Investing in Education

HYFA awards more than $60,000 in scholarships.

During the VitaFerm® Junior National Hereford Expo (JNHE), "The Hereford Masters in Madison," held July 4-10 in Madison, Wis., the Hereford Youth Foundation of America (HYFA) awarded more than $60,000 in scholarships and awards. This year, HYFA will award more than $220,000 to support members of the National Junior Hereford Association (NJHA) in their academic pursuits.

"Team Hereford continues to grow with the up-and-coming youth," says Jill Bielema, HYFA board member. "These young people are grounded in the agricultural industry and will lead the breed to new heights, and I am very grateful for their enthusiasm and knowledge."

HYFA works with the NJHA to provide opportunities for the bald-faced breed's young leaders to continue their education and strengthen the future of the Hereford breed and the agricultural industry. This wouldn't be possible without the support of breeders, businesses and organizations, like the National Hereford Women (NHW), who believe in the cause.

"Each year, HYFA and the National Hereford Women are pleased to award scholarships to deserving Hereford youth to use to pursue their post-secondary school education," says George Sprague, HYFA vice president and scholarship committee chairman. "This year, we had more applicants than ever, each with first-rate academic accomplishments and outstanding promise to make vital contributions to the future of agriculture. We are so very proud of this year's scholarship recipients."

Lindsey Jacobs, NHW board member, notes the merits of the applicants.

"It is always a privilege to participate in the HYFA scholarship process and support the next generation of young leaders as they pursue their academic and professional aspirations," Jacobs says. "Each year, we are fortunate to receive applications from an increasingly talented and accomplished group of candidates, making our selection process that much harder. Seeing the growth, strength and perseverance of this next generation reaffirms the bright future that we have as an organization and as an industry."

Golden Bull Achievement Awards

Awarded annually, the Golden Bull Achievement Award honors three outstanding collegiate members for their dedication and involvement in the NJHA. As one of the JNHE's highest honors, winners receive a bronze bull and a $2,500 scholarship to support their academic pursuits.

Sam Birdsall, Torrington, Wyo., is a senior at Kansas State University, studying agricultural economics and accounting and working toward his career goals in cattle market analysis. In 2025, he interned with an accounting firm in Cheyenne, Wyo., showcasing a different side of the financial industry. In the summer of 2026, he completed an internship with CattleFax.

"Over the years, I have had the opportunity to compete both in and out of the showring, experiences that have challenged and developed me," Birdsall says. "None of these achievements would have been possible without consistent hard work, which I believe is the most important factor influencing my future. I have learned that success requires sacrifice, and each of my accomplishments reflects the work ethic I strive to uphold."

Kade Boatman, Rockford, Ill., is a sophomore at Lake Land College, where he is working on his agricultural transfer degree, while being an active member of the livestock judging team. His interests include auctioneering, animal genetics and potentially a role in agricultural policy.

"I am committed to pursuing a career that benefits the agricultural industry," Boatman says. "People of our kind are dwindling, and I want to play a role in preserving its traditions, while helping ensure a strong and successful future for the beef industry and the Hereford breed."

Along with his professional goals, Boatman and his twin sister, Kendall, are dedicated to their cow herd, 2TK Cattle. Their goal is to raise efficient, productive cattle with style. He prides himself on managing his cattle to the highest degree.

Maddie Weaber, Wamego, Kan., is a junior at Oklahoma State University, where she is pursuing a degree in animal science with a focus on beef production and genetics, with plans to continue her education by earning her master's degree in this same field.

"Through my academic coursework, involvement in industry organizations and hands-on experiences, I am

Golden Bull Achievement Award winners (l to r): **Maddie Weaber**, Wamego, Kan.; **Sam Birdsall**, Torrington, Wyo.; and **Kade Boatman**, Rockford, Ill.

building both the technical knowledge and communication skills necessary to succeed," Weaber says. "I intend to pursue a position with a national breed association or similar organization early in my career, where I can work directly with cattlemen and apply genetic principles in a practical, impactful way."

Currently serving on the NJHA board of directors, Weaber is passionate about the beef industry and Hereford breed and the network they have enabled her to create.

