



James Brown



Cheyenne Dixon



Chelsea Good



Rebecca Tokach



Kara Wilson

Colvin Scholars Announced

Five students earn Colvin Scholarships from Certified Angus Beef LLC.

by Jennifer Kiko

Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) recently awarded \$8,500 in Colvin Scholarship funds to five students pursuing careers in the beef industry and making a positive difference in their communities.

\$3,000 Colvin Scholarship Award:

- ▶ Rebecca Tokach of Saint Anthony, N.D., Kansas State University (K-State)

\$2,500 Colvin Scholarship Award:

- ▶ James Brown of Bozeman, Mont., Montana State University

\$1,000 Colvin Scholarship Awards:

- ▶ Kara Wilson of Orleans, Ind., University of Kentucky
- ▶ Cheyenne Dixon of Des Moines, N.M., Colorado State University (CSU)
- ▶ Chelsea Good of Parker, Colo., K-State

“We are thrilled to award these Colvin Scholarship funds to such aspiring and articulate individuals,” John Stika, CAB president, says. “Each recipient exemplifies determination and commitment, and I have no doubt they will succeed in their endeavors. The beef industry will benefit from these future leaders.”

The Colvin Scholarship Fund was developed in 1999 when Louis M. “Mick” Colvin retired as CAB executive director. The scholarships recognize his role in making dreams a reality and inspiring others to be their best. Colvin co-founded the CAB program in 1978, leading the company to establish the world’s leading brand of fresh beef.

To be eligible for the scholarship, entrants were asked to write an essay addressing the following statement: *Branded beef has gained in popularity. How will the consumer be able to determine the varying values and eating experiences that are encountered from these brands? What role(s) does the Certified Angus Beef® (CAB®) brand have in this determination?*

Rebecca Tokach of Saint Anthony, N.D., wrote that brands are popular because of their reputation and promise of quality, and they’re becoming increasingly popular in the grocery store. She says a brand is really about establishing a relationship with the customer. By achieving this goal, CAB can work to help consumers understand the value CAB brings to the table and why it provides an excellent eating experience. (See her essay, “Valuing the Brand,” on page 161.)

Tokach, winner of the \$3,000 scholarship, is a junior majoring in animal sciences and industry at K-State. She plans to attend graduate school in meat science or ruminant nutrition. She is president of Block & Bridle and on the College of Agriculture Student Council and Academic Competition Team Council. Tokach is also on the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) Board of Directors. She participates in Agricultural Ambassadors and the Meats Evaluation Team.

Tokach has accepted a summer internship with CAB’s marketing team — a position offered to the top scholarship winner.

James Brown of Bozeman, Mont., is a junior at Montana State University. He is

double-majoring in agricultural business and economics, and minoring in animal science. He plans to pursue his master’s degree in applied economics and become a meat industry market analyst.

In his essay, Brown wrote that marketing strategies determine the premium consumers are willing to pay, as value is both real and perceived. He believes that through aggressive brand promotion, the CAB brand has created consumer value for all Angus branded programs by creating recognition of the Angus name.

In addition to numerous college activities, Brown received the 2008 International Livestock Congress (ILC) Travel Fellowship. He is also an intern market analyst for Safeway Corp. of Denver’s meat and seafood procurement office.

Kara Wilson of Lexington, Ky., is a junior agricultural communications major at the University of Kentucky. Following graduation, she hopes to work for a state beef cattlemen’s association or state department of agriculture to promote the safe practices, marketing and consumption of beef. She is employed as a student worker at the University of Kentucky Meat Science Lab and her family’s beef operation, Wilson Angus.

Cheyenne Dixon of Des Moines, N.M., is a junior animal science and agricultural business major at CSU. She plans to attend graduate school and pursue a master’s degree in meat science. She participates on her school’s meats judging team and is employed at High Country Meats Quality Assurance and the CSU Meat Lab.

Chelsea Good of Parker, Colo., is a senior with a triple major in agricultural communications, public relations and political science at K-State. She plans to pursue a master's degree or seek a position in beef industry promotion. Good is vice president of Collegiate Cattlewomen and first vice president of National Agri-

Marketing Association (NAMA) at K-State. She is also involved in the debate team, student council, Collegiate Farm Bureau and Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT). She is currently a CAB industry information intern and formerly an *Angus Journal* intern.

