

Friendships, Sweater Vests, Role Model

Chris Stephens invested seven years of his life working as the American Hereford Association (AHA) youth director. Those years can be described as fun, challenging and motivating.



Chris Stephens

Everyone who worked with or watched Chris realized he brought his passion for the Hereford breed into all that he did. From planning events as marvelous and flawless as the 2008 “Music on the Mountain” in Ft. Payne, Ala., to the dynamic and organized layout of every Junior National

Hereford Expo, Chris exemplifies characteristics of professionalism and servant-hearted leadership.

While working at AHA, Chris dedicated himself to every family involved in the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA). The majority of these wonderful families support the many programs AHA offers and have embraced the love for the Hereford breed that thrives today.

When the NJHA board asked Chris who the most influential individuals were in his life, Chris said, “Bob Call, Eddie Sims and Bill and Jo Ellard, without hesitation.” Each of these people has left more than just a fingerprint on Chris’ life, and Chris strives to carry their words and advice with him each day. Here are a few examples Chris shared with us:

Bob Call: “His positive outlook and passion for getting everyone on board as a team and focusing on the goal. He taught me a lot about teamwork and how to be a team player while getting the ‘troups’ gathered.”

Eddie Sims: “He defines hard work. Working hard to be the best at everything you set out to do; if you’re a youth director, be the best youth director you can be, Eddie would say. And always be professional and accountable and possess a winning attitude.”

Bill and Jo Ellard: “Set goals, follow through and if you

fail, don’t give up, keep trying. Success comes from those who try and keep trying.’ Bill wrote me this quote not long after I started at AHA, and I still carry it around with me in my day planner. Never underestimate the power of positive motivation,” Chris says.

Being a positive influence on the lives of Hereford juniors and families was not just a priority for Chris but a lifestyle. Touching and influencing countless youth who have grown up in the Hereford breed, especially those who have served on the NJHA board of directors, are just a few glimpses of the legacy with which Chris has imprinted the AHA.

It has been such a blessing to have Chris’ servant leadership and positive attitude influencing not only my life but the countless people throughout the Hereford Association the last seven years. It is with a sad heart we say goodbye to him as he pursues a new career path at Kansas State.

Life is not about winning titles, trophies or any award; it’s about the difference you can make in the lives of others on a day-to-day basis. Chris has touched the NJHA and AHA and continues to make a lasting difference throughout every area of his life. Thank you Chris for all the wonderful and lasting memories! **HW**

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