Even with his focus on Angus, auctions and other agricultural activities, Jordan excels as an athlete.

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— Jordan Hunter**

He earned a varsity letter for basketball, football, track and golf. Jordan served as a focus group leader for Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD), was an honor roll student throughout his high school career and was a member of the National Honor Society. Active in church and community service through mission trips, camps and revivals, Jordan also served on a fundraising committee for the March of Dimes.



► From left, Greiman presents American Angus Auxiliary scholarships to **Jordan Hunter**, Fair Grove, Mo., second; and **William Mayfield**, Pulaski, Tenn., fifth. Not pictured are **Waco Phipps**, Kearney, Neb., first; **Billy Lewis**, Walstonburg, N.C., third; and **Kenny Hopper**, Leonardville, Kan., fourth. Greiman presented the awards to the scholarship winners during the awards ceremony at the 2006 NJAS.



► From left, Mary Greiman, Auxiliary scholarship chairwoman, presents American Angus Auxiliary scholarships to **Kyleigh Santee**, Langdon, Kan., first; **Emily Tennant**, Greensboro, N.C., second; **Haley Rieff**, Bentonville, Ark., third; **Christina Egner**, Shelby, Ohio, fourth; and **Lauren Schroeder**, Clarence, Iowa, fifth. In addition to receiving college scholarships, these young ladies will compete for the title of Miss American Angus this fall in Louisville, Ky.

The son of David and Norma Hunter, Jordan intends to study business and marketing at Ozarks Technical Community College.

"I am hopeful and confident that the Angus breed will continue to play a huge role in my life," Jordan says. "I have had a true passion for this breed since I was a young boy, and I plan to carry on my family's tradition of breeding Angus cattle."

Billy Lewis

Billy Lewis, Walstonburg, N.C., received the third-place award of \$1,000.



"Interaction with Angus cows has helped shape my future," says Billy. "Our family income is derived solely from production agriculture: tobacco, pigs, cattle, corn and soybeans. Angus cattle play an important role in the cow-calf enterprise."

Billy has had success showing Angus heifers at the local, state, regional and national levels, but he says sharing livestock experiences and providing more educational opportunities for juniors are his greatest pleasures.

"I am proud to show Angus heifers," Billy says. "Genetic selection of bulls and heifers and their management is what produces a high-quality beef product that will meet consumer demands."

Along with his passion for raising and showing cattle, Billy has taken leadership roles, including president, of the North Carolina Junior Angus Association (NCJAA).

He says he is pleased that additional educational activities, such as clipping and fitting clinics and showmanship workshops for juniors, were implemented during his term as president of the NCJAA. Billy says he wants junior members who follow him to have the same chance at "lifelong friendships, leadership opportunities and travel" that he has had as a member of state and national Angus associations.

Billy takes full advantage of the many contests when he attends the NJAS. He has participated in the poster

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— Billy Lewis

contest, team sales, graphic design, quiz bowl, the Cook-Off, public speaking and photography contests. He has been recognized for his leadership in 4-H as an inductee into the North Carolina 4-H Honor Club, after serving numerous times as a Pitt County delegate to the North Carolina 4-H Congress.

Billy has served his community with a focus on children and the handicapped. Billy has volunteered since 2000 for the Handicapped Livestock Show at the North Carolina State Fair. He has made blankets for the Farmville Child Development Center, provided meals, Band-Aids,[®] school bags and cleaning products for the Greenville Family Violence Center, and made stress dolls for patient-counselor workshops for the behavioral health services department of Pitt Memorial Hospital. Billy also volunteered with the Walstonburg Fire Department and was named the Volunteer Fireman of the Year for 2004.

Once Billy earns a degree in livestock and poultry management from North Carolina State University, he will decide whether to pursue a job in the ag industry or return to the family farm.

“I plan on always being involved in the Angus industry as a breeder, junior advisor

“Being a part of the Angus breed has taught me a lot about responsibilities and communication skills.”

