

## From Stout Award Winners to Jersey Leaders

Since 2003, the American Jersey Cattle Association has presented the Fred Stout Experience Award to give Jersey youth practical, real-world experience in the industry. The annual award is presented annually in memory of the late Fred J. Stout Sr. of Mt. Carmel Ill., as two unique paid internship experiences. Stout was a lifelong Jersey breeder and worked for Jersey Marketing Service (JMS) for nearly 20 years.

“Fred was a very successful self-made man who was very well respected in the industry,” said Ray Schooley, past AJCA president and member of the Stout Experience Committee. “The intent of the Fred Stout Experience Award was to offer an opportunity to Jersey youth, so they could have experiences like those that shaped Fred.”

In 2000, Stout passed away unexpectedly. Several of his friends in attendance at the funeral believed his influence should be remembered and carried on. With that, they took it upon themselves to establish contributions to carry out the Fred Stout Award.

The first award, created in 2003, was made for an on-farm internship and designed to give participants a customized experience working on a reputable Jersey dairy operation. Internship employers have included elite, historic Jersey operations including Jer-Z-Boyz and Arethusa Farm. This internship is structured around Jersey herd management and production while being tailored to each recipient’s specific end-goals and interests.

Later in 2004, the internship with JMS in Reynoldsburg, Ohio was added to the award. This unique experience allows interns to build valuable skills in areas of Jersey marketing, promotion and business. Daily, participants work alongside the USJersey staff, elite breeders and other notable figures across the industry.

Funds provided by a permanent endowment established by friends and colleagues of Fred Stout, pay for housing, travel and related activities required by the cooperating employer up to the maximum amount of the scholarship award. Throughout the 10-week duration of both internships, award winners take on an integral role in the Jersey community and build lasting connections with others in the industry.

“The success of the Experience internships and the number of people in the industry who have supported the Fund, is a strong testament to the respect we had for Fred and his contribution to our breed,” said Schooley.

As applications are now being accepted for the 2019 award, the Jersey Journal visited with previous interns from the past 15 years to see where they are today. In the following roundtable, four participants of the JMS portion and three participants of the on-farm portion weigh in with their experiences and insights from the summers spent working a vital role in the Jersey industry.

Though they all come from different backgrounds and ended up in different places, all agree their experience helped them reach where they are in their careers today.

### Roundtable Participants – JMS Interns

**Dan Bauer, Lake Mills, Wis.:** Bauer is a product development analyst at the newly formed global holding company URUS.

He and his team are responsible for developing the dairy genetic portfolios that are marketed by Alta Genetics, GENEX and Jetstream Genetics. Dan is a 2006 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The year prior, he received the Fred Stout Award and interned with JMS. Having grown up on a small unregistered Holstein farm, his Experience Award first introduced him to the AJCA where he worked his first five years post-college. He remains active with USJersey and attends the annual meetings every few years and has served as a ring attendant for the International Jersey Show at World Dairy Expo since 2015.



**Aaron M. Horst, Chambersburg, Pa.:** A graduate of Virginia Tech, Aaron was the 2006 recipient of the award with JMS. He



is now the Jersey Sire Analyst for ABS Global. He works with breeders from across the country to develop Jersey genetics for ABS customers. Growing up, he showed Jerseys on the state and national levels and was an avid competitor on the dairy judging scene. In 2007 he was the winner of the Jersey Youth Achievement Contest. Currently, Horst is the A.I. representative on the AJCA’s Type

Advisory Committee and sits on the NexGen Jersey Leaders committee.

**Olivia Pearson, Lincolnton, N.C.:** Olivia graduated from North Carolina State University with her bachelor of animal science in 2015 and earned her accelerated masters the following year. She was the 2013 intern with JMS, the same year she attended Jersey Youth Academy. She grew up very active in Jersey youth programs and was the 2014 Youth Achievement Contest winner. Pearson began her career as a territory business manager with Zoetis in Virginia. She is currently a marketing coordinator at Carolina Farm Credit and promotes agriculture through different media and events. In her spare time, she remains active with her family’s home farm, Piedmont Dairy, Sophia, N.C., as they move to build a farmstead creamery and market using their All-Jersey A2/A2 milk. She owns 20 Registered Jerseys.



