

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FORESTRY

2800 N. Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4912

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2017

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Betty Thompson, 405-522-6105, betty.thompson@ag.ok.gov

Significant Women in Oklahoma Agriculture: Blayne Arthur

Wife, mother, producer, community member, executive director, board member, sister, friend...no matter what role Blayne Arthur is in during the day, she maintains a constant mindset that she is blessed.

Arthur has earned the respect of many in the agricultural and professional world. There is no denying her experience and expertise in the field, from her background on the farm, to her numerous certifications and awards, and from her many group affiliations, to her impressive career in the industry. But it's not just Arthur's accomplishments and knowledge that draw many people to her. Her humility, trustworthiness and spirit of genuinely caring about those she interacts with leaves a lasting impression on many.

"I don't think I ever went to a meeting or conference with Blayne in which we were able to walk straight out the door," said Bryan Painter, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture Communications Director and former co-worker of Arthur. "There were always at least five or six people wanting to visit with her, either to get her opinion or to share information with her. Even when I was a reporter, I had the utmost trust in the information Blayne provided for me."

From the time Arthur was young, she had a love for agriculture and knew she wanted to stay in the industry. She grew up in Chickasha, Oklahoma where her family raised horses and shorthorn cattle as well as wheat, alfalfa and soybeans which were used primarily as feed for livestock. Arthur and her two sisters were active in 4-H and FFA showing their horses and shorthorns both statewide and nationally.

One of Arthur's favorite memories was from traveling across the country with her family to a livestock show.

"My favorite memory as a youth was when we went to the Shorthorn Junior Nationals in Michigan which is obviously a long ways from Oklahoma," said Arthur, "I was running for

National Shorthorn Lassie Queen and ended up being the first Oklahoman selected for that. I had put in a lot of work, and of course exhibited cattle as well, but that was a fun family memory and I loved representing Oklahoma as well.”

Arthur’s love for livestock shows has not changed over the years. It is a passion she shares with her husband Jerrod and their two children Kelton, 8, and Kennedy, 4. Jerrod, also a Chickasha, OK native, grew up showing livestock as well. Because of their mutual love for the shows and their desire to help youth gain as much from the experience as possible, they developed a family business selling show cattle to 4-H and FFA members. It is no surprise that Lucky Strike Show Cattle has grown to selling cattle across multiple states.

Arthur emphasized that preparation for a show begins long in advance, with hard work and a lot of hours at home on the farm. She and Jerrod are teaching Kelton and Kennedy not only how to tend to their animals, but also the importance of working hard in life.

Their children work daily with their show animals, whether it is washing, rinsing, brushing, or riding, a significant amount of time goes into a great showmanship animal. Arthur said her son Kelton really enjoys the cattle, and Kennedy, like her mother at a young age, is more of a horse girl. Growing up, Arthur’s family was very involved in the equine industry. Her grandfather and father both raised horses, and she and her sisters showed horses extensively at the state and national levels.

When Arthur is not working on their farm, or at a show, she is giving back to the youth in the state by serving as the Executive Director for the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation. She is passionate about the impact youth organizations can have and the important role they play in so many lives. Giving back and helping others is something Arthur credits to learning from her late mother, Dr. Margaret “Peggy” Clark, who was a victim of the 1995 Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City.

“She wanted us to help people out on a regular basis,” said Arthur, “She wanted us to do our best to help someone else.”

That’s a quality she emulates in her current position as well as her former position of Deputy Commissioner for the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry. Arthur served as the Deputy Commissioner from 2011 to 2016, and was honored for her tremendous work and service to the agricultural industry as the 2016 Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association Distinguished Service Award Recipient.

“I can think of few if any people who have benefited Oklahoma agriculture more than Blayne Arthur,” said Michael Kelsey, Executive Vice President of the Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Association. “Her positive and professional talent, rooted deep in her own personal agriculture upbringing, presents a passion for Oklahoma agriculture that is outdone by no one.”

She remains actively involved in the industry through organizations such as Oklahoma Farm Bureau, American Quarter Horse Association, and Ponies of the Americas. She has been the recipient of numerous honors such as being selected for the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program Class XV, a Journal Record 2011 Achievers Under 40 honoree, and the 2014 Oklahoma Agricultural Woman of the Year.

Because of her dedication to the industry, Arthur earned the reputation as a trusted voice of Oklahoma Agriculture during her time as Deputy Commissioner. Roy Lee Lindsey of the Oklahoma Pork Council said when he saw Blayne Arthur speaking to the media and the public about an issue, he was confident Oklahoma agriculture was being well represented. And many of the legislators she worked with felt that way as well.

“Blayne is one of the most dedicated people I’ve ever worked with,” said Oklahoma State Representative John Pfeiffer. “Her passion for agriculture was evident in her every day work at the capitol.”

Though she continues to receive such high praise from so many, Arthur’s humility remains as evident as ever. When asked about her success, she is quick to give credit to the many people in her life that have helped her along the way. She says it is more of a team effort.

“Having the opportunity to work with anyone in the ag industry is a great place to be,” said Arthur. “I have so much respect for ag producers because of the nature of what they are doing every day. I’ve been very fortunate that through my professional career I’ve been able to work on and focus on different areas that are helping our ag producers. Even though some days are busy days, when you know what you’re doing is having a positive impact in others’ lives, and especially in the lives of youth and people in the ag industry in general, it makes you feel like you’re doing good things every day.”

###

Photo caption: The Arthur family at the National Western Livestock Show in Denver, CO. From left to right: Jerrod Arthur, Kelton Arthur, Blayne Arthur, and Kennedy Arthur. Photo credit: Heidi Anderson.