

# We Couldn't Do It Without You

As a member of the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA), there is an endless number of opportunities to compete, to get involved and to connect with people from all over the country. So what is there to do once you "age out"? It may seem as if you have to sit on the sidelines at junior shows and events, but there is nothing that says you cannot be a leader.

Take the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) for example. There are events for the adults to get involved in as well. Judges are a must, especially when it comes to the many contest and scholarship opportunities that are offered at the JNHE. Adults



Steven Green

can be there for their states and can help the juniors prepare for interactive competitions like the Certified Hereford Beef (CHB®) Grill-off or the illustrated speech contests.

An event that caught a slew of attention from

exhibitors across the nation this summer was the state tailgate. Teams from different states came together to show off their master tailgating skills and to share different foods and ideas. Without the adults being there and helping serve food and drinks, the tailgate would not have been the success it was.

Apart from the events, the Hereford youth need adults to keep them on schedule. It is easy to get sidetracked when hanging out with friends from all across the country, and sometimes an adult is needed to remind youth of event times. Hereford youth will always need adult members to keep the JNHE alive and thriving.

Adults can play a large role in their home states. Most states have a state show or regional show they attend that is organized and carried out by adult members. If you do not have a state show, I encourage you to come together and to find a way to work with the juniors and to organize a show.

Although some states do not have that many exhibitors,

fellowship and agriculture advocacy are great ways to meet new friends and to start connections that will last a lifetime. In open shows, where adults can also exhibit, the adults need to be involved in the lives of their juniors. Having a role model and a supporter means the world to Hereford youth of all ages. I remember starting with Hereford cattle and the amount of support and love I received from adult members had a huge influence on my life.

Apart from the contests and shows, adult members have a role in the juniors' everyday lives. As technology has advanced and life's pace continues to speed up, it is easy for juniors to lose focus of our true mission as livestock producers.

Adult members need to be involved in the numerous challenges juniors may face and to advise them in their decisions. With all of the misleading information in the world, especially related to agriculture, it is the adults' responsibility as leaders and role models to develop the next group of men and women who will one day be the voice of this industry. I encourage adult members to stay involved within the NJHA and to be there to help a child when he or she needs to be picked up.

Just because people get older does not mean they aren't young at heart. I encourage adults to get involved, to be influential and to

represent the Hereford breed with integrity. As a junior, I recognize the importance of adult mentoring and guidance to make decisions that will reflect on me as a person. There is always a place for adults to be in tune with the NJHA and its members. **HW**




**Chairman**  
Amanda Bacon, [amanda.bacon@okstate.edu](mailto:amanda.bacon@okstate.edu)

**Vice chairman**  
Taryn Adcock, [trose@adcockshowcattle.com](mailto:trose@adcockshowcattle.com)

**Communications chair**  
Kelsey Stimpson, [kscattle@mindspring.com](mailto:kscattle@mindspring.com)

**Leadership chair**  
Jessica Middleswarth, [jess.middleswarth@gmail.com](mailto:jess.middleswarth@gmail.com)

**Fundraising chair**  
Cody Jensen, [cjensen8@ksu.edu](mailto:cjensen8@ksu.edu)

**Membership chair**  
Kelsey Repenning, [kelsey.repenning@gmail.com](mailto:kelsey.repenning@gmail.com)

**Directors**  
Mason Blinson, [meblinson@gmail.com](mailto:meblinson@gmail.com)  
Austin Cole, [austin.cole132@topper.wku.edu](mailto:austin.cole132@topper.wku.edu)  
Steven Green, [gwherefords@yahoo.com](mailto:gwherefords@yahoo.com)  
Brooke Jensen, [brookerjensen@outlook.com](mailto:brookerjensen@outlook.com)  
Bailey McKay, [baileymckay14@yahoo.com](mailto:baileymckay14@yahoo.com)  
Tommie Lynne Mead, [tommie\\_lynne@hotmail.com](mailto:tommie_lynne@hotmail.com)

**Director of youth activities**  
Amy Cowan  
P.O. Box 014059, Kansas City, MO 64101  
816-842-3757, [acowan@hereford.org](mailto:acowan@hereford.org)

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