Junior Golden Bull Awards

Four outstanding students, grades nine through 12, received a Junior Golden Bull Award. Each recipient was given a coveted bronze Hereford bull statue. The Junior Golden Bull Award recognizes high-achieving junior members who demonstrate exceptional leadership in the Hereford breed, the agricultural industry and their communities.

Sedona Sifford, Goldvein, Va., is the ninth-grade winner. She has been an active member of the NJHA and the Virginia Junior Hereford Association (VJHA) for eight years. Sifford currently serves as the junior representative fundraising chairperson for the Southeast Regional Junior Hereford Show and is the VJHA vice president.

"The experiences and lessons I have gained through NJHA have prepared me not only to succeed academically, but also to become a leader who can positively contribute to the future of the beef industry," she says.

Sifford has competed in many different contests at the state and national levels, as well as the NJHA Fed Steer Shootout.

W. Zeb Murphree, Hamilton, Texas, is the 10th-grade winner. A high school junior this fall, Murphree is currently serving his final year of a three-year term as a director for the Junior Hereford Association of Texas.

"My Hereford association activities have benefited me by meeting so many people from all over the United States," Murphree says. "Also, I have gotten more knowledgeable in all industry aspects, from cattle genetics to speaking more confidently in front of a group."

He credits the 2025 Faces of Leadership conference for helping him develop as a speaker and communicator — skills he knows will be helpful in the future.

Cierra Collins, Frederick, Okla., is the 11th-grade winner. She will be a senior at Frederick High School this fall. She plans to run for an Oklahoma FFA state office and attend Oklahoma State University to study pre-law with an agricultural business focus.

"I am confident that the agricultural education I have gained through the NJHA will help me not only through high school and college, but for the rest of my life as an agriculturist," Collins says.

Collins says she discovered her love for public speaking through NJHA activities and competitions. She plans to use those skills to continue running for leadership positions on both the state and national levels.

Blake Brancel, Endeavor, Wis., is the 12th-grade winner. Her involvement in the NJHA, which goes beyond the showring, paves the way for success as an industry leader.

Junior Golden Bull Award ninth-12th grade winners pictured (l to r): **Sedona Sifford**, Goldvein, Va.; **W. Zeb Murphree**, Hamilton, Texas; **Cierra Collins**, Frederick, Okla.; and **Blake Brancel**, Endeavor, Wis.

"Ultimately, the reason I remain involved each year is because the NJHA represents a community of hardworking individuals who are committed to making a meaningful impact on the beef industry, which I am proud to be part of," Brancel says.

Brancel's involvement in the Wisconsin Junior Hereford Association taught her how to step up, communicate effectively and represent the Hereford breed and agricultural industry. She plans to utilize these skills in the future as she attends the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the fall, majoring in animal and veterinary biosciences.

Prospect Awards

The Prospect Award honors six junior members engaged in the Hereford breed and agricultural industry, with active participation in their schools and communities. It is awarded to the most committed and involved students in third through eighth grades.

Through this award program, young people demonstrate their dedication in the showring and beyond, while gaining professional skills they will use outside their junior show career.

Whitten Scarpinato, Mason, Texas, is the third-grade winner. He is active in the Junior Hereford Association of Texas. He has shown across the state of Texas and competed in both state and national contests to help him grow as an individual.

"These types of experiences will help me learn the basic fundamentals to life, as well as other aspects that are not associated with cattle," Scarpinato says. "I have loved showing and participating in the contests, as well as meeting new friends. I am excited to see what else there is to do as I get older."

Levi Mobley, Campbellsburg, Ky. is the fourth-grade winner. He is 10 years old and already a Kentucky Junior Hereford Association director. He has shown and competed at both the state and national levels since he joined the NJHA, earning honors as a member of the second-high peewee judging team at the 2025 JNHE.

"I would love to one day bring home banners and buckles and to promote my farm name with

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confidence and trust," Mobley says. "I am currently involved in my local 4-H livestock, skillathon and judging teams with hopes to learn as much as I can to help me improve."

Cooper Acheson, Wichita, Kan., is the fifth-grade winner. Acheson has been a member of both his state and national associations for four years. He takes great pride in his Hereford cattle and wants to represent the breed to the highest level at all events and programs he attends.