— Kenny Hopper

and supporter,” says the son of John and Miriam Lewis.

Kenny Hopper

Kenny Hopper, Leonardville, Kan., was named the fourth-place award winner and recipient of \$900.

The son of Garth and Teresa Hopper, Kenny intends to return to the family farm after earning a degree in business administration at Emporia State University.



“Being a part of the Angus breed has taught me a lot about responsibilities and communication skills,” Kenny says. “You have to be responsible when it comes to the managing and breeding of your cattle, and you have to have the right cattle for your customers or you don’t have an animal that will sell.”

Kenny can attest to the value of using Angus bulls because he has seen firsthand the difference it made in his family’s herd. Kenny is actively involved in the day-to-day chores of the farm, from planting, spraying, combining, swathing and baling hay to working the cattle with his father, maintaining fences and shearing trees.

Showing cattle since he was 6 years old, Kenny did not begin to show Angus until later in his show career.

Though Kenny enjoys success at showmanship and judging, he excels in public speaking, placing first (2004) and second (2005) in extemporaneous speaking at the Kansas Junior Angus Show. Kenny was a member of an award-winning Cook-Off team during the 2002 NJAS and a member of a second-place quiz bowl team in 2000.

Kenny has served as vice president and president of the Northeast Kansas Junior Angus Association, in numerous officer positions for the Leonardville Hustlers 4-H group, and in a variety of capacities as a member of the Riley County FFA chapter.

As captain of the football team at Riley County High School in his senior year, Kenny led his team to first-team All Flint Hills, and All League first-place team. He also participated in pep club and ecology club. In addition to his school activities, Kenny serves the Leonardville community by working to clean up four miles of highway, donating Bingo prizes and caroling at the local nursing home.

Through his years of showing cattle, Kenny has increased the family’s registered cow herd to 21 head alongside 85 commercial cows. He and his dad currently flush some of their registered cows and use the commercial cows as recipient females. They use Angus bulls on the remainder of the cow herd.

Kenny says he has made “a lot of lifelong friends and potential customers” while showing Angus cattle and plans to use all he has learned “to help our farm sell more registered Angus cattle.”

William Mayfield

William Mayfield, Pulaski, Tenn., has been selected as the fifth-place winner, receiving \$850.

As a member of a family recently named “Tennessee Angus Family of the Year,” Will’s involvement in his family’s farm operation makes him the third generation of farmers and Angus breeders.

“I have helped on the farm since I have been big enough to hold a feed scoop,” Will says. “Now I mix feed, help with pasture management, keep AHIR records and have obtained my AI certification, and am in charge of breeding our cattle.”

Raising and showing Angus cattle has brought Will awards on a county, state and national level. Will exhibited the reserve champion heifer at the South Central Beef Show, earned first-place honors in showmanship at the Giles County Fair for three years and enjoys helping younger showmen work with cattle.

“I have made many friends showing cattle,” Will says. “I am always excited about attending shows and seeing those friends. Some live in nearby counties and others live



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“I have helped on the farm since I have been big enough to hold a feed scoop.”

— William Mayfield

across the country, but the common bond is the same.”

Will currently serves as president of the Tennessee Junior Angus Association and has served as treasurer of the 4-H Honors club. He is a member of the Giles County Cattlemen’s Association and has served as lead parliamentarian in his FFA chapter.

Will is a leader in sports, earning a varsity letter in football and baseball all four years

of his high school career and serving as captain of the football team in 2005. As part of his variety of interests and talents, Will was also a member of the Spanish club, the spirit club, beta club, student council and a delegate to Boys State.

He will attend the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where he plans to major in biosystems engineering and animal science. With experience on 4-H and FFA

livestock judging teams, there is one other family tradition that Will wants to continue. “I hope to be on the UT livestock judging team just as my father was,” he says.

As for his future, the son of Mike and Susan Mayfield hopes that it holds “a little more cattle showing,” a master’s degree, employment in his field of study and raising Angus cattle.

