



Katrisha Thomas

Her voice is the first one you hear when you call the American Hereford Association (AHA); her face is the first one you see when you visit the office — Katrisha Thomas, Kansas City, Mo., has served as the AHA receptionist since April 2005. She started as a temporary employee, but was promoted to permanent status. Katrisha answers the phone, directs calls, sends and receives faxes, helps with accounts payable and has recently learned to record transfers.

After encouragement from a high school teacher, Katrisha began receptionist work upon graduation for the McDonald's Corporation. However, that wasn't exciting enough for Katrisha, who likes variety, so she went to work for a mental health facility in Manhattan, Kan. There she scheduled appointments and taught a job-seeking skills class to patients who were able to complete rehabilitation.

Although she no longer uses certain skills from the facility, Katrisha enjoys the variety of experiences the AHA has offered her. Because she lacks a background in agriculture, Katrisha says working at the AHA is completely different than anything she has done before. She says she has learned a lot about the cattle industry, but jokes she “has never even been close to a cow.”

Katrisha says that communicating with producers is the best part of her job. She always is ready for anything because most people start asking questions the second she answers the phone. She laughs, saying if she had a dollar for every time she has said, “No, I don't know; let me transfer you to someone who does,” she would be rich. Katrisha says most callers do have one thing in common: “Everyone wants to know about the weather when they call,” she says.

Katrisha's two boys — Anthony, 6, and Valor, 5 — keep her busy at home. She volunteers as scout leader for the boys' Boy Scout Troop and she coaches t-ball and baseball for the Turner Recreation League where the boys play.

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Katrisha's Favorites

Food: Italian

TV show: American Idol

Day of the week: Saturday, because she can sleep in

Vacation spot: A place warm and sunny; she's not a fan of cold weather.