2018 Colvin Scholarship winners named

By Diane Meyer

Six aspiring college students were awarded $33,500 through the *Certified Angus Beef* ® (CAB®) Colvin Scholarship Fund. Since 1999, the annual awards have supported future leaders in honor of the brand's co-founding executive director of 21 years, Louis M. "Mick" Colvin. The program continues his legacy of inspiration and creative leadership.

2018 Undergraduate Recipients

$7,500: Elisabeth Loseke | Senior, Animal Science and Pre-Veterinary Medicine | University of Nebraska-Lincoln
$6,500: Kylie Philipps | Senior, Animal Science | University of Florida
$5,000: Macy Perry | Senior, Animal Science | Oklahoma State University
$4,000: Madison Butler | Senior, Animal Science | Oklahoma State University
$3,000: April Molitor | Junior, Animal Science | Texas Tech University

2018 Graduate Recipient

$7,500: Michael Cropp | First Year, Meat Science | Iowa State University

Students who demonstrated commitment to the beef community through coursework and activities were awarded based on involvement, scholastic achievement, communication skills and references.

"The committee was blown away by the caliber of applications," said CAB's Lindsey Hoover, representing the selection committee. This year's undergraduate contenders discussed marketing plans the brand might develop in the next decade to meet global demographics and growth.

Top winner Elisabeth "Liz" Loseke sees room for digital and traditional marketing alike in reaching out to consumers, medical experts, lawmakers and producers. "Billboards, promotions at the meat counter, radio and television advertisements, and weekly grocery fliers should not be quickly abandoned in the pursuit of trendy marketing methods," the University of Nebraska-Lincoln senior wrote. "Maximizing the strengths of each generation will be imperative to anticipating demands of future consumers."

Drawing on family experience in medicine, Loseke said many dietary advisors downplay the need for red meat. "Targeting all types of future health professionals will result in a generation of providers giving medical advice that supports a diet featuring healthy, safe beef."

The animal science and pre-veterinarian major hopes to "utilize preventative medicine to ensure high-quality carcasses" to support the growth of an industry she has grown up in. "A career as a veterinarian encapsulates the opportunity to be involved in something bigger than myself by combining my love for advocating for the beef industry with science and medicine," she said.

Runner-up and $6,500 award winner Kylie Philipps stressed the importance of targeting the "purchasing power" in consumer demographics. "Emphasis will need to be placed on reaching the aging generations (as well as) Millennials and Gen Z, the growing population of ethnic consumers and the expanding middle class," she wrote.

After interning with Buckhead Meat of Florida, the animal science senior at the University of Florida plans to work with the company to reconstruct its "Beef 101" program. She suggested the CAB brand continue to "innovate, evolve and challenge the industry" to embrace rapidly changing global demographics and keep up with future expansion.

Macy Perry, Oklahoma State University (OSU) animal science senior and $5,000 winner, extolls marketing strategies that "influence newer markets and continue to grow the established ones." After graduating, Perry will start her master's degree in meat science this fall before attending law school to focus on food safety. She dreams of opening a high-end butcher shop as a way to "connect the consumer directly to the producer," which she sees as a key to future marketing.

Fellow OSU animal science senior Madison Butler identified foreign market expansion, technology and advocacy as three pathways for strategic marketing. "A locally grown product can also influence consumer decision," she wrote. "CAB could use technology to develop a traceability program because consumers want to know about the source of their beef." Her $4,000 award will go towards the master's degree she will begin this fall in animal breeding and genetics at Kansas State University.

Final undergraduate and $3,000 recipient April Molitor also sees the most marketing potential in the realm of consumer interest. "Certified Angus Beef would do well to work toward a more transparent marketing campaign that details very clearly what CAB stands for as far as sustainability of the industry and safe animal practices," the Texas Tech University animal science junior wrote. Molitor participated in research developing more affordable meat products, inspiring her to pursue a career in the meat industry as a food security and sustainability expert.

In 2012, the Colvin Scholarship Fund began awarding to graduate students in a recognized, full-time masters or doctorate program related to high-quality beef production.

This year's recipient of the $7,500 award is Michael Cropp, now researching ways to improve color stability and shelf life in cured meats as a first-year meat science master's student at Iowa State University. As part of ongoing research on nitrite-embedded film (NEF), an active packaging technology that imparts minimal levels of nitrite onto the product surface, Cropp's study is "focused on proving the potential application." To date, no other research has done that.

Hoover said, "The committee unanimously felt that Michael had a model graduate application."

"My hope is that my project will showcase other uses for NEF and expand scientific knowledge within the processed meat industry," Cropp said. "Assuming my project is successful, it could open doors for many various processed meats including those derived from premium graded beef programs such as CAB."

Top recipients Loseke and Cropp also earned all-expense-paid trips to the 2018 CAB Annual Conference in Maui, Hawaii. They will represent the fund throughout the conference, from their participation in the Colvin Golf Outing before the opening reception to the Colvin Auction during the awards reception.

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