

2018 GOAL Conference Report  
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This year GOAL was once again not just an opportunity to learn about the beef industry, but an event to make connections, experience unique activities and meet great people all while sharing appreciation for the Angus breed! This year GOAL was located in Winnipeg, Manitoba and as I stepped into the cool Winnipeg air, excitement buzzed through my body. Over the three days that we spent in Winnipeg, we were able to hear many different speakers talk about beef cattle and different techniques for managing them.

The conference started with some icebreaker games to help all the participants get to know each other better. The first speaker of the day was Erika Easton from Farm Credit Canada. She spoke to us about how to approach getting a loan for your operation and helped us work through an application as a group.

A speaker that I learned a lot from was Lance Stockbrugger. He did two different presentations. The first was titled "Succession and Taxes, Both are Certain". It focused on how to prepare farms so that they can be passed on in a financially stable and comfortable way for both parties. We also learned about the special way that farming is taxed and how to use it to benefit us the most. His second presentation was "Against the Odds" after dinner. In this presentation Stockbrugger told us about his farm and the journey that got them to where they are today. Over the years they had a few setbacks but they managed to get past them and create a successful business. Their story is a great example of how with hard work and perseverance you can be successful.

Finally, Macy Liebreich, our Junior Angus Ambassador then talked about her year as Ambassador and the awesome opportunities she has been given by holding that position. She encouraged all Juniors to apply for the position.

Apart from speakers, the first evening we enjoyed a fancy dinner where we all got dressed up and got to practice our dinner etiquette. The Juniors were all split up and assigned seats throughout the dining room to meet new people. At first some of the motions felt awkward but by the end most of us were dining like pros. This skill will be important in the near future and I am really glad we got the opportunity to take part in the lessons. Later in the evening we enjoyed some fun games including musical chairs, whose line is it anyway, lovers leap and had a quick "fake" auction for fun! Nevertheless we were all tired and ready to go to sleep after a jam packed first day.

The next morning we went to the Human Rights Museum. Every single detail of the museum had multiple meanings; from the architecture to the rocks, everything was an important symbol. Our tour guide explained to us about how many Canadians of different races were being treated unequally, and how women were also not treated fairly for quite some time. Aside from the information we learned, the museum itself was amazing! It had seven floors and a big tower on the top with an elevator that took us to the top where there was a great view of Winnipeg. After the museum we were given a short amount of free time to explore the Forks shopping complex or skate outside.

After lunch the Foundation Legacy Scholarship panel discussion was held. As usual the five candidates were very qualified and did an excellent job. Our CEO Rob Smith asked a variety of questions of the finalists and they were judged on their responses. Congratulations to Chris Jeremy for winning first place and receiving \$5,000; Lexi Hicks for placing second and receiving \$3,000 and Alexis DeCorby placed third and received \$2,000 as well as Brianna Kimmel and Heidi Tymko receiving runner up and \$500 each.

That afternoon our first speaker was Andre Stepler. He did a presentation on marketing that had a fresh, modern spin on it. He explained how he uses social media to promote his product and what we can do to promote ours. He found that Facebook was a very successful form of media to use because that is where the consumers are right now. Through Facebook, Stepler posts videos about everyday life at their farm as well as showcase pieces. I enjoyed this presentation because it showed us different ways to change our marketing styles to fit consumers.

Next Dr. David Hamilton came and spoke to us about embryo transfers. We learned a little bit about the history of embryo transplants as well as the different techniques and technologies used for embryo transfer today.

That evening we went to a dinner theatre that was very new experience! We watched a comedy play and between scenes we were served dinner. All of the servers were in character and they even pulled people out of the crowd to dance on stage. It was a really fun way to have dinner. Later that night we went to a board game café. Basically it was a little coffee shop that had over 1,000 board games. We all played games and got to know one another. Many laughs were shared that night.

Monday morning started off bright and early with a presentation from Bob Toner. He spoke about “Acquiring and Keeping your Customers.” I learned a lot about how to gain customers, but more importantly how to keep customers. One very important way of doing this for Mr. Toner was to keep “Customer Files.” These files included lots of information such as customer contact information, past purchases, details about their own cow herd, family members, pictures of the customers, and their preferences in cattle (price range, size, type.) He also talked to us about how it is very important to keep in contact with your customers to make sure that they are satisfied with the product, and to address any issues that there may be.

Next we had Jonathan Bouw speak about “Inputs, Production & Profitability”. He had a lot of interesting ideas that he uses on his operation to give him an edge. He spoke about bale grazing, purchasing hay instead of making it, calving later in the year and pasture management through rotating grazing and feeding grounds. Lastly, Meghan McGillivray and Macy Liebreich gave reports about the opportunities the CJA offers to its members as well as a report on the Junior trip to the WAF in Scotland this past year. It was great to hear about all of their experiences and definitely made us want to apply for some of these opportunities in the future!

The conference closed with speeches from retiring CJA Directors Raina Syrnyk and Ella Wood. Once those closed, we said our goodbyes to new and old friends as we all parted ways. GOAL Conference was an amazing experience and I am really glad that I was able to attend. I learned

so much, but it wouldn't have been as much fun if I hadn't met so many great people there. I really look forward to the 2019 GOAL conference, and I hope that I can attend more CJAA events in the future!

I would like to personally thank Canadian Junior Angus and the Canadian Angus Foundation for the endless opportunities they provide to Junior members as well as Belinda Wagner for everything that she does for the Association and especially all of us Juniors. We wouldn't be able to do all of this without you!

