

# FACES<sup>OF</sup> Leadership



A total of 93 juniors gathered in Springdale, Ark., for the 2014 Faces of Leadership Conference.

***Juniors from the Hereford, Maine-Anjou and Shorthorn associations gathered in Springdale, Ark., to learn about the beef industry and to build leadership skills.***

by ***Bridget Beran***

**H**ereford youth congregated in Springdale, Ark., for the second annual Faces of Leadership Convention July 27-30. Paired with the American Junior Maine-Anjou Association (AJMAA) and the American Junior Shorthorn Association (AJSA), National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members had the opportunity to visit the University of Arkansas (U of A),

Fayetteville, Ark.; Tyson Foods Inc. Discovery Center, Springdale, Ark.; and Crystal Bridges Museum, Bentonville, Ark., as well as Bacon Cattle and Sheep, Siloam Springs, Ark., and Willow Springs Cattle Co., Prairie Grove, Ark.

The Faces of Leadership Convention combined the NJHA's Program for Reaching Individuals Determined to Excel (PRIDE) Convention, the

AJMAA's National Youth Leadership Convention (NYLC) and the AJSA's Knowledge Empowers Youth (KEY) Convention to provide juniors in all three breeds the opportunity to network and to establish friendships with juniors in other breeds. This year 66 NJHA, 12 AJMAA and 15 AJSA youth from 22 states decided to enhance their leadership skills and knowledge at the Faces of Leadership Convention.



During a workshop about teamwork and communication, sisters Kendi and Seely Sayre, Arenzville, Ill., try to build a card tower. The cards had important leadership traits written on them.

“We see a different aspect when we pair with other breeds and we get to interact with their youth in a different way than we would in a showing,” says Jace Prough, an NJHA member from Altus, Okla.

One benefit of PRIDE is that it allows juniors to interact with one another away from the competitive arenas that are essential at shows. Juniors meet and build lifelong friendships while at PRIDE while also learning to be better leaders and build knowledge and skills to benefit their breed and industry.

“Past PRIDEs that I’ve attended have been so much fun and I loved the friends that I met,” says Keayla Harr, Jeromesville, Ohio. “It’s a great way to get to know new people and get your thoughts and opinions out there. It’s a great opportunity to make yourself known and heard in the Hereford breed.”

The event kicked off with a presentation from former National FFA President Levy Randolph, Hemet, Calif., and former National FFA Eastern Region Vice President Tiffany Rogers, Niles, Mich., who spoke to juniors about the importance of teamwork and communication. Through a series of activities, juniors worked on verbal and nonverbal communication.

“Once you’ve established a relationship with someone, you can communicate more effectively,” Levy says. “However, when we’re communicating with someone we don’t have that relationship with, we have to be more clear and work to help them understand us.”

Krista Cupp, Tyson’s customer relations specialist, encouraged juniors to share their agriculture stories via social media. Krista explained to attendees that because less than 2% of America is directly involved with agriculture, farmers and ranchers must



Faith Bomstad, Siloam Springs, Ark., leads her group through an exercise in communication to get all the seated members of the group standing.

work harder now than ever to show urban consumers the importance and benefits of agriculture.

Juniors then traveled to the Bacon ranch for an evening of cattle and yard games. With both sheep and Herefords, including World Hereford Conference grand champion polled Hereford bull, Remittal-West Game Day ET 74Y, the Bacons shared their operation with Hereford, Shorthorn and Maine-Anjou youth.

“I like going to farm tours because you get to see how other people work their cattle and what

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NJHA Director Cody Jensen, Courtland, Kan., explains to keynote speaker Levy Randolph the method his group used to get their team out of their seats.



The Bacon family treated attendees to delicious food, a tour of their cattle and club lamb facility and a night of fun and games. Pictured (l to r) are: Justin Bacon; Reighly Blakley, AJMAA president; Dustin Smith, AJSJA president; Brady Jensen, NJHA chairman; and Debbie, Craig and Amanda Bacon.



Craig Bacon welcomes attendees to his farm and shares highlights about Bacon Cattle and Sheep.

they're doing differently," says Abbey Farley, Alcester, S.D. "It's nice to see all these different techniques so you can adapt and improve how you do things at home."

The next day, juniors visited the Tyson Discovery Center. Attendees were able to tour the research and development plant and to see the

production side of the beef industry, as well as to learn about available internships that Tyson offers.

Craig Bacon, Tyson's senior vice president of corporate research and development, explained Tyson's morals and company standards and how its commitment to family and integrity makes it a strong company. He challenged juniors to develop

their own mission statement and tenants for their associations.