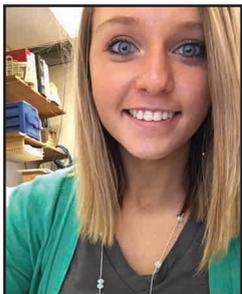
### Roundtable Participants – On-Farm Interns

**Tara Bohnert, Gilson, Ill.:** Bohnert was the very first recipient of the Experience Award in 2003 where she interned at Jer-Z-Boyz Ranch in Pixley, Ca. For the past 15 years, she has worked in the A.I. industry promoting brand awareness and

increasing Jersey semen sales. During three of those years, she worked to negotiate the acquisition of elite Jersey genetics. Currently, she serves as the president of the Illinois Jersey Cattle Club. She grew up being very active in Jersey youth programs and in the show ring. In 1999, she served as the National Jersey Queen. She is a 2002 graduate of the University of Illinois with a B.S. in animal science.



**Meagan Chittenden, Stittville, N.Y.:** The 2014 recipient, Meagan worked under the on-farm portion of the award where she worked at Young's Jersey Dairy in Yellow Springs, Ohio. She graduated from State University of New York Cobleskill in 2016 earning her bachelor's degree in agricultural business management and is currently a finance and accountant specialist at White's Farm Supply Inc. She served as the New York Jersey Queen and was a member of the third class of Jersey Youth Academy. Though she lives off her family's operation, Dutch



Hollow Farm, Schodack Landing, N.Y., Meagan still owns 30 Registered Jerseys. She is a lifetime member of AJCA and a New York State Jersey Cattle Club member.

**Gerret Boer, Dalhart, Texas:** In 2015, Boer completed his on-farm internship at the well-known Arethusa Farm in Litchfield, Conn. The senior at Oklahoma State University helps operate his home farm, Boer Jersey Dairy. Growing up he participated in many Jersey youth programs. He was a member of the third class of Jersey Youth Academy and participated in the TalkJersey speech contest. He was the 2016 winner of the Jersey Youth Achievement Contest. While



balancing his work on the farm, Boer continues to exhibit his animals in shows across the country.

**Laura Bell, Palmersville Tenn.:** Bell was the 2016 award winner and intern at Marcoot Jersey Farm and Creamery, Granville, Ill. She attended the University of Tennessee at Martin and graduated in 2017. She was an active member in the Tennessee Junior Jersey Club. Today, she works at her family's home farm, Bell Farms,



where they milk 76 Registered Jerseys enrolled in REAP. Bell's own herd consists of 20 head.

### Questions

*Why did you apply for the Fred Stout Experience Award?*

**Bauer:** While attending college, I was extremely interested

in dairy cattle marketing and sale management. I was certain I wanted to spend a summer working dairy sales with an established sale manager. Through discussions with Ted Halbach, who was one of my college instructors, I learned about JMS and its interest in potentially taking on a summer intern. After reaching out to ACJA to learn more about JMS, I was encouraged to apply for the Fred Stout Experience Award as a possible way to help finance the internship experience we were discussing.

**Bell:** I wanted to see how other farmers operated and how they handled situations that we experienced on our farm. I also wanted to work on a farm that had a creamery.

**Boer:** I applied because I thought it would be a great way to be able to get experience on prestigious farms outside of my own. I was told that when you apply, they take into consideration your interests to find a great fit before they place you for the summer. I couldn't have even imagined being chosen and placed on my dream location, Arethusa Farm, but Jersey made it happen.

**Bohnert:** I applied for the Fred Stout Experience Award because I had the honor of knowing Fred. He had coordinated the on-farm internships that both of my older brothers had done, so I knew the value in gaining experience on other dairy operations. I had actually already lined up my internship at Jer-Z-Boyz Ranch prior to winning the award.

**Chittenden:** I applied for the Fred Stout Experience because I was a first-year college student who wasn't quite sure what exact part of the industry I was interested in. I wanted to use this experience to help narrow what career I would like to pursue.

**Horst:** My college advisor, Dr. Katherine Knowlton, encouraged me to apply because she thought it fit my background and interest. I am very grateful she drew my attention to it.

**Pearson:** From an early age, Jersey genetics were a passion of mine. As odd as it sounds, at five years old, I loved attending sales, studying pedigrees and waiting to see what each animal would bring. After learning about the Fred Stout Experience, I knew this was an opportunity to bring my passion for marketing Jersey cattle and the desire for more knowledge and experience together into one total package.

