

Foundation's Focus | Creating a Future

by **Tar Tut**

Rick and Bonnie Coley-Malir provide opportunities for NJHA members.



Rick and Bonnie Coley-Malir, Dublin, Ohio, were recognized with the NJHA Honorary Junior Member of the Year Award during the 2022 NJHA and HYFA Awards Luncheon.

Rick and Bonnie Coley-Malir, Dublin, Ohio, are certainly no strangers to the industry and supporting the next generation of Hereford youth. Their love and passion for generously giving has only grown over the years through the Coley-Malir Leadership Endowment. In 2016, the couple announced a \$500,000 leadership endowment, a 10-year gift to fund a lifetime of leadership opportunities for National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members. Their efforts ensured the future of the breed will remain in good hands by supporting the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA).

The couple was recognized with the NJHA Honorary Junior Member of the Year Award for their support and leadership during the NJHA and HYFA Awards Luncheon on Oct. 21. This award is given to NJHA and HYFA supporters whose involvement and generosity creates a lasting impact for the next generation of Hereford enthusiasts.

The couple currently own and operate City Barbeque, a restaurant and catering company. Rick, a graduate of Kansas State University, says he has always had an entrepreneurial mind. He invested an

immense amount of time and energy into what his business is today. Prior to running City Barbeque, he was with John Deere as the director of dealer development and strategy for 10 years. He takes great pride in knowing that his leadership skills and personal development blossomed during his time as past national FFA president, and it is what pushed him to properly and effectively own and operate a company. For these reasons, he holds agricultural education and leadership opportunities near to his heart.

Bonnie, a graduate of the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, was born and raised into a Hereford-loving family in Lafayette, Tenn. The Coley family operation was started in 1938 by her grandfather, V.H. Coley; her father, Dee Coley; and her uncle, Clyde Coley. While growing up, it didn't take Bonnie long to fall in love with Hereford cattle herself, especially the junior program formerly known as the American Junior Hereford Association.

"After college, I went to work for the American-International Charolais Association as the head of their junior activities," Bonnie says. "After six months in that

position, the junior activities position opened at the American Hereford Association, and I couldn't pass up the opportunity to work for the breed I love." Although she is no longer in that position, Bonnie's passion for developing young leaders in the beef industry is strong.

When asked what receiving the award for Honorary Junior Members of the Year and coveted bronze bull meant to them, Rick said, "It is such a humbling honor to receive this award. Bonnie and I have the utmost respect and passion for the youth, and especially for the Hereford breed. For the both of us to be recognized as one of them is a moment I won't soon forget." Bonnie added, "We were not expecting that. It was kind of a surprise when we got our name called. But like Rick said, it was such a humbling honor." Rick then teased, "Since Bonnie already has a bronze bull, this one is going to be mine."

Both Rick and Bonnie are some of the most passionate individuals for youth in any industry and want kids to have the same opportunities they had while growing up. The best advice the couple has for young people is to always take advantage of what is presented to you because there is value in setting yourself up for success in the long run and building a foundation for your future.

The NJHA is beyond excited to bring the Faces of Leadership conference, funded by the Coley-Malir Leadership Endowment, to Columbus, Ohio, their home state, in July 2023. At the conference, junior members will be encouraged to "Prepare For Their Future." **HW**

| Tar Tut is the leadership chair on the NJHA board of directors.