



2018 JNHE Adviser of the Year

# Full Circle

## Adviser of the Year recipient Jeanne Johnson unites the entire adult and junior membership.

by *Diane Meyer*



Pictured (l to r) are Mark, Trevor, Jeanne and Tate Johnson, Centerville, S.D. Jeanne was honored as the Adviser of the Year at the 2018 Junior National Hereford Expo.

Jeanne Johnson applauded every individual called forth over the microphone during the Thursday night awards ceremony at the 2018 Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) in Grand Island, Neb. As the adviser of the South Dakota Junior Hereford Association, she had a natural tendency to feel a sense of pride for the Hereford youth receiving recognition for their hard work. However, her hands froze the moment she heard National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) board member Austin Matheny declare her the State Adviser of the Year.

“I just never thought that would be me,” Jeanne shares. “It was a great feeling, an amazing feeling. It was very humbling that people recognize everything you’re doing.”

Jeanne has advised the members of the South Dakota Junior Hereford Association since 2012. Hailing from a first-generation Hereford operation in Centerville, S.D., the mother of two easily recalls her greenhand days of attending JNHE. It made all the difference having a mentor to call

upon for advice as she helped her sons Trevor and Tate get prepped for the show.

“When you’re totally new into the Hereford sector, you need somebody you can ask questions to all the time that’s going to help you get those answers,” Jeanne explains. “Having somebody that you can ask questions to all the time, it’s kind of a network.”

### Bridging the generation gap

In addition to her duties as the junior adviser, Jeanne coordinates the South Dakota Field Day around the state, organizes junior fitting teams to compete at the South Dakota State Fair (SDSF) and the JNHE, oversees the junior Hereford show at the SDSF, compiles the junior association newsletter and fundraises for all junior activities. She also manages the South Dakota Hereford Association. Her dual leadership roles allow her to serve as a link between the juniors and adults.

A primary example of how Jeanne incorporates junior participation into adult functions is arranging for

youth volunteers at the adult’s yearly fundraiser. “There’s a lot of jobs kids can do and Jeanne has really helped bring the kids into what the adults are doing,” describes her husband, Mark. “It’s a good way for juniors to say thanks and to meet the people behind you the whole way.”

“In our South Dakota Hereford Association, the juniors and adults are just one huge, big, massive family,” Jeanne smiles.

### Tying it all together

Due to her involvement in the adult and junior associations, Jeanne is able to combine the skillsets of each age group to create a single, cohesive unit.

Chesney Effling, Highmore, S.D., commends her adviser for her ceaseless effort. “Jeanne Johnson has done everything in her power to help me and others be as successful as we possibly can,” Effling says. “Whether it be making sure we are signed up for contests or lining up a fitting team for us at both the state and national levels, she never does anything halfway.”

For Jeanne, making sure families are fully prepared for any and all competitions is one of the most rewarding aspects of her position. “There are very active families in the NJHA that are really great about making sure kids know about the different programs,” Jeanne notes. “I try to tell kids about all the opportunities out there for them. When you see how much it’s doing for your own, you want other kids to have the same opportunities.”

“Just because you’re a parent to two kids doesn’t mean you’re not a parent to all of them,” she adds.

Effling is thankful to have Jeanne as a mentor as she navigates through the junior program. “We always know we are getting the best opportunities because she wants to see us succeed,” Effling says. “I can’t thank her enough for all the countless hours and dedication she puts in to ensure the juniors can excel in everything we do.” **HW**