*How did your time in the program impact your career and where you are today?*

**Bauer:** My summer internship with JMS was crucial in shaping my early career out of college as well as my more recent work in the A.I. industry. My internship experience exposed me to the benefits of the Jersey cow, introduced me to amazing Jersey people, and allowed me to travel extensively to new and exciting parts of the country. The JMS internship was directly responsible for me spending the first five years of my professional career with AJCA/JMS and allowing me to stretch and challenge myself with leadership and management responsibilities at a relatively young age.

**Bohnert:** My exposure to large herd management and the western style of dairying was very impactful in my future in the dairy industry. I learned how to use valuable tools such as Dairy Comp 305, refined my A.I. skills and learned the logistics involved in managing a large-scale dairy. I built relationships that are still valuable today. Just as Fred believed, I believe in the power of learn-by-doing.

**Horst:** I was an intern after my freshman year, and it helped me understand that the show world I focused on growing up was

a small part of the larger Jersey landscape. After visiting more production-focused herds, I had a stronger appreciation for their cows and how farms made a variety of breeding philosophies and business models work. Through obtaining sale consignments and laying out ads, I met a lot of breeders and learned the full array of bulls and cow families that benefit me in my role today.

**Pearson:** This experience provided the opportunity for both hands on experience in marketing and working cattle sales. I was positively impacted from this opportunity in that I was able to rely on what I learned about promotional advertising, customer service and internet sales to secure my current position as a marketing coordinator for Farm Credit.

*What were your most memorable experiences? What are the most important practical real world and life skills you learned?*

**Bauer:** The most memorable experience for me was traveling to Tillamook, Ore., to work the Pride of the West sale series. It was my first trip to the northwest part of the U.S., and I vividly remember flying into Portland for the first time. I'll never forget what a new experience it was for a central Wisconsin small farm kid to be washing cattle right next to a beautiful, green, tree-covered mountain range!

On the practical side, I was able to drastically improve my teamwork skills by working with colleagues of different ages, locations and backgrounds. I learned the importance of understanding that all jobs are important on a team, whether they are behind the scenes or front-facing. I became more organized and effective at traveling efficiently, which was a big deal for me having traveled very little previously at that time.

**Bohnert:** The most memorable experience was learning to take what I knew about dairying with 100 cows and applying that to work with 3,000 cows. And a lot of that is built around relationships with those that you work with. Teamwork is essential and as much as you have to be a good cowman, you have to be good at other skills such as diagnostics, organization, computers, records, etc.

**Horst:** My second week on the job, I rode with area rep Dave Parkinson from Reynoldsburg to the Quebec border doing herd visits. I learned a lot about trip planning and remember a lot of his stories. I was impressed with how well he knew everyone we visited.

In fact, my trip to Oregon for the Pride of the West sale was the first time I'd

been on the west coast. The cows and the scenery are hard to match anywhere.

Until that summer, the only things I knew about most of the people and farms I worked with were from what I had read or heard from other people. I learned that there is no substitute for firsthand encounters in forming opinions about a farm, people, or anything else.

**Pearson:** Honestly, the most memorable experiences I had were with the AJCA, JMS and the sales crew staff. They made this experience for me and truly left me with not only knowledge, but also memories and laughs to last a lifetime. Overall, the most important life skills I learned were organization, providing excellent customer service and paying attention to detail. All these skills are criteria that employers look for when hiring.

*What has been the impact of the program on your career goals?*

**Bell:** The experience made me realize that having a creamery operating while working with the cows is more difficult than I realized at that time.

**Boer:** The program has helped me confirm that I want to stay in the dairy industry and allowed me to make connections with elite people in the field.

**Chittenden:** My experience has opened my eyes to the extent of consumer outreach and the different ways to bring the public in, whether it is just a day event, a farm-to-table restaurant or other attractions. This is something that we have incorporated over the last few years at Dutch Hollow, my family farm, and would love to pursue in future endeavors.

*What were the personal goals and expectations you hoped to achieve during your time on the internship?*

**Bell:** I wanted to learn how to make cheese and how to run a creamery.

**Boer:** What I hoped to achieve during my internship was to be able to take better care of high-end animals on a day-to-day basis as well as broaden my knowledge on the dairy industry.

**Chittenden:** The personal goals and expectations that I had for my internship experience was to learn about the marketing and consumer outreach that Young's Jersey Dairy had perfected with their community. Specifically, I learned how the consumers responded to daily farming activities and how they felt towards the farm in general.

