



Candidate Application for National Office

What you can expect when applying for a National Board Position:

- Newly elected individuals will receive training from board members, and materials related to the position will be passed down.
- Candidates will be invited to join the Pre-National Board Meeting as an observer to become familiar with board business (will not be reimbursed by National to attend)
- Newly elected Executive Board members may be reimbursed for one night's lodging for post board meeting (at a rate of ½ of double room) but are not reimbursed for additional travel costs. Meal reimbursement for day of post board meeting will follow Policy Manual and current approved budget.

Upon applying for the position, I acknowledge that I will have the necessary resources (i.e. computer, internet, etc.) to complete the duties of the position. ☒ I agree

Office Applied for: President Elect

Date: 1.22.25

This form should be used as a guideline. When typing your own form, add more space as necessary.

Christine		Zellers
First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
Assistant Professor	Rutgers Cooperative Extension	
Job Title	Employer	
4 Moore Road	Cape May Court House	New Jersey 08210
Work Mailing Address	City	State/Territory Zip
zellers@njaes.rutgers.edu	Zellers.rutgers2019@gmail.com	
Work Email Address	Home Email Address	
609.605.2825 x3603		609.605.2825
Work Phone/Extension	Work Fax	Home Phone

I. Education Background

BS/BA	Literature	West Chester University	1990
	Major	Institution	Year
MS/MA	Masters Public Policy	Walden University	2017
	Major	Institution	Year
PhD			
	Major	Institution	Year

II. State/Territory Affiliate Experience

Office	Year(s)
NJ Affiliate President Elect	2023-25
NJ Affiliate Treasurer	2020-23

Committee Chair	Year(s)
See NEAFCS Experience	

Committee	Year(s)
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III. NEAFCS Experience

Office	Year(s)
Vice President Public Affairs	2023-25
Chairperson Public Affairs Advocacy Committee	2022-2023
Vice Chairperson Public Affairs Advocacy Committee	2021-2022
Apprentice Public Affairs Advocacy Committee	2020-2021

Other Assignments Representing NEAFCS

PILD Liaison/Planning Committee (as VP of PA for NEAFCS)	2023-2025
Annual Sessions Attended (list years)	2020 (virtually), 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
New Jersey Delegate National Conference	2022

Submissions for Awards, Webinars and/or Annual Session Proposals (concurrent session, poster, ignite)
Submission did not have to be accepted.

Check all that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/> Webinar Submission	Year(s): _____	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual Session Proposal	Year(s): <u>2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025</u>	Proposal Type: <u>Concurrent & Poster</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Award Submission	Year(s): <u>2022, 2023, 2024, 2025</u>	

*Published articles in JNEAFCS

Zellers, C., Zmeckis, D., Errickson, L., Kinsey, J., Tansey, R., Calvo, L. (2023) What's the Catch? New Jersey Seafood and Healthy Living: Versatile Seafood Education Program. *Journal of National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 18, 90-94.
<https://www.neafcs.org/assets/documents/journal/2023-jneafcs/2023%20NEAFCS%20Journal%20FINAL.pdf>

Shukaitis, J. **Zellers., C.**, Delcollo, A., Elnakib, S.; Porter, S., Tansey, R. (2022). Wellness Wednesdays with FCHS: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from Implementing an Online Health Education Program. *Journal of National Extension Association of Family and*

IV. Non-Association Extension Leadership Assignments

(Annual conference committees, search committees, etc.)

Assignments: Elected (E) or Appointed (A)	Year(s)
Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB)	Member 2020-present
SNEB Public Health Committee	2020-2024 (A)
SNEB Competency Coordinator - Public Health Division	2020-2024 (A)
SNEB Competency Committee	2020-2024 (A)
American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences	Member 2022-present
Epsilon Sigma Pi Member	2020-present

V. Membership/Leadership in Other Organizations

(Professional, civic, service, religious or agency related organizations)

Organizations, Leadership role	Year(s)
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Regional Committees

Southern New Jersey Tobacco Collaborative	Member 2018 -present
Cape Atlantic Coalition for Health Coalition President	Member 2014 - present 2014-2018(A)

State Committees

New Jersey Tobacco Collaborative Member	2018 - present
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County Committees

Cape May County Human Services Advisory Council (County Commissioner appointed position)	Member 2020 - present (A)
Cape May County Wellness Committee	Member 2020 - present
Cape Regional Wellness Alliance	Member 2020 - 2022

VI. Work Experience Other Than Extension (if applicable)

Positions	Year(s)
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VII. Awards and Honors

Awards	Date(s)
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NEAFCS -Past Presidents New Professionals Award. 2024

NEAFCS Eastern Regional Award Winner – 3rd Place Excellence in Teamwork. *What's the Catch New Jersey Seafood & Healthy Living*. 20224

Gerwig Award – *Pilot Study- Cape May County Walkability*. \$1,000. 2022

*Please email one copy of your completed application
to the National Nominating Committee Chair (NEAFCS Immediate Past President).*

NEAFCS Eastern Regional Award - Excellence in Teamwork Award for *What's the Catch New Jersey Seafood & Healthy Living*. 2022

NEAFCS Eastern Regional Award– Communications Written Media Award – *Small Lifestyle Changes Can Boost Sleep, Health*. 2022

