



'American Dreams' Come True

Auxiliary scholarship winners announced at the 2007 NJAS.

by **Mathew Elliott**

Each year the American Angus Auxiliary awards junior members with generous scholarship amounts. This year was no different, with \$10,000 in scholarships being given to the top five young women and top five young men representing 10 different states.

To win one of the Auxiliary scholarships, applicants must be graduating seniors nominated by their state or regional association. The actual scholarship application consists of 16 sections in which applicants include everything from their biographical and farm information to a 300-word Angus story and three reference letters to accompany their high school transcripts.

The applicants then send in their applications to be judged, and the winners are announced at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS).

This year's award winners are:

Emma Collins

Emma Collins, Morton, Miss., won the first-place, \$1,200 scholarship in the girls' division. Collins is the fifth generation in her



PHOTO BY CHELSEA GOOD

► Emma Collins (right), Morton, Miss., receives the first-place female scholarship from Auxiliary Secretary-Treasurer Michelle Rieff, Bentonville, Ark.



PHOTO BY CHELSEA GOOD

► Five young ladies won the right to compete for Miss American Angus and were awarded scholarships. From left are Emma Collins, Gretchen Frost, Britney Creamer, Danielle Foster and Ashlyn Carter.

family to produce Angus in Mississippi and Louisiana.

"I cannot imagine my life without Angus cattle," Collins says. "My family and I own and manage a small Angus herd. Since I was very young, I have been involved in all aspects caring for the cattle."

Collins' responsibilities with her family's herd include helping with feeding, heat detection, recordkeeping, herd health, halter-training, and care and grooming of show cattle.

"Having cattle and being an active NJAA (National Junior Angus Association) member has taught me that hard work pays off," Collins says. "I have learned teamwork, money management, recordkeeping and to set goals."

These skills have paid off for Collins, who has won many awards in 4-H, the National FFA Organization and Mississippi Junior Angus Association programs. Currently the Mississippi Junior Angus reporter, Mississippi Beef Council

director of the Mississippi Junior Cattlemen's Association and Mississippi Angus Queen, Collins also stays busy in the showring.

"My family and I have attended the National Junior Angus Shows since I was 4 years old," Collins says, "and I have participated in the showring and many of the educational contests."

Collins plans to attend Hinds Community College in fall 2007 and then transfer to a university to complete her education. While in school, Collins plans to major in animal science and minor in political science.

"Angus cattle, the beef industry and the agriculture industries are very important to me, and I will pursue a career in the industry," Collins says.

Ashlyn Carter

Ashlyn Carter, Upland, Ind., received the \$1,050 second-place scholarship.

Carter and her family began working with Angus cattle in 1997 with six heifers, four cows and one herd sire on five acres. Since then they've moved to a new location that has allowed them to expand to 165 acres, renting 130 acres and now having around 100 head of Angus cattle.

Carter helps her family base their breeding on solid genetics, uniform expected progeny



differences (EPDs) and all-around functional cattle.

“When we make our sire selections, we look for bulls that not only produce strong maternal traits, but also stout bulls



Ashlyn Carter

that appeal to our commercial market,” Carter says.

Carter is proud of where her family’s program is going. Last year Carter Family Angus had its first production sale, selling 34 head of Angus cattle.

“Angus cattle have completely consumed my life since I was 8 years old and led my first show heifer, Tina, off the trailer,” Carter says.

Crediting the Angus industry with giving her countless opportunities, Carter says she has been able to meet many wonderful people that have also influenced her.

In addition to being a hobby or a business, Angus cattle provide a family tie, Carter says. “These awesome creatures also allowed for my father and me to build a solid relationship based on our love of Angus cows.”

Carter says that Carter Family Angus has come a long way since the purchase of their first heifers in 1997, and she is excited about the future.

“When I look into the future, it is full of fields dotted with hundreds of black Angus cattle grazing across the pastures,” Carter says. “Angus cattle will forever be a part of my life, and I look forward to sharing my love and passion for the breed with my own kids someday.”

Danielle Foster

Danielle Foster, Niles, Mich., is the winner of the \$1,000 third-place award.