*What would you say to youth considering applying for the internship? Why would you encourage them to apply?*

**Bauer:** I would highly recommend that youth considering applying for this internship do so. The Jersey cow continues to grow in popularity both domestically and internationally. The opportunity to meet and work right next to the leaders of such a fast-growing dairy breed is priceless. I've found Jersey people in general are extremely eager to embrace youth looking to learn about career opportunities in the dairy industry and Jersey breed. Whether the internship leads to full-time professional employment or not isn't ultimately critical, because, in the end, the skills learned and relationships made will prove to be valuable in a variety of career paths.

**Bell:** Do it because it is good for everyone to get off of the family farm for a little while to see that there is more than one approach to a situation than the one that you would take.

**Boer:** I'd tell them that they should apply because it's a great experience as well as a great way to work with and learn from other great Jersey breeders.

**Bohnert:** As a past Experience Award winner and a committee member, I cannot stress the opportunities in applying enough. Your experiences are just as valuable as your education on a resume. Even if you want to go back to your home dairy, branch out and learn from others. The opportunity to learn from others is huge. That is something Fred taught my family. Even though we wanted to farm, he knew there were some really great teachers out there that we could learn a lot from.

**Chittenden:** I would tell a youth considering applying to absolutely do it. It's not just something to add to a resume, it's the entire experience that is worth more than any other scholarship.

**Horst:** I appreciated my experience very much at the time and do even more now as I reflect on how it shaped my goals and built connections. Whether a student wants to work in industry or return to the farm, I think the experience will provide valuable perspective.

**Pearson:** I would highly recommend and encourage any eligible youth to apply for this position. Regardless if you're interested in working on the family farm or for a company, this experience can provide you the opportunity to gain hands on experience and knowledge that you can use for your farm or future career. It's the best of both worlds when you can combine your passion for the Jersey breed and have real world experience to rely on when applying for future career positions.

*What advice do you have for the future*

*interns?*

**Bauer:** I would encourage students to challenge themselves to pursue an internship or two during their college career that takes them out of their comfort zone. Internships are the perfect opportunity for new experiences, such as trying an area of the industry not previously considered or moving out of state for a summer. The future is impossible to predict, and as many have said, change is the only true constant.

Having said that, I would encourage students and young professionals alike to keep an eye on what's going on in the industry that they are most passionate. Strive to develop your own vision, and focus on what skills and experiences will make you most valuable in the future you want to excel in. With your own unique dreams and aspirations in mind, look for internship programs that will help you develop and mature on both personal and professional levels.

**Bell:** Go into the internship with an open mind and with goals.

**Boer:** Do not take the internship for granted. Absorb as much knowledge as you can, because the time will feel like it's going by faster than you realize.

**Bohnert:** Dream big. The Fred Stout Committee works hard to make a customized on-farm experience. The

committee utilizes their resources to match the recipient with a dairy that has a focus in the areas of interest.

**Chittenden:** I would tell them to get out and do something different. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity, take full advantage of the knowledge and experiences. It's the time to get out of your comfort zone and try something you have never done before or learn more about an interest.

**Horst:** You will meet a lot of people that you will work with in some way in the future so engage with them and learn from them! Herby Lutz was my boss that summer and now works at Select Sires. Dan Bauer was newly hired at JMS and we are still friends from that summer. I visited Scott Carson's farm during our New York trip. Both (Bauer and Carson) are sire analysts at URUS now. Of course, I still work with a number of AJCA and JMS staff in my role now.

**Pearson:** My advice for interns working with Jersey Marketing Service would be to take advantage of the time you have with your peers. Build lasting relationships with them and learn from them. They have a wealth of knowledge and experience that you can benefit from.

**Deadline to Apply is December 1**

December 1, 2018 is the deadline to

submit applications and required letters of support.

Applicants must have completed their high school education. To apply, submit a one-page résumé listing previous work experience, skills and other qualifications, plus a separate cover letter stating your ambitions, goals and career aspirations, including plans for achieving them. The letter must also explain how and why the Fred Stout Experience will be of benefit in achieving future goals. A summary of involvement with and interest in Registered Jersey™ cattle is required. Specify which experience (marketing internship, on-farm internship) is preferred, or indicate if you are interested in both opportunities.

Two letters of support are required, one from an active breeder of Registered Jersey™ cattle, excluding immediate family members; and the other from a teacher, mentor or past employer. These must be mailed directly by the supporters to the AJCA office.

Email submission is preferred using the address [info@usjersey.com](mailto:info@usjersey.com). If sending by mail, address to Fred Stout Experience, c/o American Jersey Cattle Association, 6486 E. Main Street, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068-2362.