

# Continuing the Tradition

New NJHA board members elected to wear the maroon jacket.

State delegates elected four new National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) directors during the 2021 VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE) Hereford Spectacular July 3-9 in Kansas City, Mo.

Wesley Denton, Blue Rapids, Kan.; Lauren Jones, Darlington, Wis.; Hannah Pearson, Oconto, Neb.; and Tar Tut, Faribault, Minn. received their maroon NJHA jackets during the JNHE awards ceremony on July 8. Twelve directors — each serving three-year terms — comprise the NJHA board and govern the 3,800-member organization.

The 2021-22 officer team includes chairman Noah Benedict, Dewey, Ill.; vice-chairman Wyatt Lawrence, Princeton, Minn.; communications chair Bailey Morrell, Willows, Calif.; leadership chair Lauren McMillan, Tiskilwa, Ill.; fundraising chair J.W. Cox, Flemingsburg, Ky.; and membership chair Libby Rushton, Waverly, Tenn. Also serving as directors are Luke Daniels, Dalhart, Texas; Ralston Ripp, Kearney, Neb.; and the four newly elected directors.

Retiring board members were chairman Montana Lawrence, Princeton, Minn.; vice chairman Abby Spindle, Moriarty, N.M.; director, Samuel Lawrence, Avilla, Ind.; and director Brooklyn Adam, Lathrop, Mo.

## Newly elected directors

**Wesley Denton** is the 19-year-old son of Angie and John Denton from Blue Rapids, Kan. He will be a sophomore at Kansas State University, majoring in animal sciences and industry. He has been a director for the Kansas Junior Hereford Association since 2017 along with serving in multiple FFA and 4-H offices. He plans to serve the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) with integrity, leadership and hard work, while continually striving to be a selfless leader. He believes the strength of an organization, like the NJHA, is the ability to grow connections across age groups. Wesley has led clipping, fitting and showmanship clinics, as well as provided individual mentorship. He would like to expand on this one-on-one approach with the NJHA board of directors.



**Wesley**

**Lauren Jones**, the 18-year-old daughter of B.J. and Kim Jones of Darlington, Wis., will be a freshman at Oklahoma State University, double majoring



**Lauren**

in animal science and agriculture communications. One of her long-term goals is to help cattlemen effectively market their animals and end products. She believes it is important for the membership to continue to be involved in activities that provide youth with experiences that will help them succeed in the future. She wants to explore ways for the adult membership to become more involved in the junior membership, especially as junior members transition to membership in the American Hereford Association.

## Hannah Pearson

is the 20-year-old daughter of Wade and Michelle Pearson of Oconto, Neb. She is going to be a sophomore at Texas Tech University, majoring in agriculture communications. Hannah plans to work with the state associations to promote participation in the contests while serving on the NJHA board of directors. She believes it is important for the board to be distinguished, honest and reputable advocates of both the Hereford breed and the beef industry. She looks forward to building relationships with other



**Hannah**



Samuel Lawrence and **Wesley Denton** celebrate after Wesley puts on his new maroon jacket.



Abigail Spindle passes along her maroon jacket to **Lauren Jones**.



**Hannah Pearson** was the first newly elected board member to receive her maroon jacket from Brooklyn Adam.



The 2021-22 NJHA board of directors pictured front row (l to r) are Lauren McMillan, Hannah Pearson, Bailey Morrell, Ralston Ripp, Lauren Jones and Libby Rushton. Back row (l to r) Wyatt Lawrence, J.W. Cox, Noah Benedict, Tar Tut, Luke Daniels and Wesley Denton.

members, giving back to the breed and continuing to build on the “agriculture of tomorrow.”

**Tar Tut** is the 19-year-old son of Pock Tut and Nyamark Kekh of Faribault, Minn. He will be a junior at Texas A&M University, majoring in agriculture communications, with an emphasis in sales and marketing and



**Tar**

a minor in animal science. He hopes to get a masters in international communications after completing his undergraduate degree. He believes it is important to encourage all junior members to participate in as many programs as possible to promote a well-rounded individual in the breed as well as in the beef industry. He wants to be a leader and positive light for members of the organization, helping them attain their goals.

### Standing directors

**Noah Benedict**, the 21-year-old son of Chad and Becky Benedict, is a senior at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, majoring in agribusiness: markets and management, minoring in leadership studies. Upon graduation, he plans to work in the livestock feed and nutrition industry. Noah’s various leadership roles include serving as chairman of the Illinois Junior Hereford Association. He is a fifth-generation Hereford breeder and says he hopes to continue his family’s operation into the next generation.

Noah values the NJHA because of its tremendous support for its members and how much he knows it can help them grow. He strives to make as many connections as he can with the members and their families. Noah is looking forward to an exciting final year serving the NJHA as chairman.

