

WORKING TO BUILD A FUTURE

Chet McClure receives Allied Angus Breeders Scholarship.

by Karen Hiltbrand, American Angus Association

If the saying “work ethic is the most important component of being successful” is true, Chet McClure of Homer, Ill., should be quite the success.

At merely 12 years old, McClure had already started his first job. Since then he has worked to ensure he had the available funds to attend college, with the goal of becoming a veterinarian and owning his own cattle/mixed animal practice.

“Currently, I am employed for three different entities, working 70-plus hours a week during breaks and approximately 20-plus hours a week during the school year,” says McClure.

While pursuing his undergraduate and doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM) degrees, he has collectively held 13 internships and jobs, and he has proven himself to possess the work ethic required to ensure success.

“The crazy part about it is, with all the information I’m getting fed, I mean, I’ve never loved going to school as much as when I’ve gone to veterinary school,” he says.

Being recognized for his work ethic and commitment to success, McClure was selected as one of three to receive \$1,000 Allied Angus Breeders scholarships in 2019. As the cost of tuition rises, so does the financial commitment the Angus Foundation extends to Angus youth to advance its mission of education, youth and research. The Foundation offers young men and women the Allied Angus Breeders Scholarship to support those making sound breeding decisions through the use of registered Angus genetics.

Grandfathered in

Several factors contributed to

McClure’s spark of interest in the cattle industry, but it was predominately thanks to his family’s strong roots in agriculture.

As a little boy, McClure says, he can remember he and his siblings traveling around with his grandfather, who was a large-animal veterinarian, and going on farm visits.

McClure says his grandfather was one of those people who was a great teacher, but didn’t want to go into teaching. Today, he attributes his comfort level to going out in the field alongside his grandfather all of those years.

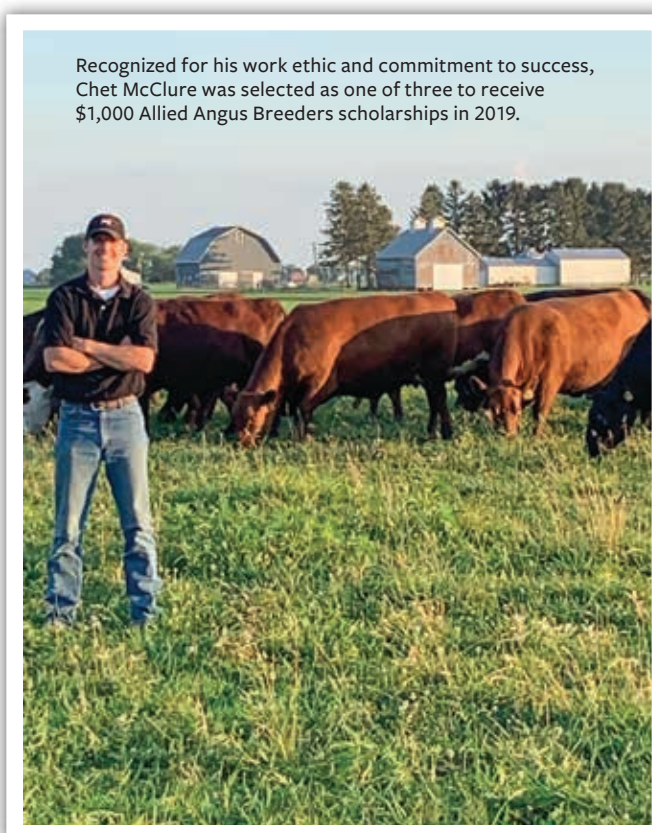
“We’d hold horses for him to pull blood on, or we’d go to a swine farm with him,” he says. “I am so much more comfortable in class because of the experience I had growing up with cattle and being able to be around my grandfather as far as knowing what to do.”

Aside from all the time spent with his grandfather, watching his older brother show also played a role in developing his interest in cattle.

“We showed cattle since I was little,” he says. “That is what got me interested in the first place. What kept me going was the cattle production aspect of it.”

It was in the second grade when McClure says he remembers bringing home his first registered Angus heifer. Although he enjoyed his time in the show ring, he most enjoyed being able to go out and feed cows and see the hard work he invested in pay off.

“It’s a cool feeling to be able to see everything come together at



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the end and be able to see not only the dollar amount, but the growth of the calves,” he says. “It’s being able to see everything come together and have a product that you put all that work into come to fruition.”

Deciding to succeed

Aside from his educational pursuits, McClure chose to implement Angus genetics into his herd for the simple explanation of marketing opportunities.

“My goal as a cattle producer, as every producer should be, is to

produce high-quality beef to customers by the most efficient means possible,” he says. “I can capitalize on programs such as CAB® (the Certified Angus Beef® brand) and improve my bottom line at local feeder-calf sales.”

McClure is always aiming for efficient production. During his interview specifically, he is multitasking while in the tractor baling hay.

“It’s always been a thing for me, to stay busy,” he says. “If I have time to do something, I want to try to get stuff done. I think that’s kind of been the mentality I grew up with.”

Aside from his fast-paced lifestyle, he still finds the time to reflect on the opportunities he has been presented.

“Be thankful for where you’re at, the opportunities that have gotten you there, and just keep plugging away at it,” he says. “Keep the people around you as positive as possible.”

With the help of the Angus Foundation, McClure will be able to dedicate more of his time and effort to the pursuit of his education and less time worrying

about finances. The Angus Foundation is committed to providing avenues for success to past and present junior members. The Allied Angus Breeders scholarships are available to students, or students from families, who use Angus genetics. Interested students are urged to apply by May 1. For more information or to apply, visit <http://bit.ly/ABB-Com-Scholar>. ■

Editor’s note: Karen Hiltbrand is a communications specialist for the American Angus Association.