



# Next Generation

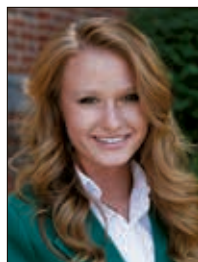
► Postcard from an NJAA director and state spotlights. Compiled by Kasey Brown.

## A letter to myself

*I wish you wouldn't worry; let it be. I'd say, have a little faith and you'll see. If I could write a letter to me. — Brad Paisley*

### Letter to young juniors

As I filled out my Gold Award application it hit me — my junior Angus career was coming to an abrupt end. I looked back over the past 12 years, and there were so many



Jena Lee Wagner

opportunities I had experienced that at the age of 9, when I first started, I never thought were possible. In these past two years, those impossible opportunities have become part of my everyday life.

For example, some of those unfathomable experiences include traveling across the country to represent the Angus breed at multiple shows and meeting people from all over the United States at Raising the Bar and Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) conferences. I wish I had written a letter to my 9-year-old self telling me not to worry, stress or be scared because the future had so much to offer. I wish I would have given myself some guidelines and advice before I jumped in headfirst and was overwhelmed. Well, I cannot write a letter to myself, but I can to the next junior.

To that next junior, I say never turn down a handshake. You never know where that

opportunity might lead. Try something new, something out of your comfort zone. The opportunity may be as simple as saying, “Hi,” or having a conversation with someone new. There will be nothing more expensive in your life than a missed opportunity and the regret that follows. Not all opportunities will end with success, but all will end with lessons learned.

Next, I challenge you to step up, and be a leader. Be the leader you would want to follow. You do not have to have a position or title to be a leader. Take action; inspire others to dream more, act more, do more and become more. A leader is someone who helps others grow.

I encourage you to surround yourself with a good support system. Surround yourself with helpful individuals who believe in your dreams and want to help you achieve them.

My support system is my family, of course, but my sister is the biggest supporter. My sister pushes me every day to be a better person because I never want to let her down. She is the person who knows when I need a hug or a kick in the behind to help me get back on track toward my goals. The best support comes from someone who will not let you take the shortcuts, but will hold your hand during the entire journey.

Last, but not least, hard work, dedication and determination are the three things that

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have to come before success every time. Most people miss opportunities because “it’s dressed in overalls and looks like work,” as Thomas Edison would say. Success involves a lot of hard work, and it does not always work out the way you planned, even if you do everything right. See the opportunity even in the failed attempt. If you put in hard work, then you are that much closer to coming out on top. So do not worry; have a little faith. You are the one in charge of your own destiny.

— Jena Lee Wagner, Montana

### Bronze and Silver awards

Matthew Antonio, Hydes, Md.; Eric Blythe, White City, Kan.; Tyler Blythe, White City, Kan.; Jessica Crowell, Elrod, Ala.; Michelle Keyes, Springfield, Neb.; Mikayla Kind, Jefferson, Wis.; Ashley McEwen, Bushnell, Ill.; and Erin Steele, Anita, Iowa, have earned the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Bronze and Silver awards, according to Jaclyn Upperman, events and education director of the American Angus Association in Saint Joseph, Mo.

**Antonio**, the 18-year-old son of Debra and David Antonio, attends Archbishop Curley High School and is a member of the NJAA and the Maryland Junior Angus Association, where he has served as treasurer.

He has participated in local, state, regional and national shows and showmanship contests, including the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS). Antonio has also submitted weight data to Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR®) and has consigned cattle in the Angus Event Sale. He was also involved with his local 4-H club for several years.

**Eric Blythe**, the 18-year-old son of Duane Blythe and Debbie Lyons-Blythe, attends White City High School and is a member

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Visit the NJAA web site  
at [www.njaa.info](http://www.njaa.info).

of the NJAA and the Kansas Junior Angus Association, where he has served as district director.

He has participated in state, regional and national shows. At the NJAS, Eric participated in quiz bowl and livestock judging contests and the Auxiliary-sponsored All-American *Certified Angus Beef*<sup>®</sup> (CAB<sup>®</sup>) Cook-Off. He also participated in the mentoring program in 2006 and 2007, the 2012 and 2013 LEAD conferences and the 2013 Raising the Bar conference.