Acheson is very involved in the NJHA Fed Steer Shootout, sending cattle to the feedlot that he can follow from pasture to plate. He has attended the NJHA Fed Steer Shootout Field Day for the last three years.

"When I grow up, I want to play in the NFL and raise Hereford cattle. The teamwork and leadership skills I'm learning through the NJHA will help me be a good teammate," Acheson says. "Everything I'm learning now will also help me raise cattle on my own someday and continue the Hereford tradition. I hope that by playing in the NFL, I can also help promote Hereford cattle and make our breed even stronger."

Cache Billman, Rigby, Idaho, is the sixth-grade winner. Billman is 12 years old and has been a member of both the NJHA and the Idaho Junior Hereford Association for six years, participating in his first JNHE in 2022.

A fifth-generation Hereford breeder, Billman wants to continue his family's tradition of raising and showing quality Hereford cattle. He is considering running for the NJHA board of directors in the future to give back to the organization.

"I know there is still a lot I need to learn to become a successful cattleman one day," Billman says. "But, being involved in the junior association will help me with that. It gives me chances to learn from experienced breeders and understand more about genetics, herd management and the business side of cattle. I want to stay as involved as I can, so I can keep getting better."

Quaid McIntyre, Leedey, Okla., is the seventh-grade winner. He is involved in and out of the showring. Now that he has reached eligibility in his state, he is excited to campaign for a director or officer position with the Junior Hereford Association of Oklahoma.

"I plan to continue showing Herefords and attending JNHE until I age out," McIntyre says. "I know I am young, but right now, my plans are to graduate from high school and attend Oklahoma State University and do something in agriculture. My brother and I hope to run our own cattle operation together when we are older, on our family's land."

Claire Collins, Frederick, Okla., is the eighth-grade winner. Collins recently finished serving as the 2025 Oklahoma Hereford Princess. She has also served as the Southwest area director for multiple years, helping raise money for the regional show and assisting with member activities.

"I am a fifth-generation Hereford rancher on my father's side and a sixth generation on my mother's side," Collins says. "I plan to raise my family through this breed and run for National Hereford Queen and the National Hereford Women board of directors."

Bob Call Founders Scholarships

Kaylee Lunsford, Fort Scott, Kan., and **Rylie Meinhardt**, Onaga, Kan., were each awarded a $2,500 Bob Call Founders Scholarship.

The Bob Call Founders Scholarship honors the legacy of Bob Call, HYFA's first president and a trailblazer in the establishment of its scholarship and leadership initiatives. This $2,500 scholarship recognizes two outstanding Hereford youth and is fittingly awarded during the JNHE, where Call chaired the host committee 27 years ago for the first event in Oklahoma. Bob and his wife, Dolores Call, Cushing, Okla., owned and operated CBY Polled Herefords and loved nothing more than supporting Hereford youth and watching them succeed.

Lunsford is a recent graduate of Oklahoma State University with a degree in animal science and plans to begin graduate school this fall focusing on global studies and international agriculture. She aspires to build a career in international agricultural law — not only advancing her professional interests, but also supporting producers and contributing to the long-term sustainability of agriculture.

While pursuing her professional goals, Lunsford plans to continue her family's growing cow-calf program, centered on producing functional, efficient cattle that perform in real-world production systems.

"Beyond the financial support, this scholarship represents an investment from an industry that has played a significant role in shaping my goals," Lunsford says. "That support motivates

Prospect Award third-fifth grade winners, (l to r): **Whitten Scarpinato**, Mason, Texas; **Levi Mobley**, Campbellsburg, Ky.; and **Cooper Acheson**, Wichita, Kan.

Prospect Award sixth-eighth grade winners, (l to r): **Cache Billman**, Rigby, Idaho; **Quaid McIntyre**, Leedey, Okla.; and **Claire Collins**, Frederick, Okla.

Bob Call Founders Scholarship winners, **Rylie Meinhardt**, Onaga, Kan. Not pictured: **Kaylee Lunsford**, Fort Scott, Kan.

National Junior Merit Scholarship winner, **Emma Ballinger**, McKee, Ky.

Bud Snidow Scholarship winner, **Salem Sifford**, Goldvein, Va.

me to continue working toward a career where I can advocate for agriculture on a broader scale and contribute to the future of the industry."