Foster remembers family vacations that took her all over the country showing cattle. She also remembers having to stand on the sideline and watch her brother showing, but then she hit that magical age, and it was her turn in the ring.

“There are things in life that your passion for is indescribable,” Foster says. “Angus cattle fit into that category in my life.”

It was that passion that Foster displayed when she was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, and there was a possibility of not being able to show because of the physical demands.

“My determination to succeed, my love of Angus cattle, and the support of my family and friends helped me to persist during the difficult time,” Foster says.

Foster comes from a family farm, raising crops and cattle. She says that together they work on everything.

“Growing up on a farm has instilled many qualities in my brother and me and has taught us many things that the average child would never learn,” Foster says. “I believe the hard-working-farm-girl attitude will help in my future.”

She credits the Michigan association and NJAA for the opportunities that she’s had



Danielle Foster

to learn something new — whether it be through the contests that taught her presentation skills and beef facts to the showing.

“With all I have gained through my years of raising and showing Angus cattle, I have no

doubt that it will forever be a part of my life,” Foster says.

Foster plans to major in business and communications, then attend law school to become a prosecuting attorney or enter the field of broadcast journalism.

“Showing cattle has made me who I am today,” Foster says. “It doesn’t matter if I win or lose. I walk away from each show with a smile on my face because of the people and the experiences.”

Britney Creamer

Britney Creamer, Montrose, Colo., won the \$900 fourth-place scholarship.

Creamer wasn’t your typical kindergartner. At 6 a.m., while most kids were still in their beds, Creamer was out with her dad in their old truck checking and feeding their cows. She still remembers jumping out of the truck and announcing, “Dad, it’s a heifer!”

That same excitement is still with her today as she has gained a wealth of knowledge working beside her family.

“Only yesterday, my main responsibilities were feeding and caring for my show animals,” Creamer says. “Today, I’m in charge of all of the show cattle.”

Not only is she in charge of the show cattle, but she is also very active in detecting heat in cows, freeze-branding, recording data on their computer, clerking at the family’s bull sale and sitting in the kitchen with her family, determining which bulls to use.



Britney Creamer

She credits her family for believing

strongly in junior Angus activities. “My participation in junior Angus shows across the United States has played a tremendous role in my decision to remain active in the agriculture industry.”

Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) conferences have also played a large role in Creamer’s education and experiences. Attending several conferences, she says, has increased both her industry and Angus knowledge while making her a better leader. Her Angus experiences have also given her valuable lessons and lifelong friends.

Creamer plans to study agricultural business and Spanish in college, but she says her thoughts will never be far from her family’s ranch.

“Were the breeding decisions I made good?” Creamer wonders. “Did my favorite cow have another show champion? I’ll probably even miss getting up on Saturdays to help around the ranch.”

Gretchen Frost

Gretchen Frost, Tallula, Ill., is the fifth-place scholarship winner, receiving \$850.

Frost attended her first cattle show in a stroller, but she wasn’t convinced right away. For years she tagged along to shows to watch her older siblings in the barn and in the ring. During those years she often wondered why her siblings were always so happy about a

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cattle show; it just looked like hard work to her.

"I would watch them smile after showing and not even winning," Frost explains. "How could you be happy about that? Then I realized all that this Angus business had to offer."

Some of Frost's best friendships developed from meeting people at Angus shows, which has allowed her to build a network of friends across the country.



Gretchen Frost

Frost has many special memories about her involvement with Angus events. How their family always "vacationed" at NJAs and the memories that accompany those shows. A few of Frost's favorite memories include caravanning with friends, the breakdown in the middle of nowhere, being the only one small enough to crawl into the stuffed trailer nose, celebrating birthdays, and discovering that her siblings really weren't all that bad.

Her parents have maintained their small Angus herd so that she and her siblings could continue to have those special experiences.

Frost's future plans include completing an undergraduate degree in animal science and obtaining a doctorate in veterinary medicine, specializing in cattle embryology. She knows that her Angus experiences have given her the solid foundation upon which to build her future, and she has learned many life lessons in the barn.

