



# DREAM SUPPORT

Jake Barnes credits the Angus Foundation for making dreams of higher education and securing a career path in agriculture a reality for young people in the industry.

## Angus Foundation scholarship fuels dream for young Oklahoma cattleman.

by Kaitlyn Ryan, American Angus Association

Jake Barnes isn't your typical ranch kid. Everything he's learned about the cattle business has been by trial and error, and his family's ranch is one that's been built from the ground up.

Tucked way up in the northeast corner of the state, Diamond B Ranch is located at Fairland, Okla. Jake's parents, Jerry and Kathy Barnes, bought the ranch when Jake was only 2½ years old.

Raising cattle wasn't the original motive for the purchase. Rather, his dad wanted to teach him to hunt, fish and live a quiet life in the country. However, as fate would have it, the ranch acquisition came with a handful of commercial cattle, which the Barnes family learned to care for on the spot. The experience sparked a passion in Jake at a young age.

"At 2½ years old, I remember helping round cows up," Jake says, adding, "well, as much as a toddler can help. I would just wave my arms and yell like I saw my dad do."

With a limited working knowledge of the cattle business, but a desire to pursue a life in the industry, Jerry conducted some research on different breeds and

management practices. At the conclusion of his research, all signs pointed toward breeding Angus cattle. The breed's docility, easy maintenance, maternal instinct and high-marbling ability were just a few selling points.

Unfortunately, before the family was able to start building their herd, Jerry's job transferred him to Denver. The family decided to put off the cattle endeavor due to the long distance, and the land was leased out during their stay in Colorado.

### Back in business

Ten years later, just as Jake was gearing up for his sophomore year of high school, the Barnes family returned to northeast Oklahoma. Back in a position where he could pursue his dream of raising cattle, it was a no-brainer for Jake to join FFA. His dad took him to his first cattle sale, where he purchased his first show heifer, solidifying his interest in the cattle business.

This heifer became the

foundation female for Diamond B Ranch and was instrumental in developing the herd. As the cornerstone of the current herd's genetic merit, she helped Jake reach new heights on a competitive level. Perhaps his most notable accomplishment as a young breeder, Jake's bred-and-owned bull, Take Notice, was named grand champion at

the 2016 National Western Angus Bull Sale Show.

Involvement in organizations like the Oklahoma Junior Angus Association and Oklahoma Junior Cattlemen's Association was key in developing Jake's industry knowledge. Coupled with invaluable support and life lessons from his father, he's learned a lot over the years — from feed and supplement strategies to cutting and baling hay.

"But I've learned a lot about death and disappointment, too," Jake says. "I've learned how to be a gracious loser, and that sometimes life just isn't fair. But in spite of all that, the good still outweighs the bad, and the rewards are worth the struggle."

### Looking at college

When the time came for Jake to decide on a senior college, Oklahoma State University (OSU) easily sorted itself to the top of his list. However, this exciting transfer shed light on the ever-increasing costs of higher education.

This led Jake to apply for the 2017 Angus Foundation Allied Angus Breeders Scholarship. The Allied Angus Breeders Scholarship is offered to young breeders who use Angus genetics in a commercial cattle operation's breeding program or whose parents use Angus genetics. Jake was chosen as a recipient of the scholarship award, and is thankful

for the role it has played in funding his education.

"College is only getting pricier, and this scholarship really helped offset the cost," Jake says. "The Angus Foundation makes all the difference in the world for some students, and I was honored to be chosen as a scholarship recipient."

Jake is on track to graduate this May with a bachelor's degree in agricultural leadership. His post-graduation plans are not set in stone, but one thing that is a definite for the now 24-year-old is his plan to continue developing and growing his herd at home.

"I'm very invested in the future of our operation," Jake says. "I think a lot of that has to do with me helping grow the ranch to what it is today and seeing our hard work come to fruition."

The Barnes family currently grazes 150 registered Angus cows. They use data from the American Angus Association — including expected progeny differences (EPDs) and HD50K™ for Angus scores — to make bull and replacement heifer decisions.

### Foundation support

Jake credits organizations like the Angus Foundation for making dreams of higher education and securing a career path in agriculture a reality for young people in the industry.

"This scholarship tells me that the Angus Foundation believes in my future and my plans," Jake says. "It's reassuring that there are people willing to invest in my future impact on the industry."

The Angus Foundation offers three \$1,000 Allied Angus Breeders scholarships each year. Applicants must be a graduating high school senior or enrolled at a junior college, four-year college/university or other accredited institution and have a minimum 2.0 GPA. Scholarship applications are available online at [www.angusfoundation.org](http://www.angusfoundation.org) and are due May 1, 2019. ■

Editor's note: Kaitlyn Ryan is a communications specialist for the American Angus Association.