Meinhardt is a junior at Kansas State University majoring in animal sciences and industry with a focus in communications. Being an advocate for the agricultural industry and the people it represents inspires her future career goals.

When thinking about the Hereford breed, Meinhardt believes it is summarized in one word — mentorship. Currently, she serves on the NJHA board of directors, showcasing mentorship every day, while simultaneously treating it as a mantra in her family's cattle operation, Redwood Cattle Co.

"Grant, Linda and Bailey McKay were the first mentors that we had in the Hereford breed. They allowed us to get our start by showing their heifers, teaching us how to wash, work hair, show, make breeding decisions and so many more things," Meinhardt says. "That is a goal of ours at Redwood Cattle Co. No matter your experience level, we want to support you in any way that you need us to."

National Junior Merit Scholarship

Emma Ballinger, McKee, Ky., won the $5,000 National Junior Merit Scholarship.

The National Junior Merit Scholarship stands as one of the highest honors presented at the JNHE. Created to promote initiative, teamwork, passion, leadership and excellence, the award aims to cultivate well-rounded breeders for the Hereford breed and the beef industry. Each year, the recipient is awarded a $5,000 scholarship and a subsidized trip to a Hereford operation of their choosing within the continental U.S.

Ballinger is a senior at the University of Kentucky, completing her degree in agricultural education and advocacy, with future goals of utilizing her passion for agriculture to set students up for success and create a classroom where they feel the same sense of purpose and connection that she had growing up.

Serving on the NJHA board of directors, as well as having a strong connection to the Kentucky 4-H and FFA associations, Ballinger wants to be an agricultural teacher who makes an impact.

"I want to be the kind of teacher who changes lives, just like agricultural education changed mine," Ballinger says. "I want my students to leave my classroom with confidence in who they are, pride in where they come from and excitement for where they are going."

Bud Snidow Award

Salem Sifford, Goldvein, Va., won the $2,500 Bud Snidow Award and Scholarship.

Each year, the National Hereford Women (NHW) pay tribute to Bud Snidow, a former American Hereford Association employee and a respected Hereford historian, by presenting a custom buckle and scholarship in his honor. This $2,500 goes to an outstanding NJHA member who exemplifies the values Snidow held dear: fairness, a strong work ethic, enthusiasm and an unwavering dedication to the Hereford breed and its community.

Sifford is a graduate student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University pursuing a master's degree in animal and poultry science with a focus on beef cattle Extension. She retired her maroon jacket during the 2026 JNHE awards ceremony, after serving as the 2025-2026 NJHA chairman.

Passionate about teaching livestock evaluation, Sifford's career goals are to expand and improve her cattle operation, and to be a livestock judging coach.

"I have tried to surround myself with powerful resources within the livestock industry, while continuing to work with 4-H, FFA and collegiate contestants to continue to learn what teaching techniques work best," Sifford says. "With this goal in mind, I have maintained my passion to help producers improve their herds, as well. While working through my master's study, I have had the chance to complete studies that place commercial cattle producers at the forefront."

Donna Curry Memorial Scholarships

Three NJHA members received the Donna Curry Memorial $2,500 Scholarship.

When Donna Curry of McAlester, Okla., passed away in 2022, the Hereford community lost a remarkable woman and beloved friend. With her steadfast commitment to youth and her meaningful influence, Donna inspired all who knew her. To ensure Donna's spirit continues to lead future generations and carry her legacy forward, HYFA and the Curry family established this scholarship.

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"The number of applicants this year was overwhelming, and all the accolades these kids have already stacked up, and the resumes they have developed at such a young age is beyond impressive. Donna was involved heavily in all facets of the Hereford breed and no matter what event was going on she always had a soft spot for the kids willing to help other kids … I feel like all of these applicants are individuals who would always be willing to lend a helping hand to others, even if they sacrificed benefiting themselves," says Cameron Curry, scholarship selection committee member and son of the late Donna Curry. "As an organization, we will be stronger together, and it starts with youth. It's safe to say the future of this breed is in good hands."

Aidyn Barber, Channing, Texas, is a junior at Texas Tech University majoring in animal sciences and agribusiness with a concentration in agricultural communications. She has future plans of pursuing a master's degree in agricultural law and working for a breed association or major livestock show in Texas.