"The thrill at the birth of each new calf is sometimes tempered with the tears at the death of a baby calf," Frost says. "I have come to accept that as a part of life. Hard work does pay off ... eventually. Opportunities are everywhere, just look for them."

Andrew Rogen

Andrew Rogen, Brandon, S.D., is the first-place winner in the boys' division, winning \$1,200.

At his school, Rogen answers to "Hey, Cowboy," yet what his classmates don't realize is how much of an effect these cows have had on his life. Rogen is a first-generation Angus producer with a herd of 35 cows. He began showing cattle when he was 8.

"My first year in the showing was quite an adventure," Rogen says, "with excitable heifers, no experience, but a lot of enthusiasm."

In 2000, Rogen went to Iowa for his first NJAS. He was excited to show against juniors from across the country, but he learned an important lesson when he placed at the bottom of his class.

"Winning isn't everything," Rogen says. "This realization led to my involvement in the South Dakota Junior Angus Association (SDJAA). I helped organize the first South Dakota Cook-Off team and also rejuvenated the state's quiz bowl team."

While becoming more involved with the SDJAA, Rogen began taking on leadership positions. He is currently serving his second term as president of the SDJAA. His responsibilities include working with advisors for all of the junior activities within the state.

Last year, Rogen helped organize the first streaming video online coverage of the NJAS and was pleased with its success.

"The program was a huge success, with 4,838 viewers from three countries, five provinces and 44 states," Rogen says. "This is a way for me to give something back to the juniors, their families and the Angus industries."



► Andrew Rogen (right), Brandon, S.D., receives the first-place male scholarship from Rieff.

This fall Rogen will be attending South Dakota State University, majoring in biology. He plans to further his education at Iowa State University by pursuing a doctorate in veterinary medicine.

Kevin Gleason

Kevin Gleason, Midlothian, Texas, won the second-place, \$1,050 scholarship.

Gleason sees the conclusion of his show career not as an ending, but as a beginning. This beginning, he says, will involve Gleason



Kevin Gleason

Cattle Co. soon possibly changing its look.

"For the past 10 years, quality females were kept for my brother and me to show or to keep as replacement heifers," Gleason says. "Now that my brother and I will both be

in college, striving to raise that perfect show heifer isn't nearly as important."

Gleason wants to move toward cattle that have the "look" as well as a balanced set of growth, maternal and carcass EPDs. He has learned just how valuable good Angus cattle can be and truly believes in the breed's motto, "The Business Breed." In the future, Gleason plans to put more time into marketing and utilizing carcass ultrasound to build his herd for the future.

Gleason credits Angus cattle as a learning tool. Since the age of 6, he has been traveling to livestock shows and sales. At 14, he attended his first LEAD Conference.

"Through LEAD I've learned that I can be a leader, and that I am a leader," Gleason says. "Being involved in the NJAA has given me the confidence to push myself through playing guitar and helping with devotions at LEAD, public speaking through team sales, and participating in the various contests the NJAA offers."

In Texas, Gleason has served as an officer for the past six years; two years were spent as president of the Texas Junior Angus Association (TJAA). This fall he plans to attend Blinn College and participate on the livestock judging team. From there he plans to attend Texas A&M University to complete his degree.

“My goal is to enter into agricultural sales while continuing to improve my Angus herd,” Gleason says. “One of my ambitions is to one day judge the NJAS.”

Trevor Whiteside

Trevor Whiteside, Queenstown, Md., was awarded the \$1,000 third-place scholarship.

Whiteside has been around Angus cattle his entire life; however, the NJAA has only recently become part of that. In spite of this, he did not hesitate to become involved and take every advantage that the NJAA offers to its members.

“It has made me a new person,” Whiteside says. “From the new friends that I’ve made, the amount of responsibility I have achieved to the leadership roles I have taken on, there are no regrets.”

Whiteside is proud to be the foundation of their Angus program and hopes it continues in the future. He and his brother own a combined 35 head of Angus cows in partnership,

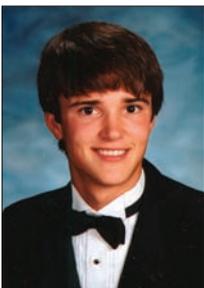
where they share many responsibilities and knowledge with each other. In addition to those responsibilities, Whiteside is also active in his family’s herd.

