

GOALS 2021

SANTA GERTRUDIS JUNIORS CHART A COURSE FOR CLEAR SUCCESS

Forty-six members of the National Junior Santa Gertrudis Association (NJSGA) gathered in Crystal River, Fla., July 26-30, 2021, for a fulfilling experience at Gerts Ongoing Advanced Leadership Summit (GOALS). “Chart a Course for Clear Success” was the theme for the experiences that led the participants on new adventures, allowed them to gain valuable leadership skills and interact with many wonderful Santa Gertrudis friends for a memory-making event.

Young leaders representing seven states (Texas, Mississippi, Florida, Louisiana, Illinois, Arkansas and New Mexico) participated in this year’s event. The Plantation on Crystal River was a perfect setting to learn and have fun in the sun and water in the summertime. GOALS facilitator and featured speaker, Jason Wetzler, led multiple educational and inspirational sessions to engage participants to learn more about themselves and those around them, explore their WHY in life and contemplate how to be better leaders and citizens.

Outside the classroom, juniors experienced active bonding and leadership skills through activities and tours. Everyone enjoyed the GOALS 2021 Beef Cook-Off where team members were given a bag of groceries, ground beef and a pantry of items to create their own “epic burger” in a “Chopped-like” challenge. The youth loved this and the Plantation chef, marketing



director and sales representatives, who served as judges, were wowed by this competition. Participants enjoyed all the Plantation had to offer with a pool-side hamburger meal, swimming in the pool as well as the adjacent bay, and enjoyed a dive-in movie night.

One of the week’s highlights was the Adventure Center Boat Tour and swimming with the manatees. The “gentle giants,” often called sea cows, were exciting to see, especially a momma and baby calf manatee pair! And, getting to go to Three Sisters natural springs to “spring-hop” was a lot of fun and a beautiful nature experience that many have never experienced before!

The week also involved some outstanding agricultural tours and educational sessions. We had the privilege of

visiting the University of Florida (UF) Beef Teaching Unit in Gainesville. This 90-acre farm includes 200 head of cattle and provides hands-on training for students enrolled in the animal sciences program.

Todd Thrift, Ph.D., spoke to our juniors and provided a workshop on animal care and health, including information on vaccinations, proper healthcare equipment, dehorning and castration procedures, hormone usage and working cattle in general for their health and safety. Thrift shared a live demonstration of working bull calves in the cattle chutes to give them vaccinations, hormone implants, castration methods, etc. He also shared this information as part of the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program, which allowed all GOALS attendees to receive their BQA certification.

Thrift then shared a demonstration on pulling a calf in a full-size cow simulated model and shared the process of cattle birth as well as the complications that can come with calf presentations and how to effectively pull a calf if needed during birth. Jesse Savell, former Florida National Junior Santa Gertrudis Association member, also welcomed us to the beef unit as its manager. We also visited the UF Gator football stadium for photo opportunities as well as to see parts of the campus.

GOALS also featured a full day touring ag facilities in the Lake City area. We visited Cracker Land and Cattle Company, a bonded cattle dealer that specializes in cattle order buying and preconditioning. Cracker Land is a family-owned business that began in 2001 by Hunter and Luci Ketcham. Cracker buys, receives, processes and ships up to 4,000 cattle per week in Florida and Georgia and can ship to feedlots all over the United States. They also prepare and feed more than one million pounds of feed per week, and employ a

The GOALS delegation at the University of Florida Beef Teaching Unit with Dr. Todd Thrift and Unit Manager and NJSGA member Jesse Savelle. This experience allowed all the juniors to receive their BQA certification.



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full staff of cowboys (including former NJSGA member Jakob Jones)

We also visited Southern Cross Dairy, a local Florida dairy owned by Australian native and second-generation dairy farmer Dave Temple. Dave and his family recently built a new dairy facility housing Holstein females that are milked three times a day. They produce their own silage and breed all their dairy cows to a beef bull to produce halfblood calves for feedlot operations. Dave also created Thunder Coffeemilk, a popular Australian beverage. This product is made without added chemicals and preservatives, and is a shelf-stable coffee dairy beverage that is set to hit the U.S. market in September.

The final GOALS 2021 highlight was an evening dinner and dance at the Plantation. Florida Rep. Chuck Brannan addressed the youth and shared how his involvement with agriculture as a former NJSGA member and showman, 4-H and FFA member as well as state FFA officer made him the person he is today and attributes his success in politics to his upbringing in youth agricultural programs. He also shared a letter from the Florida governor welcoming GOALS 2021 delegates to Florida and recognizing the wonderful opportunities being afforded through this program.

The comradery and bonding these young people develop over the course of a GOALS experience is amazing. Testimonies sharing passionate emotion and gratitude from the oldest junior veteran to the newest GOALS rookie is something that is very present by week's end and so heartwarming to see! Nearly half of the attendees were first-



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ABOVE: The bonding and unity spirit of GOALS shown as members enjoy the Spring Hop at Three Sisters Spring off King's Bay in Crystal River.

LEFT: Juniors embark on a trip to the Adventure Center. Swimming with manatees was a highlight of the trip.

SGBI
On the Road

After being grounded during the pandemic, Santa Gertrudis Breeders International is back on the road, representing Santa Gertrudis genetics and promoting the breed to cattlemen across the southern United States.

It's been a busy summer for Executive Director Webb Fields, who has attended the National Junior Santa Gertrudis Show, the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association Annual Convention, the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association Convention and Expo and, most recently, the 2021 Cattle Industry Convention & National Cattlemen's Beef Association Trade Show. It's great to be out meeting people interested in Santa Gertrudis cattle! 🐄



ABOVE: Darren Richmond and Webb Fields at the SGBI booth at NCBA.



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timers, and all of them said they would return and were glad they attended. These kids truly love this breed, this association and the opportunities afforded them, and they learn wonderful leadership qualities through this program.

The GOALS 2021 youth and chaperones truly appreciate the support and financial contributions provided to help make this trip possible. Casey Jones and I truly feel that co-chairing and planning GOALS is a labor of love that we enjoy doing for and sharing with our juniors. We thank everyone who helped make GOALS 2021 possible and successful! 🐾



The 2021-2022 National Junior Santa Gertrudis Association Board at the closing dinner and banquet.

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