Growing up in the Hereford breed, she says that she has developed a strong passion for the people — especially the junior members — who are the future of the industry.

"That's the greatest thing about the Hereford breed. It's not just about the cattle; it's about the people behind them. It's the friendships, the support and the shared experiences that make it special," Barber says. "Those are the things that last long after the show is over, and they're what have truly shaped me into the person I am today."

Sarah Beth Callicott, Only, Tenn, is a senior at Tennessee Tech University pursuing a degree in agricultural education. With a passion fueled by the love of agriculture and the desire to pass it on to future students, Callicott aspires to have a Hereford show team at her future school, working with breeders so that students can gain access to quality genetics.

Serving on the NJHA board of directors, she recognizes the Hereford breed is full of high-quality youth and considers herself lucky to be surrounded by so many other high-achieving juniors.

"Receiving a scholarship from HYFA is extremely encouraging to know that they believe in my dreams and goals enough to invest in them. It fuels my passion and drive to make the association proud on my behalf," Callicott says. "I am very excited about my future dreams and goals, and it means the world to me that the Hereford Association is a part of it."

Jordan Mitchem, Vale, N.C., is a sophomore at North Carolina State University majoring in animal science with a minor in biotechnology and agriculture business. While she is still exploring her career goals, she looks to build a future in agriculture that combines her passion for cattle, science and agricultural policy.

A member of the NJHA board of directors, Mitchem is an involved junior member who has taken much inspiration and industry knowledge from the different events that the NJHA offers, such as the Building on Leadership Development conference and NJHA Fed Steer Shootout program.

"After completing my undergraduate degree, I plan to either attend veterinary school or pursue graduate studies to further specialize my knowledge," Mitchem says. "No matter which path I choose, I intend to use my background in animal science, economics and real-world farming experience to become a leader in the agricultural industry and to help ensure the future success of my family's farm."

Hereford Herdsman Scholarships

Kendall Boatman, Rockford, Ill., and **T.R. Putz**, Otley, Iowa, were awarded $2,500 Hereford Herdsman Scholarships.

Sullivan Supply Inc. and Hereford herdsmen from across the nation partner with HYFA to make these two scholarships possible.

Boatman is a sophomore at Lake Land Community College, competing on the livestock judging team and working toward her agricultural transfer degree. She is excited to pursue future internship opportunities, but knows her focus will be on roles that highlight the importance of agriculture to the consumer.

"I envision staying connected to the beef industry, possibly through roles in marketing, public relations, working for a cattle breed association or even managing my own cattle operation," Boatman says. "Regardless of the exact path I take, I will always be committed to ensuring that agriculture remains strong, respected and supported for generations to come."

Currently serving on the NJHA board, Boatman credits the organization with setting her up for success and helping teach the values that have shaped her as an individual.

Putz is a senior at Iowa State University majoring in agricultural

Donna Curry Memorial Scholarship winners (l to r): **Aidyn Barber**, Channing, Texas; **Sarah Beth Callicott**, Only, Tenn.; and **Jordan Mitchem**, Vale, NC.

Hereford Herdsman Scholarship winners pictured (l to r): **Kendall Boatman**, Rockford, Ill., and **T.R. Putz**, Otley, Iowa.

Bluegrass and Buckeye Scholarship winner, **Harlee Watson**, Flemingsburg, Ky.

Charles E. Boyd Memorial Scholarship winner, **Sarah Birdsall**, Torrington, Wyo.

John Wayne Memorial Scholarship winner, **Nolan Hornecker**, Casper, Wyo.

studies with an emphasis on animal science, agricultural business and supply chain management. His long-term future is a career in agricultural sales, while also developing his Hereford operation, focusing on quality, proven genetics and gradually expanding his herd to be able to host a fall cattle sale.

"I believe a selfmade person earns what they get. That mindset has shaped every decision I've made in college," Putz says. "My involvement in the Hereford breed has taught me discipline, responsibility and resilience. It has also given me mentors who expect excellence from me."

Putz' involvement in the Hereford breed as a junior member, leader and breeder have primed him for future success.

Bluegrass and Buckeye Scholarship

Harlee Watson, Flemingsburg, Ky., was awarded the $2,000 Bluegrass and Buckeye Scholarship.