“I am extremely confident in the Angus breed and all the prospects that it offers,” Whiteside says.

Throughout his time with the Maryland Junior Angus Association (MJAA) and NJAA, Whiteside has taken on several responsibilities. He is currently the reporter for the MJAA and has participated in the photography, creative writing and quiz bowl contests at the NJAA level. Whiteside says these events have expanded his knowledge and viewpoint about the association and the beef industry.

This fall, Whiteside plans to attend Virginia Tech, where he will major in animal sciences and eventually study pharmaceutical sciences. Even with college in his life, Whiteside plans to stay involved in the junior associations.

“The Angus breed will be around for a long time, and I plan to be a part of it for the rest of my life.”



Trevor Whiteside

Wesley Ruby

Wesley Ruby, Greene, Iowa, was named the \$900 scholarship winner.

Ruby knows that most academic institutions are looking for diversity, responsibility and problem-solving skills in their students, and he’s glad to know that those qualities are found on his farm.



Wesley Ruby

He sees diversity as allowing him to look at things in different ways. “Working with my dad on a cattle and crop farm has taught me that Angus is a must in our cow herd,” Ruby says. “When I started showing Angus, I found that you could be diverse within the breed, due to the large genetic variation.”

This diversity allowed Ruby to analyze which bulls would be best-suited for their females. He also worked on trying assorted feeding regimens with different rations best-suited to his animals.

Another lesson Ruby has learned through his time in the NJAA is responsibility. He says it is a tool he knows that he will use for the rest of his life.

“I was always the kid that liked to help around the farm but never wanted to accept the day-to-day responsibilities,” Ruby says. “I soon realized that in order to raise and show cattle, I needed to mature and step up to the task. The rewards come when the cows calve successfully, and a healthy herd is grazing in the pasture.”

Ruby spent some time as president of the Iowa Junior Angus Association (IJAA) and learned a few problem-solving skills.

“I felt the need to improve membership involvement and help institute a workshop that offered leadership training to officers and directors,” Ruby says.

Ruby implemented the workshop from previous leadership conferences that he’d attended. With the juniors’ enthusiasm, the state of Iowa is up to meeting the challenge of hosting the 2008 NJAS.

Ruby says the numerous Angus shows, field days, sales and leadership conferences he has attended have helped develop his skills.

“I am ready to let Hawkeye Community College know this Iowa farm boy is ready for the challenge.”

Joseph Jackson

Joseph Jackson, Salvisa, Ky., has been awarded the fifth-place, \$850 scholarship.

Jackson can usually be found in the barn, taking care of his show heifers and practicing for shows during the summers.

“I have shown Angus cattle since an early age and have always enjoyed it,” Jackson says.

Jackson grew up on his family’s 180-acre Dividing Ridge Farm, which is primarily an Angus cattle reproduction operation.



Joseph Jackson

He has been active in artificial insemination (AI), showing, and selling or keeping the offspring of those cattle. Recently, Jackson’s father was paralyzed due to spinal cord compression caused by multiple myeloma cancer, and Jackson has taken over the day-to-day operations. Now he is in charge of feeding and harvesting hay, as well as monitoring cattle reproduction.

“Basically, I am running the entire farm single-handedly with the advice of my dad,” Jackson says.

Through 4-H, Jackson has always stayed busy. He recently competed on the 2005 State 4-H Livestock Skillathon Team, where he identified breeds, feedstuffs, cuts of meats and solved calculations pertaining to livestock.

“I led my team to winning 10th place in the national contest at the North American International Livestock Expo (NAILE),” Jackson says. “I also participate in many livestock judging contests.”

Jackson is currently majoring in biosystems and agricultural engineering, where he plans to pursue a career in the biomedical industry.

“The reason for that is because I am a diabetic. I have made it my mission to improve upon diabetes technology,” Jackson says. “That does not mean that I will leave agriculture. I plan to start my own Angus cattle farm, because that is what I have grown up with, and I just love farming too much to consider a future without a farm.”

