

# Cool Jobs

## 12 Ways Columbians Make A Living Doing What They Love

BY ANITA NEAL HARRISON



### Cowgirl

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#### Laura Flynn-Smith, Flying 45 Ranch

Laura Flynn-Smith was just 18 when she married her husband, Travis Smith.

"We didn't start with much, and we weren't fortunate enough to have land passed down to us, but acquiring our own little ranch has been more than worth the blood, sweat and tears," she says.

Today, with the help of their two children, Katie, 18, and Zane, 7, they raise a small commercial herd of black Angus-cross cattle and American Quarter Horses. They train the horses themselves for the sport of cowboy-mounted shooting, in which swiftly riding contestants shoot targets with .45-caliber

single-action revolvers.

"We are on the road competing nearly every weekend during the warmer months," Flynn-Smith says.

The family also has a small business creating livestock branding irons.

The best part of ranch life, Flynn-Smith says, is seeing her children grow up close to the land. She recalls how Katie — then 12 years old and home alone in the early spring — saved a calf that had slid into the creek and stood freezing in the water. Katie saddled the family's best horse, roped the calf, drug it out of the creek, towed it off and took it to its mother to nurse.

"Our goal has always been to raise children who are capable, tough, kind, wise and strong — both mentally and physically," she says. "While we believe strongly in a higher education, we also believe that kids just really can't get that strong core anywhere better than the farm."