The Bluegrass and Buckeye Scholarship is a collaborative effort between the Kentucky and Ohio Hereford Associations and HYFA. Each year, they award a $2,000 scholarship to an exceptional NJHA member. The scholarship aims to cultivate future leaders in the Hereford breed and the beef industry.

Watson, who recently completed her associate's degree at Butler Community College, is a junior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, studying animal science. Her personal goals after graduation are to return home and become a business partner with her parents, growing their purebred and commercial cow-calf operation, while also working toward owning and operating her own funeral home.

An active member of the NJHA, she is currently serving on the NJHA board of directors and as the Kentucky Junior Hereford Association president. Watson's work ethic serving in these positions showcases her passion for the Hereford breed and commitment to mentoring the next generation of Hereford juniors.

"My involvement in the NJHA has equipped me with the tools I need to be successful and shaped me into a confident, experienced and skilled individual who is capable of achieving great things in my future career," Watson says.

Charles E. Boyd Memorial Scholarship

Sarah Birdsall, Torrington, Wyo., was awarded the $2,000 Charles E. Boyd Memorial Scholarship.

The Charles E. Boyd Memorial Scholarship honors the legacy of Charles E. Boyd Sr., a third-generation Hereford breeder from Mayslick, Ky., who devoted his life to supporting youth in the agricultural industry. Widely recognized on local, state and national levels for his achievements, Boyd was a renowned cattle judge who participated in all major livestock shows and exhibited numerous international and national Hereford champions. This scholarship supports youth in the Hereford breed who plan to attend college and pursue a degree in agriculture.

Boyd's daughter, Suzanne Matheny, assisted with the scholarship interview process.

"Our family is honored to be able to help a junior member receive a scholarship in memory of Charles E. Boyd," she says. "This year's recipient is an admirable example of giving back and hard work, which are the cornerstones of this scholarship."

Birdsall, a sophomore at Kansas State University, is majoring in marketing and finance, while also obtaining her certificate of sales. She has long-term goals of taking the knowledge and experience gained from her education and future workplace to start her own marketing and advertising business.

Her passion for both the Hereford breed and academics drives her, as she sees ways she can contribute to the breed that also align with her future aspirations.

John Wayne Memorial Scholarship

Nolan Hornecker, Casper, Wyo., was awarded the $2,000 John Wayne Memorial Scholarship.

The John Wayne Memorial Scholarship honors the legacy of John Wayne — a renowned actor, agriculturalist and Hereford breeder — by recognizing a deserving college student who has made significant contributions to the agricultural industry and the Hereford breed.

Hornecker is a senior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln majoring in agricultural business. He previously received a double-major associate degree from Casper College in geographic information systems (GIS) and agricultural business.

His professional goals include entrepreneurship — building businesses both within the livestock industry and agricultural technology space. He is

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interested in utilizing his background in GIS to create tools that can help producers make better decisions and improve efficiency. He also hopes to start a nonprofit foundation focused on mental health and suicide awareness in agriculture.

"This is something I care a lot about because agriculture is a tough, stigma-driven industry where people often don't talk about what they are going through. There are not enough resources available, and I want to be someone who helps change that. Being able to support people in agriculture and give them access to help is something that would mean a lot to me," Hornecker says. "At the end of the day, I want my legacy to be built on faith, family and hard work."

Mead Family Memorial Scholarship

Dustin Denton, Blue Rapids, Kan., received the Mead Family Memorial $2,000 Scholarship.

Mead Cattle Enterprises, Midville, Ga., has been dedicated to breeding Hereford cattle for more than 40 years. As original members of the Pro Performance Breeders group, they have long supported young Hereford enthusiasts. In 2020, the Mead family experienced the loss of two amazing ladies and the backbone of their Hereford operation, owner Tommy Mead's mother, Hazel Mead, and his wife, Valarie Mead. To honor their memory, family and friends established the Mead Family Memorial Scholarship Endowment in 2021.

"Today's youth are tomorrow's leaders, and I continue to be inspired by their knowledge, ambition and dedication," says Tommie Lynne Jones, daughter of Tommy Mead. "Dustin's application was genuine and thoughtfully reflected both his involvement within the industry and his future career goals. I'm honored to have the opportunity to support his aspirations through our scholarship and to play a small part in continuing the growth and future of the Hereford breed."

