AJCA Awards College Scholarships

The Arkansas Junior Cattlemen’s Association is pleased to announce this year’s recipients of $7,300 in scholarship awards. John Dillard of El Dorado receives $1,000, Bodie Cotter of Henderson receives $1,000, Kallee Cowart of Amity receives $1,000, Connor Miller of Leachville receives $1,000, Cole Umberson of Prairie Grove receives $1,000 and Blaire Wildy of Manila receives $1,800. Blaire Wildy was also awarded the MultiminUSA® $500 scholarship.

John Dillard is the son of Pat and Sue Dillard. John will attend Southern Arkansas University where he will study agriculture business and animal science. His goal is to work as a livestock feed specialist to assist farmers, ranchers and livestock exhibitors with innovative products. He says, “My local Arkansas Cattlemen’s Association (Union County Cattlemen) has provided knowledge based programs about the cattle industry and best practices for my cattle operation while providing support for youth interested in the industry.” John has served for five years as an Arkansas State Fair Ambassador. In this position he has volunteered countless hours of service but has also had the opportunity to express the importance of agriculture to children on school tours, audiences from live TV interviews and meetings with state legislators.

Bodie Cotter will attend the University of Arkansas where he will study crop science and agriculture education. He is interested in becoming an agronomist. He also has a strong desire to teach youth about agriculture. Bodie is the son of Lyn and Leah Cotter. It is Bodie’s desire to make a positive impact on the agriculture industry. Bodie says, AJCA has benefited him by providing him opportunities to compete and learn all while working to improve and increase and improve his cattle herd. Bodie has had an active high school career where he was highly involved in FFA, basketball and trap shooting. Through these activities and organizations he has learned the importance of community service not only in developing himself but also in making a positive impact on others.

Kallee Cowart is the daughter of Kyle and Dana Cowart. She will attend the University of Central Arkansas where she will major in biology as a step to becoming a physical therapist. After two different sports related injuries, it was then Kallee realized what she wanted to do with her life. Kallee has been active showing livestock at county, district and state fairs. Kallee is described by her teachers as having an endless curiosity to learn combined with a willingness to take risks. This will allow her to grow and achieve in both college and adulthood. Kallee can often be found working at the family business, a farm feed store in Glenwood.

Connor Miller will attend Arkansas Northeastern College where he will earn a welding certification. He will continue his involvement on his family farm as a fifth generation farmer. Connor is the son of Gordon and Missi Miller. Connor says “It is an awesome feeling you get when you work extremely hard with a calf and receive positive feedback in the show ring. It’s the best feeling in the world. Connor says his involvement in AJCA has taught him responsibility, to take pride in his work and that perseverance pays off. Connor is active on his FFA show team. In FFA he has held the offices of secretary and two terms as vice-president where he has learned extensive leadership skills. Connor is also actively involved in his school’s basketball program serving as team manager. Connors best memory of showing livestock was at the North American International Livestock Exhibition in Louisville, Kentucky. He says this quote holds lots of truth, “Show calves leave hoof prints on your heart.”

Cole Umberson is the son of Jason and Tonya Umberson. He will attend Eastern Oklahoma State College with a goal of transferring to the University of Arkansas to earn a degree in poultry nutrition. Cole has worked with his local Farm Bureau to serve as a presenter with the Ag in the Classroom program that teaches elementary students where their food comes from and the importance of agriculture. Cole is an active leader in his local FFA chapter where is currently serving as his chapter president. His chapter Poultry Career Development Team won state and earned 2nd place in the nation. Cole describes his involvement in AJCA as a great opportunity to show, learn, and meet new friends and network with cattle breeders while exhibiting cattle as being very beneficial to his future.

Blaire Wildy is the daughter of Justin and Kristi Wildy. Blaire will attend Arkansas State University in Jonesboro where she will study agriculture business and public relations. Blaire has served on the board of AJCA as an area vice president, president-elect and president. Blaire has chaired many AJCA committees that have included Super Saturday, the AJCA awards program, Arkansas State Fair Spring Show and fundraising. Blaire says, “AJCA has pushed me to become the leader I am today.” Five years ago if you would have told me I would be headed to college to major in agriculture, I would have told you that you were crazy! That all changed when I joined FFA and got my first steer and heifer project!” Blaire plays basketball and this year she has served her school student council president.

AJCA scholarships are made available through generous association sponsors, AJCA fundraising activities, AJCA sanctioning fees and membership dues. For more information about AJCA, please go to [www.ajcattle.com](http://www.ajcattle.com).