

# Retiring Board Reflections

It seems like just yesterday that Kara Eschbach walked my way after giving her retiring speech and handed me her burgundy jacket. Although the jacket she passed down to me didn't even come close to fitting, the symbol of responsibility was still there. Now here I am closing in on the time when I will give my retiring address, and it got me thinking of what advice I would give to those who are considering running for the board and, eventually, those who will get the retirees' jackets.

To those thinking about running for the board, I have one basic piece of advice: take the decision to run seriously. If you get on, you will become a leader of a huge association with a lot of juniors looking to you to make important decisions.

However, running for the board is a great experience no matter what. If you are a candidate, I will tell you that it is very important to work as much as you can. Helping at the JNHE is when the delegates and juniors will see if you have what it takes to be on the board. Also, the connections you make and the juniors you meet while working will help you greatly once you are elected. If you are thinking about running for the board, be prepared to work hard but also know that you will make some of your best friends while running.

To future board members, I would like to share some lessons I learned

during my three years on the board that I hope will help you. First of all, be prepared to work, and work hard. The worst thing board members can do is to forget or neglect the responsibility they have to the board. Understand that you will have to give up things that you might rather do to fulfill a responsibility, but that is much better than not fulfilling it. Do not let the occasional failure discourage you from trying to get something else done. Listen to your advisors; they are a great source of wisdom and will definitely be there for you whenever you need them.

Most importantly do not take these things for granted if elected to the board. Do not take your family for granted; you will need their help a lot in order to fulfill your responsibilities.

Do not take your responsibility for granted; the delegates who voted for you voted for an individual who they thought could lead the association and make it better. Do not let them down. And lastly, do not take your fellow board members for granted; it is important to work together to get things done, and more than likely, they will become like family in the end.

I hope this is helpful to those juniors out there thinking about running for the board. If you need more advice, just let me know, and then tell me to stop if I start giving you too much advice.

— *Jake Metch, NJHA leadership chair*

Being on the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) board has been a rewarding experience. I can't believe how fast these past three years have flown by, to think I will be handing off my jacket this summer in Kansas City.

I encourage all junior members to run for this great board. Representing the Hereford breed and the juniors has been an honor and a privilege. Not only have I gained leadership experience, but I have also gained industry knowledge and increased my knowledge of this breed.

These past three years have allowed me to make connections with Hereford breeders all over the country that I will have in the future. Being on the board has also allowed me to get to know many juniors who will be the future leaders of the Hereford breed.

My advice to junior members is to get involved in this great breed that we know, whether it is running for the NJHA board, getting involved in your state association or getting involved with contests at the Junior National Hereford Expo.

— *Justin Bacon, NJHA fundraising chair*

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