



The Scoop Transitions to Media Crew

NJAA members learn of journalism and communications through Media Crew opportunity.

Story & photos by **Kasey Brown**, associate editor

No matter what career you choose, communication skills are vital to success. National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) members have a unique opportunity to learn various forms of communications through the Media Crew. The Media Crew was formerly *The Scoop* newsletter, a publication produced by NJAA members from interviews done at the National Junior Angus Show (Njas). The newly named Media Crew expands its scope to writing, social media and shadowing this year.

Carrie Horsley, director of marketing and public relations for the Angus Foundation

and supervisor of the Media Crew, says the goal of the switch was to expose its members to more of the fast-paced reality of communications. Instead of producing a newsletter that is published long after the show, the Media Crew produces *The Angus Agenda* to distribute each day at Njas. *The Angus Agenda* includes the day's schedule, results of the show and stories written by Media Crew and the National Junior Angus Board (NJAB).

Additionally, the Media Crew members take photos throughout the seven-day event to be posted on the NJAA social-

media platforms — Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Horsley says this lets the Media Crew experience how photo coverage plays an integral part of communications, and engage their peers in popular, and instantaneous, platforms.

The last aspect of the Media Crew is shadowing. Each member has the opportunity to shadow staff members of Angus Productions Inc. (API) and to see the interview process for both print and television — the *Angus Journal* and *The Angus Report*.

Creating the Agenda

The biggest responsibility is producing content for *The Angus Agenda*. Five of the seven members — Taylor Clarke, Rocky Ridge, Md.; Katie Friederichs, Walcott, Iowa; Destiny McCauley, Bowling Green, Fla.; Connor Orrock, Woodford, Va.; and J.D. Rosman, Creston, Wash. — signed up to write for *The Angus Agenda*. Each of these five were assigned one to three stories before Njas.

Horsley explained that each came up with their own story topic, with some help or refinement from Horsley and Maggie Jasper, Versailles, Ky., NJAB director of communications. These topics ranged from DNA testing to restaurants and attractions of Indianapolis to being an advocate for the beef industry. These articles were due before Njas so the first three days of *The Angus Agenda* could be printed and ready before arriving in

► **Above:** Media Crew members met at the beginning of the week with Maggie Jasper and Carrie Horsley, Media Crew supervisor. Here they learned of their assignments during the week.

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Indianapolis. This also gave time for editing and revisions, noted Horsley.

Clarke says she hadn't participated in *The Scoop* because she worried about time constraints, though she has attended NJAS every year since it was in Denver, Colo., in 2005. She is very interested in photography and graphic design, and says the Media Crew sounded like it was right up her alley. She wants to study agricultural communications when she transfers to the University of Tennessee after this year at a local community college.

"I like that this lets juniors get involved,

and we get to write *The Angus Agenda* (which can be seen by all attendees of the NJAS) from our perspective. It lets juniors write for juniors," Clarke adds.

Orrock, who will be a freshman studying animal science and business at Kansas State University (K-State) in the fall and who was a member of *The Scoop* since he reached the eligible age, says the Media Crew offers more options of responsibilities and opportunities.

"The Media Crew gives an interesting opportunity to work with industry professionals and juniors of all ages," he says. "It also lets us show opportunities for involvement. I hope to improve my interview and writing skills."

Orrock explains this using his article focused on attractions and restaurants in Indianapolis as an example. He saw the article about Indianapolis attractions in the June *Angus Journal* (which can be found at <http://bit.ly/1rmqsQn>) and wanted to incorporate some of those attractions for juniors who don't receive the *Angus Journal*. He also added some restaurants recommended by Yelp Inc.

The Media Crew is designed to help give juniors communications experience and knowledge. Clarke adds they applied for the Media Crew in the spring. Once selected, they received writing tips and guidelines to help with their articles.

Social media army

In addition to the five writers, Brooke Haas, Downs, Ill., and Allison Hawthorne, Westby, Wis., contributed social media content throughout the week. All members of the Media Crew took photos of events



► Media Crew members (from left) Connor Orrock, Brooke Haas and Taylor Clarke learned about an *Angus Journal* interview by being interviewed.

during the week and submitted them with captions to Jasper, who posted them to NJAA social-media platforms and credited the Media Crew photographer.

Clarke says, "In addition to writing articles for *The Angus Agenda*, the rest of the Media Crew members and I were asked to take pictures throughout the week of the various events going on so that they could be shared with fans on social media. It was cool insight to just how important and connecting social media is in today's society."

Haas says, "I like to take photographs and to capture those moments. Everyone likes the handshake pictures, and pictures can put you in the moment. It is exhilarating. Contributing to the social media lets us show what we like to do and can keep people who aren't here up to date. All of our posts can be found with the hashtag #NJAS2014."

Clarke notes that she has always been interested in photography and graphic design and quips, "We're like the social-media army and report to our general, Maggie."

To view the complete album of photos taken by the Media Crew, visit <http://on.fb.me/1o1Zn1g>.

Shadows

Many of the Media Crew members are studying agricultural communications and journalism. By shadowing API staff members, they get to see a glimpse of journalism careers up close.

"I really want to work for the *Angus Journal* someday," says Haas. "An article was written about my heifer last year ("Not Your Ordinary Show Heifer" by Lynsey Meharg can be read at <http://bit.ly/UARatG>), and I loved the whole experience. I decided that was what I wanted to do, and I love interacting with junior members."

Clarke adds, "Getting to shadow with the *Angus Journal* was a big deal for me because it has always been one of my favorite publications, and it was neat to get to see how the industry professionals conduct interviews."

"My experience with the NJAS Media Crew was really great. It was just as amazing of an opportunity as I expected it to be. Media Crew is an amazing opportunity for Angus juniors that are interested in any type of communications, and I'm sure it will grow to be a huge part of the National Junior Angus Show in the future. I'd like to thank everyone that was a part of the Media Crew team for giving us juniors such a great experience!"