"I really enjoyed Tyson Foods," says Jena McCall, Emory, Texas. "I like facts and numbers so I felt like I learned a lot while we were visiting Tyson about the production side of our industry. I learned a lot about our industry overall throughout this trip. There's more to it than I thought, personally. I'm taking away a lot more facts and new information than I expected."

Youth then traveled to the Crystal Bridges Museum, an art museum renowned for its ability to partner nature, architecture and different types of art for a truly beautiful experience. They also had the opportunity to visit the original Wal-Mart store and museum. Juniors finished their day in Branson, Mo., aboard the Showboat Branson Belle, where they were entertained by musicians and a comedian plus participated in the annual PRIDE dance.

The Faces of Leadership started again Tuesday, bright and early, at the U of A. Home to the only agricultural law program in the country, the U of A is a partner to the National Agricultural Law Center (NALC), Fayetteville, Ark. Representatives from NALC spoke to the youth about policies that could potentially hurt or help the future of agriculture and the information that the NALC provides to help farmers and ranchers be more informed about their rights and the laws that affect them. Juniors spoke passionately about their concerns regarding right-to-farm laws and water rights and other issues that are affecting agriculture across the nation.

Attendees also participated in workshops about advocacy and leadership while at the U of A. After being split into groups, juniors



Juniors learn how to make sausage and other pizza toppings at Tyson Foods Inc.



Carlee Meeks, Taylor, Neb., and Kagney Collins, Flanagan, Ill., make a pizza while at Tyson Foods Inc.



Junior directors with Craig Bacon in front of an antique Tyson Foods Inc. truck.



U of A professors spoke to juniors about poultry, agricultural law, leadership and communications.



Juniors work as a team to come up with a message to offer animal rights activists as if they were members of a state fair board.



NJHA Chairman Brady Jensen, Courtland, Kan., serves as the ringman for a leadership traits auction demonstrating how the group valued certain traits over others.



Kyle Longcore, Cedar Springs, Mich., tweets his ag story during a social media workshop led by Krista Cupp, Tyson Foods Inc. customer relations specialists.



Jena McCall, Emory, Texas, tries to find the answers to the Wal-Mart Museum scavenger hunt.



AHA Executive Vice President Craig Huffhines discusses the future of the beef industry.

planned how they, as a team, would respond to animal rights activists. They prepared a mission statement on behalf of a state fair about showing cattle and market sales. Their goal was to explain the fair's point of view to a media outlet after being trained to give a concise, direct and informative statement.

"The advocacy workshop was really beneficial. I think it's important that we learn about how to talk to animal rights activists and how to communicate with them effectively as well as see their side of the story," says Katie Burns, Coulterville, Ill.

Youth also had the opportunity to participate in a leadership traits auction, where participants had to try to buy as many of the top 10 leadership traits as possible, but they had to prioritize how much each trait was worth to them. These traits, including honesty, supportiveness, intelligence and others, were chosen by top business leaders across the world as the most desirable leadership traits in their employees.

Also while they were at U of A, juniors learned how to "call the hogs," which is a tradition for the Arkansas Razorbacks.

The convention concluded with a visit to Willow Springs Cattle Co. and the Walker family farm. Eric Walker, owner, and Cody Green, show and sale cattle manager, showed attendees around their extensive show barn and explained the operation. Arkansas FFA officers Bryce Rohr, Matthew Smith, Mark Dement and Morgan Faulkner



Faces of Leadership concluded with youth enjoying ice cream sundaes and an evening at the water park compliments of the Walker family.



Attendees competed in a relay race while at Willow Springs Cattle Co.



Eric Walker welcomes Faces of Leadership attendees to his farm and explains his family's background and involvement in the cattle business.

were invited to speak and to share a little bit about agriculture in Arkansas.

Lessons that juniors learn while at the Faces of Leadership benefit not only them but also their state associations. "I'd heard from so many other Hereford juniors in Texas about what a great experience this convention was and I've wanted to go since I was little," says Molly Booth, Whitney, Texas, a first-time attendee. "I'm excited to take the lessons I've learned and bring them back to Texas and help

encourage and educate our kids and hopefully they'll come to PRIDE with me next year."

First-time and veteran PRIDE attendees agree that it's a great way to expand a junior's Hereford experience in a multitude of ways.

"PRIDE is always a great experience and you make a lot of new friends," Abbey adds. "You learn so many things about your breed and you get to visit new places. You learn to be a leader and speak for yourself." **HW**