

## Jersey Born and Raised — Cassie Chittenden

Saying that Jersey cows have left a huge imprint on my life is an understatement. In my opinion, Jersey cows are the part of my life that will never end. As my parents claim, the love for Jersey cows is simply in my blood. With that said, growing up on Dutch Hollow Farm has allowed me to share this love with the entire Chittenden family. Each member of my family has, in some way, helped me to be able to achieve what I have in my life. However, it is my parents, Brian and Beth, that I owe the greatest thanks to.

During elementary school, I spent my after-school time hanging out at the barn, but my favorite time was summer because that meant it was show season and I had my very own calf to train and spoil. Every summer, my sister, cousins, and I spent our summer caring for our show heifers. All of us working together helped me to learn the value of teamwork and the importance of helping each other to be able to achieve a goal. It was also at this age where I began reading the *Jersey Journal*. However, it was common for my parents to “receive the *Journal* late” because I would hide it under my bed for reading every night until I had finished it three times.

When I became age eligible, I joined the local 4-H club and dove head first into the dairy project. Through my 10 years of 4-H, I participated in dairy bowl, dairy judging, dairy clinics, and showing at the county fair. During high school, I was a member of the New York State Junior Dairy Leaders program which allowed me to be able to attend the National 4-H Dairy Conference. This program was a group of teens who toured farms, explored new technologies, learned about careers in the dairy field, and most importantly, bonded with others who were interested in dairy. Furthermore, I served as the 2009-2010 Columbia County Dairy Princess and was selected as one of the top three written communications winners at the New York State dairy princess pageant.

In 1993, at one-year-old my parents purchased my first cow Huestis Brook Gail, Excellent-91%, from the Fantastic 50s Sale. Gail was an amazing brood cow, living to 14 years old and currently has 43 descendents in my herd of 21 heifers and 34 cows. Four of these descendents have placed in the National Jersey Youth Production Contest and an additional three have been shown in The All American Junior Show. Six bull descendents have been sold to A.I. companies and a granddaughter sold in the Pot O’Gold Sale. In addition, “Gail” herself also placed in the National Jersey Youth Production Contest and the Leading Living Lifetime Production Contest.

The first time I was exposed directly to the Jersey youth activities was my first trip to Louisville with my Grandma. When we first walked through the barn I was amazed just looking at cows’ signs seeing all the names of farms and cows

from the *Jersey Journal*. To my surprise Grandma had asked Paul Stiles if I could have my picture with “Blacky Rose,” the previous year’s grand champion. When I was walking through the bed I was so excited that I started to shake some and when I actually pet her she had the silkiest coat I had ever felt before. My favorite part of that trip was the first time I watched the National Jersey Jug Futurity. I sat in awe watching the queens enter and preside over the class from their ringside seats. When each cow was then introduced and the lights were raised to see

the ring full of Jersey cows, I was mesmerized and simply amazed. Four years later, I was honored to be able to show my bred and owned cow in the class just for the experience. As this year’s First Alternate National Jersey Queen, I became one of the girls to be escorted into the ring before the class began.

In addition to the other contests I have participated in, I was chosen to be a member of the first and second Jersey Youth Academy classes. For any youth who is interested in the Jersey breed and the dairy industry—**APPLY!** This program allowed me to learn about more topics in the dairy industry than I could imagine. Here we not only learned but bonded with other kids who are interested in Jerseys and the dairy industry. The friendships we built are ones that will last forever as I have seen many of these individuals at Louisville, Annual Meetings, and other dairy events.

Currently, I am entering my Junior year at Cornell University majoring in animal science with a dairy concentration, and an anticipated minor in ag business. Along with regular class work, I am very active in Sigma Alpha, a professional sorority for women in agriculture, serving on the executive board as the 2012 treasurer. This past winter, as a member of Cornell University Dairy Science Club, I was able to attend our trip to Italy and learn about agriculture in a different country. I am also a Cornell Traditions Fellow which honors students with a good work ethic and academic achievement. Even at college, I still set aside time to read over the *Jersey Journal* and sort through the top GJPI listings in the breed. All of my involvement and work I have done with the Jersey breed have allowed me to gain two internships during my summers; one at Scotch View Farm in Stamford, N.Y., and the other at D&E Jerseys in Hilmar, Calif. The experiences and confidence I have gained while working at both of these operations are lessons that cannot be found in a classroom.

As for my future plans, I will graduate from Cornell in May 2014. Beyond, that I hope to carry on the legacy which my great-grandfather Stanley Chittenden began, by working with and breeding exceptional Registered Jersey cattle that excel for tomorrow’s commercial dairy setting and markets. Words cannot quantify how I feel about receiving this award and thank you to all of you that have contributed to it.



## 2011 National Jersey Youth Achievement Awards

Cassandra Chittenden was born to carry on the strong lineage of successful Jersey breeders among the Chittenden Family. She was born the day of the New York State Sale in which her parents served as co-chairs, only to later make her own way in the dairy industry and be named the 2011 National Jersey Youth Achievement Winner.

