

Building Leaders in the Heartland



The Jensen family welcomed Faces of Leadership participants to Jensen Bros., Courtland, Kan.

National Junior Hereford Association members gather in Kansas City, Mo., for the annual Faces of Leadership Conference.

by *Paige Jones*

The National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) was at home in the heartland, hosting 89 NJHA members in its hometown of Kansas City, Mo., Aug. 1-4, for the eighth-annual Faces of Leadership Conference.

NJHA members ages 14 to 21 from 20 states arrived in Kansas City looking to gain leadership and communication skills, but what they left with was much more. Whether it was the nationally known speakers that moved them, the workshops that motivated them or the friends that they met along the way, each participant left with more goals, knowledge and a network of people to support him or her.

A change in perspective

The event kicked off Tuesday afternoon with an opportunity for NJHA members to get to know one another through icebreaker activities led by the NJHA board of directors.

"This conference is designed to get you out of your comfort zone," says NJHA Board Chairman



Steven Green, Munfordville, Ky. "See how much you can learn about Hereford cattle and more importantly, about yourself."

The Faces of Leadership Conference serves as an opportunity to network with other individuals interested in the Hereford cattle industry as well as leadership and industry professionals.

Sydney Dvorak of Pickstown, S.D., is a Faces of Leadership veteran attending her third Faces of Leadership Conference. As an experienced attendee, her perspective has changed since her first conference.

"I try to continue to push myself out of my comfort zone and get out and meet new people, but I try to help others as well," Dvorak says. "I like to encourage others, especially first year kids, to meet new people and try new things so they can get as much as they can out of this conference."

Home in the heartland

The conference's first speaker traveled to Kansas City from Utah to teach a lesson in perseverance



Amberley Snyder, professional barrel racer, motivated the group by sharing the hills and valleys of her life.

and attitude. Amberley Snyder shared her story of tragedy to triumph from being paralyzed from a car accident to becoming a professional barrel racer, breakaway roper and motivational speaker.

“Get back on the horse,” Amberley’s motto echoed through the meeting room.

To her, as a barrel racer, this motto is quite literal. To the Faces of Leadership attendees, this motto rang true as a message to never give up.

“I think we all learned a great lesson on perseverance,” says Green. “No matter how many times we get knocked down in life, you have to pick yourself up again and take life by the horns.”

After hearing Amberley’s inspiring words, the group headed to tour the home of the NJHA at the American Hereford Association (AHA) office in downtown Kansas City. Attendees were welcomed by AHA Executive Vice President Jack Ward, who shared the history and future of the AHA.

“I loved seeing the history of the AHA and all of the behind the scenes work done there,” Dvorak remarks. “It was cool seeing all of the individual offices and realizing that this is the space where all the important planning and work happens.”

The juniors’ sights were set west Wednesday morning as they headed to Kansas State University (K-State) in Manhattan, Kan., for a full day of learning and leadership training. Group members put their teamwork skills to the test in the K-State Challenge Course.

Just as in life, through mental and physical obstacles, the group of juniors found ways to accomplish their goals while learning about themselves and their teammates.

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AHA Executive Vice President Jack Ward described the history of the AHA building for the NJHA juniors.



Hannah Williams of Nebraska remained calm and comfortable on the zero gravity ropes at Main Event: Eat. Bowl. Play.



NJHA members enjoyed time to relax on their first day of Faces of Leadership at Main Event: Eat. Bowl. Play.



Lots of laughs were shared as juniors took on the K-State Challenge Course.



Payton Farmer and Allie Schrammel work side-by-side as they cross an obstacle in the K-State Challenge Course on day two of Faces of Leadership.



David Grieger, K-State animal sciences professor, shared ultrasound and pregnancy detection techniques.



K-State Assistant Professor Karol Fike gave the group an inside look at embryos during her reproductive session — Under the Microscope: A How-To on ET Work.



Shane Bedwell demonstrated the proper way to take DNA samples.



In Calving 101, A.J. Tarpoff, K-State assistant professor, showed the juniors what to do and what not to do when pulling calves.



