

Since 1989 the Minnesota State Auctioneers Association has crowned a new auctioneer champion each year. There are not enough words to describe the feeling of becoming one of those champions when you write your name in the history book. Although that in itself is a great feeling, there are many other reasons why it means so much to me. Since 2005 I have been blessed to work weekly in the great state of Minnesota. Starting as a ring man at NorthStar Auto Auction in Shakopee, Minnesota, it took me nearly 15 years to get a full-time job behind the microphone.

Auctioneering championships were always something that I had my eye on but quickly in my career I found that I had to chase a paycheck and not a belt buckle. What I did not realize is the effect that competition has on you as an auctioneer. The last time I had competed was in the Iowa Auctioneer contest back in 2009. I took a break from competing and went to work sharpening my skills. In 2018 I decided to compete again and try my hand at the Minnesota State Auctioneer Contest. I was not one of the finalists, and I guess you could say that on that day in Moorhead, Minnesota the spark had ignited for me!

Since starting to compete again, I know without a doubt it has sharpened my speaking skills and created much more professionalism within me. Competing makes you think outside the box, and you meet people that are willing to help you. They become your friends; for example the 2018 Minnesota Champion David Whitaker and I still laugh about that day. He told me he called his wife and told her, "That JJ Wise guy is here." Anne's response to David was, "Well I bet he is saying that David Whitaker guy is here." After congratulating him that evening, he told me this story and I was saying the same thing in my mind! This is what makes these contests so fun for me: meeting new people that are willing to help you to become the best auctioneer you can be.

Being a Champion is much more than a belt buckle or a trophy. No matter how you place when you compete in an Auctioneering contest, you are a champion if you take something with you to improve on. I want to personally invite you to get outside your comfort zone, have fun and compete this year. If you know an auctioneer that is just beginning to develop their skills, encourage them to join our association and enter the rookie division. They are the future of our industry and if we do not encourage them, the live auctioneer will not be around long. If you yourself have ever competed or thought about competing, please enter this year - it may just be your year!

The contest will take place at the winter Conference and Show on Thursday, January 12 – 6:00 p.m. at Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center, 2100 Arrowwood Lane, Alexandria, MN 56308.

"You can't win them if you're not in them."

JJ Wise, 2022 Minnesota State Champion Auctioneer