The contest recognizes Jersey youth from across the country for their leadership activities and participation in Jersey functions, as well as their success in breeding and managing their own Jersey cattle.

This past March, 21 applications from determined and dedicated youth across the country arrived in the office of the American Jersey Cattle Association (AJCA). Each application was evaluated and ranked by a committee of judges to determine this year's top 10 placings.

The Jersey youth programs have been a core part of Jersey youth development since 1958. Nominations for the National Jersey Youth Achievement Contest are made by state Jersey organizations, which can nominate up to two individuals each year. The competition is open to members of the AJCA who are between the ages of 16 and 20 on January 1, 2011, or placed among the top 10 in the previous year's contest. The AJCA provides cash awards totaling \$3,000 to the top 10 individuals. Awards will be presented at the Junior Banquet on November 3, 2012, during All American festivities in Louisville, Ky.

### Cassandra Chittenden

Cassandra "Cassie" Chittenden, Dutch Hollow Farm LLC, Schodack Landing, N.Y., has had a busy year since appearing on the 2010 National Youth Achievement Contest as the third place winner. In addition to finishing her second year of college, taking part in several on-campus clubs and outreach activities and completing an internship at D&E Jerseys, Hilmar, Calif., Cassie served as the first Alternate National Jersey Queen. Cassie is



Chittenden

part of a long list of Top 10 Youth Achievement winners to hail from Master Breeders, Dutch Hollow Farm LLC.

Cassie, the third generation of the Chittenden family to participate in Jersey youth programs, is the daughter of Brian and Beth Chittenden, and granddaughter of Melanie Chittenden and former AJCA president and Distinguished Service honoree, Paul Chittenden. Cassie is the fifth member of this Jersey family to see their names among the Top 10 Youth Achievement winners behind her grandfather, father, aunt and uncle.

She is a sophomore at Cornell University where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in animal science with a focus in dairy science, with plans to adopt an agribusiness minor. Cassandra is a member of the Sigma Alpha Professional Sorority for Women in Agriculture, which she served as Philanthropy Chair, the Cornell University Dairy Science Club, the New York State Junior Dairy leaders and interned at Scotch View Farm, Stamford, N.Y., in 2011.

In addition to climbing the ranks of the achievement contest, Cassie has grown her Jersey herd to 24 heifers and 28 cows. In 2011 the DHIR m.e. production on 24 records in her herd was 21,022–1,033–732. She has regularly placed in the New York, New England and National Youth Production contests since 2001, winning production titles in the New York contest, the New England contest and placing four times in the national contest, including the 2010 contest.

In the 2011 her herd had an average appraisal score of 81% on 33 head, with two Excellent and 24 Very Good animals. Others have also noticed the quality of Cassie's animals, as she has sent five bulls into A.I. service and recently sold a heifer in the Pot O'Gold Sale.

"My cows are my motivator to be so passionate about agriculture," said Chittenden. "This industry has grown to be a piece of me, in the case that our industry is lost, it would be as if a piece of me was lost as well."

Cassie has used her passion for the Jersey breed to help promote the dairy industry and agriculture through various platforms. In December 2011, Cassie spoke to National Public Radio listeners of "The Takeaway" segment, where she discussed

the proposed change to national farm labor laws for children.

She has served as the Columbia County (NY) Jersey Princess and has been a member of the Columbia County Dairy Promotion board. She is a member of her district and state Jersey club and the AJCA. In 2006, she took second place in the TalkJersey competition—capturing first place in 2008—and was on the first place team from the Jersey Youth Challenge at the 2009 AJCA-NAJ Annual Meetings. This busy youth was also chosen to take part in both classes of the Jersey Youth Academy and participated in a youth roundtable for the September 2008 *Jersey Journal*.

At The 2011 All American Junior Jersey Show, Cassie was awarded the Sunbow Trophy for Top Producing Cow of the show, in addition to winning a PA Protein Award for her junior two-year-old, GR Dutch Hollow Gannon Glide during The 2011 All American Jersey Show.

Along with awards for her outstanding Jerseys, she has also won numerous for her "master" showman skills. Cassie has been named Master Showperson of the Columbia County (NY) fair three times and had the same honor bestowed upon her during the Delaware County (NY) Parish Show. At the age of 10 she was named the Reserve Master Showperson of the Columbia County (NY) Fair, a title she took home on two additional occasions.

As she heads back to school this fall, Cassie will continue her dairy science education. While hitting the books, Cassie will pay special attention to calf management and herd health, the two areas she is most passionate about. With a family steeped in dairy tradition and commitment to the Jersey breed, Cassie hopes to follow in the footsteps of those before her as a successful Registered Jersey breeder.

### Cassandra N. Krull

Moving up four spots to second place is current National Jersey Queen Cassandra "Cassy" N. Krull, Shining Star Dairy Cattle, Lake Mills, Wis. As she completes her final few weeks promoting the Jersey breed nationally, Cassy has her sights set on a new distinction, Alice in Dairyland, the Wisconsin agriculture ambassador position.

Cassy's herd posted an m.e. average of 15,568–817–576 on seven records.

(continued to page 20)