

Lending a Helping Hoof

Hereford youth collect school supplies for Howard Elementary School, Grand Island, Neb.

by *Bridget Beran*



Since 2012, National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members have taken the opportunity to do something for others while at the Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE). Started by 2012 National Hereford Queen Amanda Bacon, Helping Hooves is a service project that is led each year by the National Hereford Queen. The project traditionally collects charitable items for the community that is hosting the JNHE.

This year National Hereford Queen Katie Nolles, Bassett, Neb., led the effort to collect school supplies for Howard Elementary School, Grand Island, Neb. With more than 800 juniors and their families present in Grand Island, Hereford youth collected 126 lb. of school supplies, including pencils, scissors and glue sticks.

"I am deeply impressed with the NJHA members and their families

who donated school supplies to the Helping Hooves project," Katie says. "Since JNHE was in my home state, I got to visit the school when I dropped the supplies off. While I was visiting with the principal, she informed me they have a 90% poverty rate among their students and that they receive

many calls asking for help to provide supplies. I did not know that when I selected the school, and now I know that I made the right decision."

Katie says taking the project in this direction was important to her because of how much she values education and helping provide students with all of the necessities they need to be successful in school.

"The students and staff were so grateful to receive our donations," Katie says. "They make the school such a positive learning environment. It is a unique and satisfactory feeling to know that we played a part in providing important materials for these students to succeed."

She also made a point to include agriculture in the service project, looking to give back while also educating children about where their food comes from.

"The Nebraska Beef Council donated fun fact sheets about cattle so the students will also get some agriculture knowledge along with their supplies," Katie says. "This experience has opened my eyes more to see the needs of local communities. Each of us has the ability to make a difference and when we listen to what people really need, we make great things happen." **HW**

Communities benefit from Helping Hooves

For the first Helping Hooves service project, Amanda Bacon, 2012 National Hereford Queen, asked juniors to collect toiletry items from hotels that they visited throughout the year. In the first year alone, Hereford youth donated more than 1,100 items to Hope Harbor homeless shelter in Grand Island, Neb.

In the following year, youth collected 2,424 items to donate to Hope House homeless shelter in Kansas City, Mo. In 2014, then National Hereford Queen Brooke Jensen, Courtland, Kan., took the project in a different direction, choosing to collect pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House Charities, and youth were able to collect 78 lb. of pop tabs. Hereford youth and their families continually show their generosity and desire to give back to the communities that host the Junior National Hereford Expo each summer. **HW**