Denton is a sophomore at Kansas State University (K-State) where he is majoring in animal sciences and industry under the pre-veterinary pathway. As part of the K-State Veterinary Scholars Early Admission Program, he will transfer to the K-State College of Veterinary Medicine after he completes his undergraduate degree.

His career goals include practicing veterinary medicine near his hometown so he can also continue building his herd of Hereford cattle.

"Although the journey will be difficult and time consuming, I know that veterinary medicine is something I am passionate about and I will put my best effort into every step of the process," Denton says.

NOP Founders Scholarship

Lauren Wingler, Christiana, Tenn., received the $2,000 NOP Founders Scholarship.

Established in 2003, the NOP Founders Scholarship honors the pioneering women who founded the National Organization of Poll-ettes (NOP), which began in 1965 and later became known as the National Hereford Women (NHW).

Wingler is a sophomore at the University of Tennessee at Martin majoring in agricultural business with an emphasis on agricultural law. She is focusing on building a strong foundation in both the business and legal aspects of agriculture, while preparing to attend law school with a focus on agricultural and environmental law.

Currently serving as the National Hereford Queen, Wingler knows the impact the Hereford breed can have on its members and the opportunities it offers.

"These connections, along with my background in the Hereford breed, will help me stay deeply rooted in the industry I am passionate about serving," Wingler says. "Through dedication to my education, continued involvement in agriculture and a commitment to advocacy, I am confident in my ability to achieve my goal of becoming an agricultural lawyer and making a meaningful impact on rural communities."

Hereford Herdsmen of the Year

Jase Beltz, Canton, Kan., was named the Junior Hereford Herdsmen of the Year, receiving a $2,500 scholarship, sponsored by HYFA and Sullivan Supply, along with a custom belt buckle.

Herdsman winners demonstrate knowledge of the Hereford breed and beef industry alongside a tremendous work ethic. The nominees are initially selected by a committee, then voted on by their peers throughout the JNHE.

Beltz is currently attending Oklahoma State University, where

Mead Memorial Scholarship winner, **Dustin Denton**, Blue Rapids, Kan.

NOP Founders Scholarship winner, **Lauren Wingler**, Christiana, Tenn.

Junior Hereford Herdsman of the Year, **Jase Beltz**, Canton, Kan.

Walter and Joe Lewis High Point Senior Award winner, **Aidyn Barber**, Channing, Texas.

Faces of Leadership Scholarship winners, pictured (l to r): **Elayna Aue**, Auburndale, Wis.; **Cora Belle Chapman**, Seneca, Ill.; **Gabe Crutcher**, Montrose, Ill.; **Aubrey Lockhart**, Somerville, Texas; **Corbin Perry**, Tower Hill, Ill.; **Dax Putz**, Otley, Iowa; and **Blayklee Stelzer**, Oologah, Okla. Not pictured: **Jayda Cant**, Imbler, Ore.; **Emily Hass**, Cambridge, Minn.; and **Annabelle Wright**, Warner Robins, Ga.

he is majoring in agribusiness with a minor in finance. After earning his degree, he plans to pursue a career in the agricultural finance industry with a focus on commodities trading. He and his family have worked to build their herd from the ground up after moving to Kansas. Seeing the quality of their cattle improve over time has been incredibly rewarding to Beltz. He is grateful for the opportunity to be recognized for the dedication and commitment to building their Hereford program.

The Hereford breed has provided Beltz with invaluable connections and lessons that he says are second to none. He looks forward to carrying those experiences with him as he pursues a career in agriculture. His passion for the cattle industry, work ethic and commitment to the Hereford breed made him a standout candidate.

"Winning Herdsman showed me that by having big dreams and working hard to chase them, success is always within reach," says Beltz, who was also champion senior showman at this year's JNHE.

Walter and Joe Lewis High Point Senior Award

Aidyn Barber, Channing, Texas, won the Walter and Joe Lewis High Point Senior Award.

The Walter and Joe Lewis High Point Senior Award goes to the high-point exhibitor in the senior division. Young people receive points for their placings and participation in JNHE contests and showring performance. On the final day of the event, points are totaled, and the senior with the most points receives the award. The award winner receives a custom belt buckle and $1,000 scholarship.