Eric has submitted weight data to AHIR.

**Tyler Blythe**, the 18-year-old son of Duane Blythe and Debbie Lyons-Blythe, attends White City High School and is a member of the NJAA and the Kansas Junior Angus Association, where he has served as district director.

He has participated in state, regional and national shows. At the NJAS, Tyler participated in quiz bowl and livestock judging contests and the Cook-Off. He also participated in the mentoring program in 2006 and 2007, the 2012 and 2013 LEAD conferences and the 2013 Raising the Bar conference.

Tyler has submitted weight data to AHIR.

**Crowell**, the 17-year-old daughter of Randy and Bonnie Crowell, attends Northside High School and is a member of the NJAA and the Alabama Junior Angus Association, where she has served as royalty.

She has participated in local, state and national shows and showmanship contests. At the NJAS, Crowell participated in the photography and livestock judging contests. She also participated in the mentoring program in 2009.

Crowell has submitted weight data to AHIR. She has also served as secretary and president for her local 4-H livestock extension.

**Keyes**, the 18-year-old daughter of Kevin and Teresa Keyes, is a member of the NJAA and the Nebraska Junior Angus Association, where she has served as historian.

She has participated in state, regional and national shows. At the NJAS, Keyes participated in the mentoring program in 2013. She also participated in the 2013 and 2014 Raising the Bar conferences and the 2013 LEAD conference.

Keyes has submitted weight data to AHIR.

**Kind**, the 18-year-old daughter of Jeff and Deb Kind, attends Fort Atkinson High School and is a member of the NJAA and the Wisconsin Junior Angus Association, where she serves as membership coordinator and royalty. She also received the 2014 Wisconsin Angus Auxiliary Scholarship and participated in the 2007 Wisconsin Junior Angus Association LEAD conference.

Kind has participated in local and state shows and showmanship contests. She has submitted weight data to AHIR and consigned cattle at the Wisconsin Breeders' Futurity.

**McEwen**, the 18-year-old daughter of Brian and Cherish McEwen, attends Bushnell-Prairie City High School and is a member of the NJAA and the Illinois Junior Angus Association, where she has served as secretary, scrapbook chair and reporter. She currently serves as director.

She has participated in local, state, regional and national shows and showmanship contests. At the NJAS, McEwen participated in the photography, quiz bowl and livestock judging contests and the Cook-Off. She was a participant in the 2007 mentoring program and the 2013 LEAD conference.

McEwen has submitted weight data to AHIR and is actively involved in her local 4-H club and FFA chapter.

**Steele**, the 21-year-old daughter of Douglas and Lynette Steele, attends Iowa State University and is a member of the NJAA and the Iowa Junior Angus Association, where she has served as director, historian, second vice president and first vice president.

She has participated in national shows and showmanship contests. At the NJAS, Steele participated in team fitting, creative writing, team sales, extemporaneous speaking, livestock judging and the prepared speaking contest. She participated in the mentoring program in 2004 and 2005. She participated in the LEAD conferences from 2007-2012.

Steele has submitted weight data to AHIR and consigned cattle to the Steele Land and Livestock Sale and the Steele Land and Livestock Cow Sale.

► **Arkansas Jr. Angus Preview Show**, Little Rock, May 2-4



► **Jaden Tweedy** (left), Imboden, and **Tanner Wingert** (right), Rose Bud, won peewee showmanship.



► **Winners of junior showmanship** were (from left) **Ross Wingert**, Rose Bud, first; **Carson Cole**, second, and **Connor Cole**, third, both of Russellville; **Reid Wingert**, Rose Bud, fourth; and **Garett Beggs**, Sims, fifth.



► **Winners of senior showmanship** were (from left) **Kelsy Hockaday**, Nashville, first; **Will Pohlman**, Prairie Grove, second; **January Tweedy**, Imboden, third; **Sydney Hughes**, Nashville, fourth; and **Allie Martin**, Paragould, fifth.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KATY TUNSTILL

