

# Being **BOLD**

## NJHA members develop their leadership.

by *Chloé Durian*

**C**MT Artist of the Year, Cody Johnson, helped pave the motivational foundation for Hereford youth attending the fifth annual Building on Leadership Development (BOLD) conference in Desdemona, Texas, March 26-29.

“Pray for roadblocks and be comfortable with them coming,” Johnson encouraged the 26 BOLD participants. “Don’t ever let your vision get blurry by fame and success.”

National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) members from across the country and Canada forged foundational leadership skills and industry connections during the elite

leadership event hosted by Gary and Kathy Buchholz, of GKB Cattle, at their Hi Point Ranch.

The impressive lineup of speakers didn’t stop at Johnson, though. Tyson Durfey, world champion rodeo athlete; Shane Bedwell, American Hereford Association (AHA) director of breed improvement and chief operating officer; and Tyler Norvell, president of Norvell Consulting and CEO of Oklahoma Youth Expo and Cattlemen’s Congress, provided participants with valuable insights and expertise.

“Your mind will give you the power to do anything that you

want to do, even if there’s no money, even if it’s hard, even if it’s difficult, even if in the moment it looks like you can’t do it, you just take one step,” Durfey said. “You don’t have to think about the million steps after, but just the one step, and then the next step.”

### Learning by doing

BOLD attendees also participated in a variety of leadership-building activities, including workshops led by NJHA board members, which focused on strengthening communication skills and leading with purpose.

Along the way, BOLD participants had plenty of chances

Back row (left to right): Gary Buchholz, GKB Cattle; Rylie Meinhardt, Onaga, Kan.; Sam Birdsall, Torrington, Wyo.; Will Meinhardt, Onaga, Kan.; Nolan Hornecker, Casper, Wyo.; Augustus Sexton, Cost, Texas; Luke DeSalvo, Morrilton, Ark.; Jase Beltz, Canton, Kan.; Matt Bruns, North Platte, Neb.; Rhett Lehman, Sullivan, Ill.; Addison Koontz, Thomas, Okla.; Emma Bell, Eustace, Texas; and Salem Sifford, Goldvein, Va. Front row (left to right): Kathy Buchholz, GKB Cattle; Delaney Chester, Oregonia, Ohio; McKenna Gatz, Fairview, Kan.; Jorja Ebert, Polo, Mo.; Ella Callicott, Only, Tenn.; Alison George, Mondovi, Wis.; Bella Pressnall, Randolph, Minn.; Jordan Mitchem, Vale, N.C.; Kaleigh McNaughton, Gravenhurst, Ontario; Aidyn Barber, Channing, Texas; Elayna Hawkins, Freeport, Mich.; Madison Kegley, Burlington, Wis.; Mackenzie Ramsdell, Limington, Maine; and Lauren Gatz, Fairview, Kan.





NJHA members join CMT Artist of the Year, Cody Johnson, during the fifth annual BOLD conference in Desdemona, Texas.

to explore career opportunities and learn how to better position themselves for their future careers.

Lauren Perez, LEP Associates, led a session focused on resume writing and mock job interviews. Participants received advice from industry mentors based on their personal experiences during career roundtables. These roundtable discussions included: Gary Buchholz, GKB Cattle; Bruce Everhart, Everhart Herefords and Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) board member; Remy Wyatt, Ph.D., BioZyme® Inc.; and Cody Mahan, Merck Animal Health. These industry leaders' passion for the future of agriculture was inspiring.

"You are a product of the people you place around you.

You elevate each other," Johnson reminded attendees. "You've been gifted with an opportunity to be on a different level than others and that comes with pressure, but pressure can make a diamond."

Attendees emphasized the connections made through the conference. "The BOLD conference is such a great opportunity to work on so many different aspects of leadership and spend time networking and getting to know so many wonderful people within the industry," said Elayna Hawkins, Freeport, Mich.

BOLD speakers, mentors and industry leaders challenged participants to look forward, define their passions and set purposeful goals for their

leadership journeys, careers in the beef industry and beyond.

**Join us next year**

BOLD is an elite leadership program designed to build upon skills developed at the NJHA Faces of Leadership conference, with a focus on individualized growth. All NJHA members ages 18–21 are eligible to apply; approximately 20 are chosen to attend each year. BOLD is an exclusive opportunity made possible by the GKB Cattle Youth Endowment through HYFA.

The 2027 conference is scheduled for April 8-11. Applications open this fall. The application deadline is Feb. 1, 2027. For more information, visit [Hereford.org/youth](http://Hereford.org/youth). **HW**



Cody Johnson, CMT Artist of the Year, surprised participants with a keynote speech emphasizing the power of leadership and connections.



Bruce Everhart, Everhart Herefords and HYFA board member, visited with attendees during career roundtables.



Tyson Durfey, world champion rodeo athlete, encouraged BOLD participants to adopt a leadership mindset and tackle challenges one step at a time.



Gary Buchholz, GKB Cattle, shows attendees around Hi Point Ranch, where he graciously hosted the event.