Barber is the daughter of Brett Barber and Nicole Lowers. She is currently pursuing a degree in animal science at Texas Tech University. She is passionate about the breed and the way of life it provides her family. Aidyn credits the NJHA with helping her become the person she is today and says there is no place she would rather be than the barn.

She's honored to be recognized for her commitment to the Hereford breed and pursuing her goals, in and outside the showring. Barber knows the recognition represents the sleepless nights and long hours she spends caring for her cattle, along with unwavering dedication to pursuing her goals. As she continues her education at Texas Tech University, Barber looks forward to building upon the lessons she has learned through the Hereford breed, while pursuing a future in agriculture.

"Receiving the Senior High Point Award is truly an honor because it represents so much more than success in the showring." Barber says. "It reflects years of hard work, dedication and the countless memories made with my family, friends and the Hereford community. The Hereford breed has given me opportunities and relationships that have shaped who I am, and I'm incredibly grateful for everyone who has been part of that journey. This recognition is something I'll always be proud of, and I hope to continue giving back to the breed that has given me so much."

Faces of Leadership Scholarship

Ten NJHA members received Faces of Leadership Scholarships.

The NHW awarded $500 scholarships to 10 young people attending the 2026 Faces of Leadership Conference. The NHW works diligently to support Hereford juniors and ensure their future success. Through leadership development programs like the Faces of Leadership conference, NHW encourages young people to develop their leadership skills and make connections. These scholarships assist with registration costs. Recipients submitted an application detailing the impact of leadership conferences and how they would use the skills gained from the opportunity.

The 2026 Faces of Leadership Scholarship winners are: **Elayna Aue**, Auburndale, Wis.; **Jayda Cant**, Imbler, Ore.; **Cora Belle Chapman**, Seneca, Ill.; **Gabe Crutcher**, Montrose, Ill.; **Emily Hass**, Cambridge, Minn.; **Aubrey Lockhart**, Somerville, Texas; **Corbin Perry**, Tower Hill, Ill.; **Dax Putz**, Otley, Iowa; **Blayklee Stelzer**, Oologah, Okla.; and **Annabelle Wright**, Warner Robins, Ga.

Livestock Marketeers Scholarship

Kade Boatman, Rockford, Ill., and **Brock Miller**, Haxtun, Colo., received $1,500 scholarships from the Livestock Marketeers, an organization of livestock marketing professionals. Livestock Marketeers Scholarships go to college-age students interested in pursuing a career in the livestock marketing industry.

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The Livestock Marketeers Scholarship fund was established in 2023 with $23,000 raised at its annual Hall of Fame Banquet. Livestock Marketeers has now surpassed $60,000 in support, ensuring this scholarship will continue for future generations. Along with an interest in pursuing a career in the livestock marketing industry, Livestock Marketeers scholarships require affiliation with a livestock organization.

Boatman is a sophomore at Lake Land College, where he is working on his agricultural transfer degree, while being an active member of the livestock judging team. His interests include auctioneering, animal genetics and potentially a role in agricultural policy.

He plans to pursue a career as a livestock auctioneer, combining his passion for the cattle industry with strong communication, leadership and sales skills gained through 4-H, FFA and the NJHA. As a livestock auctioneer, his goal would be serving as a link between producers and buyers, helping ensure that animals are marketed in a way that reflects their true value.

Livestock Marketeers Scholarship recipient, **Kade Boatman**, Rockford, Ill., pictured with Kane Aegerter and Corbin Cowles of the Livestock Marketeers Association.

Miller is a freshman at Northeastern Junior College where he is pursuing a double major in animal science and agriculture business, while planning to eventually pursue a master's in agriculture economics.

Miller comes from a fifth-generation Angus cow-calf operation in northeastern Colorado, with a herd of approximately 90 commercial pairs and 60 registered Angus pairs. His dad and uncle each manage a separate Angus herd of approximately 300 registered Angus for Spruce Mountain Ranch. Growing up around the family operation and the ranch has taught him much more than just animal husbandry; it has taught hard work, critical thinking skills and the importance of paying attention to details. **HW**

Livestock Marketeers Scholarship recipient, Brock Miller, Haxtun, Colo.