**Wyatt Lawrence**, the 21-year-old son of Bryan and Marytina Lawrence, recently graduated from the University of Minnesota (UMN) Twin Cities, majoring in agribusiness with a minor in animal science. While at the UMN, Wyatt was a part of the livestock judging team, Block and Bridle Club and a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity. In 2020, Wyatt married his wife, Claire, and they returned to Princeton to take part in the family farming operation. Wyatt and Claire are the fourth generation to raise Hereford cattle. Wyatt attributes his knowledge and passion for the cattle industry to his time spent as an NJHA member. He held many breed leadership roles at the state level and considers it a true honor to serve on the



**Tar Tut** receives his maroon jacket from fellow Minnesotan, Montana Lawrence.

national board of directors. While on the board, Wyatt focuses on educating and growing the next generation of beef professionals. Wyatt is passionate about the breed and Hereford youth, and he is excited about what the future holds for the NJHA.

**Bailey Morrell** is the 20-year-old daughter of Barry and Carrie Morrell. She will be a senior at Colorado State University (CSU) this fall, double majoring in agricultural education, with a concentration in agricultural literacy, and political science, with a concentration in environmental policy. During her years at CSU, Bailey served as the Block and Bridle Club vice president and the Collegiate Livestock Association secretary. She is currently a member of the livestock judging team. After graduation she plans to attend law school to earn an agricultural law degree. Bailey hopes to own her own practice in Northern California, specializing in agriculture water rights while continuing to operate her family's multi-generational seedstock Hereford operation, Morrell Ranches. Bailey served as president of the California-Nevada Junior Hereford Association for four years and as state Hereford queen. She looks forward to serving on the junior board for one more year while making memories that last a lifetime.

**Lauren McMillan**, the 19-year-old daughter of Kyle and Jodi McMillan, is a sophomore at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she is majoring in agricultural leadership while being heavily involved in all parts of campus life. After graduate school, she plans to focus on a leadership position with an agricultural company. Lauren is a 12-year member of the Illinois Junior Hereford Association, where she is currently serving as president. She works to connect with both youth and adult members to understand how she can help improve their

experience in the Association. Lauren continues to focus on how the board can create the best environment and JNHE for members, as she believes those before her have done. Lauren says it is an honor to serve on the NJHA board and cannot wait to see what the future holds.

**J.W. Cox** is the 19-year-old son of Shane and John Moran. He will be a junior this fall at Western Kentucky University, majoring in animal science with an option in pre-veterinary medicine. After receiving his college degree, J.W. plans to become a large animal vet specializing in embryology. He is a four-year member of the Kentucky Junior Hereford Association, where he served as the president and vice president. J.W. would like to return the favor the board gave him by striving to be someone who can set the pace for the younger generation. He plans to help younger kids get started and become more involved in the organization, while working side-by-side with leaders of the industry to gain support for NJHA programs.

**Libby Rushton** is the 19-year-old daughter of Lee and Andrea Rushton. She is a sophomore at the University of Tennessee at Martin, majoring in agricultural business and political science. Libby plans to represent an agricultural company or organization in the public relations or political field. Libby is a member of the Tennessee Junior Hereford Association, where she has served as president, reporter and middle Tennessee director. Libby's goal is to help connect her state to the national program by growing excitement and interest in showing cattle and participating in competitions. She wants to connect with the juniors in the breed by serving as a representative and having the opportunity to motivate and encourage others, as well as increasing her connection to the breed by seeking and learning more about the Hereford industry as a whole.

**Luke Daniels** is a 19-year-old twin son of Scanlon and Angela Daniels. He will be a sophomore at South Plains College this fall, studying pre-veterinary/animal science and competing on the livestock judging team. Luke's ultimate goal is to farm and raise quality Hereford cattle, while focusing on the advancement of embryology and collection services in his family's veterinary operation — Circle H Headquarters, LLC. He credits his competitive drive, ethics and genuine passion for the Hereford breed to being a first-generation breeder growing up in the Texas panhandle. Luke's 12 years as a member of the Texas Junior Hereford Association includes multiple leadership positions. In each one he aims to be a set of ears and a source of information for Hereford youth, attempting to be the best resource possible while assisting in growth of the breed's future.

**Ralston Ripp** is the 21-year-old daughter of Cody and Ronette Heinrich. She is a junior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) with a dual major in animal science and agribusiness. While at UNL, she has been actively engaged in the Engler Entrepreneurship program and is excited to continue to grow her small business ventures. She has been a part of the livestock judging team, served as Block & Bridle committee chairperson and was an Alpha Phi freshman orientation leader. Ralston plans to grow her cattle herd and open her own business targeting beef cattle, rural communities and youth. Ralston is a 12-year member of the Nebraska Junior Hereford Association and served as the 2018 state queen, the reporter, the secretary, the vice president and current president. As an NJHA director, Ralston works to ensure aspirations are welcome, long-lasting traditions of the Hereford breed are sustained, and legacy is grown to last beyond the current generation. **HW**