Generous fundraising efforts from the

brand's licensed partners continue to grow the Colvin Scholarship Fund. One of the largest fundraisers is a golf tournament and auction in conjunction with the brand's annual conference. The 2008 golf event and title sponsorship was auctioned to Palmer Food Services/G&C Food Distributors.



Valuing the Brand

Colvin Scholarship winner shares essay.

by **Rebecca Tokach**



Prada, Guess® and Coach®. What do these three names have in common? They are top designer brands that young women between the ages of 18 and 35 want to own and display. Just as John Deere®, Ford® and Massey Ferguson® mean something to my dad, these brands signify top-quality accessories for women.

Why do these brands mean something to customers? Why are young women willing to pay \$200 to \$500 for a Coach purse? It is because of the reputation and the promise for quality that each of these brands carry. All of them have been around for more than half a century, proving to customers that their products are worth the extra money.

Many farmers continually go back to the yellow and green because of the quality and promise of service that John Deere tractors guarantee, even if they have to pay more.

Just as brand names have made a huge impact on clothing and tractor decisions, brands are becoming increasingly important in the grocery store. From Land 'O Lakes® to Sarah Lee® every family has its favorite brands. The phenomenon for branded products has spread past butter and bread and has hit the meat industry.

In 2005, more than 70 different USDA-recognized branded beef programs were offered on the market. With so many choices, it is hard for today's consumer to know the difference between each brand.

Each branded meat product promises its customer something different and unique. However, the *Certified Angus Beef*® (CAB®) brand has taken on the responsibility to go above and beyond the others. CAB helps its customers understand the different values and eating experiences among the brands.

The first step CAB employs is described in the article, "Branding Part 1: Building Loyalty," in *The Cattle Business Weekly*: "A brand is really about establishing a relationship with the customer. By achieving this goal, CAB can work to help consumers understand the value of [the brand] and why it provides an excellent eating experience."

According to the article, "A brand is a promise. You are promising



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what people can expect — be it quality, flavor, price, etc." CAB has done this by providing a high-quality product each time the consumer visits the meatcase.

A survey conducted by *Beef* magazine reports 58% of people look for a meat brand that has consistent quality every time as a top priority when shopping.

CAB satisfies them by setting specifications that require Modest or higher marbling, consistent ribeye size, "A" maturity and all of the other 10 specifications. These help ensure that consumers are always provided some of the most tender, flavorful meat on the market. Studies have shown that only one in 50 CAB steaks will be tough, vs. one in eight for other brands [based on USDA Select]. That kind of performance keeps consumers coming back to the meatcase time after time.

Take my aunt, for example, who lives in a large city and feeds a family of six. She does all the grocery shopping for the family and is constantly looking for the best values. However, the one place she does not sacrifice quality for price is in her beef selections.

My aunt says she keeps buying the CAB brand because of the flavor, tenderness and consistency. It may be more expensive than other brands, but she likes the guarantee of knowing every steak she cooks will taste as good as the last one.

As competition in the branded beef market increases, CAB must go further in building these connections. Educational opportunities could show customers the differences in marbling and cooking techniques can affect their eating experiences. CAB could utilize the backs of package labels as well as its web site to offer new recipes for today's busy cooks to try. The more CAB invests in customer education about high-quality products, the more likely they will keep buying the brand at premium prices.

The final step for CAB to keep satisfied customers is to implement and use feedback. Through online surveys or visiting with customers at the grocery stores, CAB can learn where the brand has excelled, but also where improvements can be made.

The past decade has seen a tremendous growth in the demand for natural and organic products. CAB has capitalized on that growth and offered its own natural brand extension for those consumers. If CAB continues to listen to customers and keeps trying to satisfy their desire for superior-quality meat products, it will continue to be the world's largest and most successful brand of beef.

Building and maintaining customer relationships will always be CAB's role in the branded-beef industry. That starts with the best products in the meatcase, but it is important that CAB take it to the next level and make the brand a part of every customer's life. To the extent that CAB can develop long-lasting relationships with customers, it will have the same sort of reputation and guarantee for quality as John Deere has for my dad, or Coach has for me.