

Hello National Junior Red Angus Association Members and enthusiasts!

My name is Jaclyn Ketchum from Ekalaka, Mont. I am a sophomore at Kansas State University where I am majoring in animal science with a biotechnology option. I have served two previous years on the national board as your Leadership Director and Mountains Region Director. This year I am excited to serve as your president and also represent the Mountains Region. Please feel free to direct any questions, comments, ideas, suggestion or thoughts to me or your regional director.

As we come into a new year, I think you will find that a common theme of the National Junior Red Angus Association is novelty and change. We recently elected a new National Junior Board of Directors, we have a new Junior Coordinator, and the RAAA will elect open board positions in September. I encourage all members and Junior Red Angus supporters to keep an open mind to change that leads to improvement from where we are today.

During a conference call, Rhonda Deist, Junior Activities Committee member, provided the group with a quote written by L. Thomas Holdcroft. "The past is a guidepost, not a hitching post." As we go throughout this new year we need to keep in mind that the history of the National Junior Red Angus Association has been very productive and successful and we can use the past as a guidepost.

However, as George Bernard Shaw said, "Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything."

In order for our Association to move forward, to continue to succeed, to accomplish new goals, to grow, and to continue to become the best that we can be, we must change and not use the past as a hitching post. As we look at change, the one thing that we have to keep in mind is that without the core policies as our guidepost, our organization could make a turn in the wrong direction that would have a lasting negative effect.

This is another example of how we will be using the past as a guidepost. With all of this change, though, we will need support now more than ever. Support from our National Board, support from our sponsors, support from our families and support from the breed as a whole.

The newly elected National Junior Red Angus Board of Directors met after a successful Round-Up in North Dakota and had a meeting of the minds. This will be my third year as a National Officer for the Junior Red Angus Association and coming into the year, I am the most hopeful and excited to see what this year has in store. At the meeting we came up with a list of potential priorities, event and activity ideas and guiding principles.

When looking at the potential priorities that we as a board feel are important to accomplish this year, we composed a list of five items. This list will continue to grow throughout the year, but as we begin, we feel it is important to grow the participation of our current JRA membership, promote our member events and opportunities, build relationships with potential commercial members, build intentional communication with interested parties, membership and our board, and finally execute aggressive board goals.

Looking at the list, everything seems almost easily achievable, but from previous experience I personally know that without a plan to achieve every item on our potential priorities list, we won't meet our goals. So as a board, we came up with a plan for each priority.

We plan to increase growth from our current membership by attending and participating in more state and regional events as well as by making more regional contacts. By being more active in our regions we will also be able to promote our member events and opportunities. We will also achieve this priority by utilizing social media such as Facebook and Instagram.

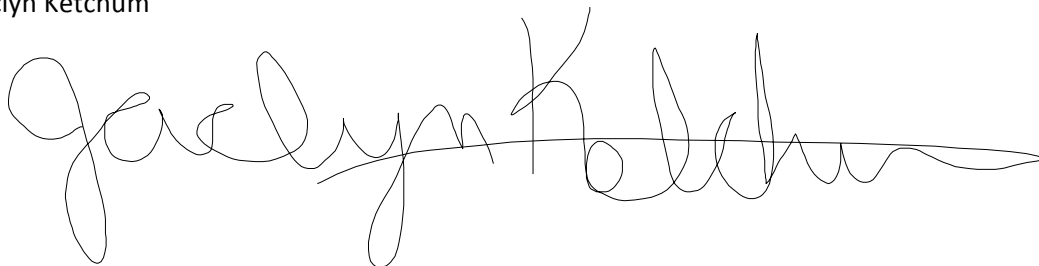
We plan to build relationships with potential commercial members by increasing interactions between our board and partner groups by attending conferences such as NCBA, Red Angus Summit, Red Angus National Convention and BIF. By attending these events we will not only be able build relationship with potential commercial members but we will also be able to have more of a presence at these events and will increase the industry's knowledge of the National Junior Red Angus Association.

As far as becoming a more aggressive board and setting more aggressive goals for our board, we plan to have a weekly board business meeting. When we look back at our priorities we see room for improvement but we also are able to see that there is more than one way to accomplish each of our priorities. That is why we also created a list of guiding principles.

We as a board must be open to different ideas and perspectives, we must establish trust in relationships, we have to keep in mind that leadership is not about us as individuals but those around us, and we have to base all of our decisions on our Core Policies, our mission, vision and values.

As I look forward to this coming year I am excited to see what will come.

Your president,  
Jaclyn Ketchum

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jaclyn Ketchum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal tail extending to the right.