Lisa Norton, BioZyme, Inc., vice president, shared life advice with the NJHA juniors Thursday morning.

Faces of Leadership participants dove in with hands-on learning as they were welcomed to the new K-State Purebred Unit by K-State faculty David Grieger, A.J. Tarpoff and Karol Fike and heard from AHA Director of Breed Improvement Shane Bedwell. From pregnancy diagnosis to DNA testing and embryology to calving dos and don'ts, participants found the reproductive rotation sessions helpful in improving their own herds.

“With embryology, I’m used to just seeing the last step in all of that and seeing just the end result, but at K-State, I got to see the whole process from start to finish,” says second year Faces of Leadership participant Chesney Effling, Highmore, S.D. “Seeing all of that from a microscopic view point was really interesting.”

The NJHA members packed up their new industry knowledge and took it along with them to Jensen Bros. in Courtland, Kan., where they judged a class of Hereford cattle and enjoyed a meal provided by the Jensen family.

Leave your space a better place

A trip to BioZyme Inc. in St. Joseph, Mo., kicked off the final day of Faces of Leadership with a tour of its facility. BioZyme Vice President Lisa Norton shared what the Nortons’ company stands for and why they support the NJHA.

“We take it very seriously to prep you to win in life and not just in the showing,” Norton says.

It was apparent through the tour that BioZyme works to improve the industry not only by



Jarrett Breber, Chesney Effling, Sydney Dvorak and Ethan Howe were all smiles amongst the Hereford cattle at Jensen Bros.



Sam and Sarah Lawrence of Indiana debated while judging a class at Jensen Bros.



Former NJHA chairman and current BioZyme, Inc., employee, Cody Jensen, helped Ivan Blume create a new product during his new product development presentation.



Ivan Blume was quick to volunteer during Heather Schultz's leadership training session.



The NJHA members cheered on the Kansas City Royals to end a great week of leadership, networking and fun.



Keynote speaker Heather Schultz with the NJHA board.

improving its products but also by taking the time to teach the individuals that are a part of it. NJHA members were shown the step-by-step process of how BioZyme products get from the drawing board to their own show barns.

"It was interesting to see how they come up with the idea of all of these popular products," Effling says. "The tour showed us the start to finish process, and I liked being able to see just how much time and effort goes into just one bag of product."

The theme of self-improvement continued with motivational speaker Heather Schultz as she taught the group to "leave their space a better place."

agriculture industry as a whole was as simple as leaving it better than when they found it.

Even after enjoying a tailgate at Kauffman Stadium and a Kansas City Royals win later that day to wrap up the Faces of Leadership Conference, Heather's words stuck with the NJHA members as they traveled home after a full three days of activities.

Through the miles traveled and the knowledge and skills gained, the Faces of Leadership Conference has once again strived to leave its space a better place by impacting NJHA members from all over the country. **HW**

The next generation of breeders

Faces of Leadership Conference attendees learned more than leadership skills. From pregnancy diagnosis to DNA testing and embryology to calving tips, participants took home reproductive knowledge helpful in improving their own herds. Shane Bedwell set the tone for the reproductive sessions saying, "I'm counting on you all to be the next generation of great breeders that do things the right way." Here are some key points Hereford youth took away:

Calving 101 with A.J. Tarpoff

- After 20-30 minutes of pulling a calf, call for help.
- It takes 12-15 hours for a cow to pass placenta. Don't pull it out.
- Let nature take its course; interfering can sometimes make things worse.
- Don't neglect your calving equipment.

What's the Deal with DNA? with Shane Bedwell

There are four acceptable DNA samples for the AHA: Hair, blood, tissue and semen.

Hands In, Hands On with David Grieger

Palpation can be a valuable pregnancy detection tool. How far along in gestation can be determined by comparing the size of the fetus to the following:

- 60 days — large marble
- 90 days — golf ball
- 120 days — baseball
- 150 days — softball

Under the Microscope: A How-To on ET Work with Karol Fike

The basics of cattle embryo transfer:

- Day 0 — When the donor cow is in heat
- Day 7 — Flush embryos of donor cow
- Day 7 of recipient female's standing heat — transfer embryo

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