



Invest Directly in Your Future

fund-raising

noun: fundraising;

the seeking of financial support for a charity, cause, or other enterprise.

In July 2021, the seventh class of Jersey Youth Academy was held. Thirty-one bright, energetic high school juniors to college seniors attended and reinforced to USJersey staff our industry is in great hands.

Academy is a universally appreciated program. The industry likes it. Participants like it. Our members like it.

While we all agree it is a great program, it takes a committed staff and organization to facilitate the program and of course funding to financially support the endeavor.

Jersey breeders and the dairy industry have supported the cause many times. It all began with the syndication of a bull named BW Academy. After the first class in 2009, an all-donation National Heifer Sale was held in 2011 with the proceeds going to the Academy fund. There is an annual Cow Pie Bingo held with the funds raised contributed directly to Jersey Youth Academy.

Robert Bignami, Orland, Calif., has been one of the largest contributors to Jersey Youth Academy and a visionary behind the program concept. After the conclusion of Class VII, he took time to talk about fundraising and helping the program reach a self-sustainable level for the future.

“Like anything in this world, Academy costs money. For us to take the program to the next level, it will take fundraising. No one likes fundraising but we’ve got to do it.

“It doesn’t take a lot of money from an individual when a lot of us participate.

He offered the following ideas for donations that won’t break the bank.

- Donate a heifer at a sale or a portion of the proceeds of your consignment;

- Syndicate a young bull and sell shares in him to donate;
- Selling a cow for beef purposes? Donate the check to the youth programs of the AJCA

“By investing in Jersey Youth Academy, you are investing in your future. Any donation to the national Jersey youth development programs you are focusing on the future leaders in the industry.

“We are making a difference in a lot of lives with the smallest donations.”

Jersey Youth Academy is important to our future as an industry. Why? Its goal is to expose youth to as many possibilities as we can for careers in the Jersey and dairy industry. We need to retain their knowledge and passion to propel us forward.

As we look at our alumni, we see the diversity of careers amongst them. There are graduates home managing their dairies, state and federal veterinarians, herd managers, global dairy managers and general managers of A.I. companies, a communications manager for National Milk Federation and even a marketing specialist with the Federal Milk Market Administration’s office. The stars shine bright among us and they are making decisions today that affect our future and the generations behind us.

“It behooves all of us to lend every support and encouragement to the youth of our business.”

There are, however, other forms of “support and encouragement” that linger beyond any ribbon or trophy, certificate of achievement, cash award or scholarship check.

As you see Jersey youth going about their activities, do pass on words of congratulations with a big smile as they demonstrate good sportsmanship, keep up their records, or do any other good job that is part of their development as young Jersey breeders. Such actions on your part will surely inspire, and after all, “The inspired youth of today are tomorrow’s leaders.”