

# Summer Interns Join the Angus Team

Future beef industry leaders gain real-world experience in Saint Joseph, Mo.

by Laurin Spraberry, American Angus Association

**T**he summer months are busy around the American Angus Association. With cattle shows; educational conferences; and the everyday publication, research and marketing deadlines, there's a lot happening — and a lot of opportunity to learn.

In May, the Association welcomed five interns to its headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo., to assist staff. Get to know Heather Bradford, Melissa Keyes, Carrie Horsley, Laurin Spraberry and Lynsey Meharg and their responsibilities in the paragraphs that follow.

## Heather Bradford, AGI

While working with Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) this summer, Bradford's activities will range from interacting with customers to conducting her own research project, which is expected to yield selection tools that will be of immediate use to Angus breeders and commercial cattlemen.

"Heather's background in beef cattle research gives her the opportunity to put her skills to use and develop hands-on applications for cattle producers," says Tonya Amen, AGI genetic services director. "We're thrilled to have her on board and look forward to what she can accomplish."

An Ohio native, Bradford recently finished her master's in animal breeding at Kansas State University (K-State), where her research project involved estimating genetic parameters for udder quality in Hereford cattle. She holds a bachelor's degree in animal science from Purdue University, and will begin working toward a doctorate this fall at K-State.

Bradford's passion for the beef industry stems from her family's involvement with seedstock cattle, and she hopes to eventually work with research and beef cattle genetics.

"I'm excited about gaining firsthand knowledge and a better understanding of what happens behind the scenes at a breed association," Bradford says.

## Lynsey Meharg, *Angus Journal*

Meharg will add to the efforts at the *Angus Journal* as the intern in the editorial department. Throughout the summer,



► From left, Heather Bradford, Laurin Spraberry, Lynsey Meharg, Melissa Keyes, Carrie Horsley and Bryanne Duckett are assisting the American Angus Association and *Angus Journal* staff as interns through the summer. Duckett joined the team early as intern for the Junior Activities Department and was introduced in the February 2013 *Angus Journal*.

she is responsible for contributing to the *Angus Journal*, *Angus Beef Bulletin*, *Angus Beef Bulletin EXTRA* and *Angus Journal Daily* electronic newsletter. She also has the opportunity to attend a variety of industry events and conferences.

"The *Angus Journal* internship has evolved from being largely an extra hand to help cover junior nationals and other summer activities to being a full-fledged editorial team member," says Shauna Hermel, *Angus Journal* editor. "We're looking forward to involving Lynsey in our editorial process, and taking full advantage of her writing and photography skills, as well as the enthusiasm she brings to the team."

Meharg, a recent transplant to Council Hill, Okla., will be a junior agricultural communications major at Texas Tech University (Texas Tech) in Lubbock. Growing up on a commercial operation in northwest Florida, she credits her family, as well as the cattle industry, with inspiring her to be a voice for agricultural producers.

"As the granddaughter of a woman with a passion for agriculture and Angus cattle, advocating for agriculture is something I truly believe in," Meharg says. "I am grateful

for the opportunity to work with a group of people who are just as passionate about this industry as I am."

## Carrie Horsley, Activities and Events

As the Association's event-planning intern, Horsley will be active in finalizing details and helping with Cattlemen's Boot Camps and the Beef Leaders Institute, as well as playing an integral role in the National Angus Conference & Tour. She will also represent the Association at shows.

"Carrie is going to put her organization skills to work this summer keeping up with multiple Angus-related events," says Shelia Stannard, Association director of activities and events. "She has a passion for this industry, and I'm delighted to help her learn from this experience."

Horsley is originally from Galva, Ill., and earned an associate's degree from Black Hawk College. Currently, she is a student at Oklahoma State University and will graduate in December with a degree in agricultural communications, and a minor in agricultural economics and agribusiness. Horsley has shown and raised Angus cattle her entire life.

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She has been involved in Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the Agribusiness Club at Black Hawk College.

“This experience is going to help me learn and grow for my future,” Horsley says. “I hope to improve my skills and take in as much as possible.”

### **Melissa Keyes, Junior Activities**

This year’s intern for junior activities, Keyes, will be instrumental in assisting with the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS),

Angus Ambassador finals and the annual Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) conference. She is also going to be overseeing the many life-skill contests at the 2013 NJAS in Kansas City, Mo.

“Melissa is going to greatly benefit our department,” says Robin Ruff, Association director of junior activities. “Her interest in both communications and agriculture are valuable to our team as we plan and execute nationwide events for our Angus juniors.”

Keyes is from Springfield, Neb., where

her family has been farming and ranching for six generations at Keyes Angus Farm. She is currently a senior at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, where she is working toward her bachelor’s degree in agricultural communications. Keyes is involved in the National Agri-Marketing Association, has served as a National Collegiate Agriculture Ambassador and is a Nebraska Beef Industry Scholar.

“I’ve always been passionate about the agriculture industry and Angus cattle,” Keyes says. “This internship is a dream come true, and I’m eager to learn from this organization.”

Keyes also joins intern Bryanne Duckett,

who began working with the junior activities department in January 2013. Duckett is the first participant in a special, eight-month internship program that is centered on organizing youth events. Duckett attends Northwest Missouri State University, where she is pursuing a degree in animal science with a minor in commercial agriculture.

**Laurin Spraberry,  
PR and Communications**

Spraberry is joining forces with the Public Relations (PR) and Communications Department this summer. She will gain experience in all aspects of the Association's

multimedia approach to promoting Angus cattle, including writing, editing, design, photography and video production. She will also play an important role in promoting and covering events at the 2013 NJAS.

"Laurin's genuine enthusiasm for farmers and ranchers makes her a fantastic addition to the Angus team," says Eric Grant, department director. "This summer, she will have many opportunities to express that enthusiasm through print and digital communications."

Spraberry is a senior agricultural communications student at Texas Tech. She is active in numerous school activities, such as

Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT), intramural sports, and she has served as an agriculture mentor to incoming freshmen. Spraberry's passion for the beef industry comes from her family's cattle company that raises stocker and feeder cattle in Anson, Texas.

"The cattle industry has always played an important role in my life," Spraberry says. "The chance to work with an organization that I am passionate about while growing in my communication abilities is the perfect internship, in my mind."