NEAFCS Roth/Sangree Professional Development Award 2022

NEAFCS State Award – Excellence in Teamwork Award for *What's the Catch New Jersey Seafood & Healthy Living*. 2022

NEAFCS State Award – Communications Written Media Award- *Small Lifestyle Changes Can Boost Sleep, Health*. 2022

Gerwig Award – *Pilot Study of Seafood Cost and Consumption*. \$1,000. 2020

Position Statement

A. Why would you like to be a candidate for this office?

Contributing my time and talent to volunteerism has always provided me with a sense of personal fulfillment. When I can commit to an organization that inspires me, it is far more rewarding and NEAFCS motivates me both professionally and personally. When I became a member of NEAFCS I immediately realized it as a community I wished to contribute to, and it has been a privilege to serve as Treasurer and President- Elect for my state-affiliate while also serving on the national level as the Advocacy Committee Apprentice, Vice Chair and Chair and then as the Vice President for Public Affairs. Because NEAFCS provides its members with a great sense of community, it is where I wish to dedicate my time and efforts for professional service. My previous leadership experiences, both personal and professional, have equipped me to lead with enthusiasm and empathy—qualities that align well with NEAFCS values. While NEAFCS is a professional association it is personally appealing to me. I prefer to dedicate my time to an organization that shares my values, and with NEAFCS, those shared values include strong relationships, meaningful professional opportunities, and career growth.

NEAFCS is a place where I can and do utilize professional support and growth while developing lifelong partnerships, collaboration opportunities and most importantly friendships. Since I became Vice-President of Public Affairs, I have been fortunate to develop relationships with colleagues across the country. It has been inspiring to see the work of others and to receive their support for my work. The question for me is not, 'why would I like to be a candidate for President Elect' but rather the question is 'why wouldn't I run for this office' because NEAFCS has offered me so many opportunities it seems only appropriate that I would want to give back.

In addition to the strong commitment, I have for NEAFCS as a member, I also have leadership skills that, if elected, I would be proud to utilize for the continued success of the Association. From my very first job at age 16 to my current position I have always been offered or promoted to management and leadership positions. A leadership area I pride myself on is mentoring others and leading by example. I have been fortunate to have incredible mentors, many in FCS, who have shown me grace, guidance, and exemplary leadership. Their influence has inspired me to pay their kindness forward and lead by example, just as my mentors did for me. I would be honored to share my leadership skills with my fellow NEAFCS members by listening, communicating and supporting the goals and missions of the Association for continued success.

B. If you were elected, what would be your top priority/goal for your term?

The membership of NEAFCS is growing and this continued expansion is exciting for FSC as a profession. As the Association continues to grow, consistent, inclusive and inviting communication should be a continued priority, not only with new members but with current and life members alike. Recent and current leaders like Jennifer Bridge, Rick Griffins, Julie Garden Robinson, Susan Routh, and Dianne Christensen have communicated with members and laid the groundwork for continued growth. To their credit, these leaders expanded the Association's community through

thoughtful communication. Our current President Jennifer Bridge has made 'read and respond' her Presidential slogan and I would like to build on that initiative to keep members engaged and involved.

As VP of Public Affairs, I collaborated with the three Public Affairs chairs to design and implement a survey assessing the use and impact of various Public Affairs campaigns. Member perceptions and understanding play an important role in communication utilization. The survey revealed that 50% of the members surveyed (n=122) did not utilize some of the readily available campaign materials—despite their great quality. We also asked why members may not be using resources and top responses were: lack of knowledge of resources and didn't know how to use resources. The survey revealed that, despite the availability of Public Affairs resources, many members were unaware of their existence or how to utilize them effectively. This highlights the ongoing need for clear and consistent communication with members. If elected, I will aim to build on the achievements of past presidents who prioritized communication by sustaining key initiatives like the mentoring program and enhancing outreach through Regional Directors. Additionally, I will emphasize the Association's valuable resources to support member professional growth and engagement so that every member feels welcomed, included and informed.

Are you willing to be considered as a candidate for a different office? The national nominating committee chair would contact you first as to your preference and willingness to serve in any other position. Yes ☒ No ☐ Maybe ☐

Are you willing to leave your application on file for three (3) years in the event of a position vacancy or for reconsideration for office for the next election? Yes ☒ No ☐

Your signature below confirms that you have read the current NEAFCS Policy Manual and agree to the duties and qualifications for the position in which you are applying for as well as additional policies outlined in the Manual.



1.22.25

Signature of Applicant

Date

Letters of support and recommendation from the following individuals must accompany the application.

- ▶ State Director of Extension (required)
- ▶ State Program Leader or immediate supervisor (one required)
- ▶ NEAFCS board member or state/territory affiliate president (optional)

Applications are due to the National Nominating Committee Chair by May 1st. Please include with your application a high resolution headshot photo for the candidate display at Annual Session.

NEAFCS is an equal opportunity/affirmative action association. NEAFCS values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of race, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Membership is not by invitation. (Strategic Plan 1993-97)

March 26, 2025

Dear NEAFCS Nominations Committee,

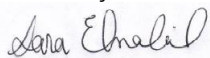
I am pleased to write in support of Chris Zellers' application for President-Elect of NEAFCS. Since joining NEAFCS in 2020, Ms. Zellers has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the organization through various leadership roles, including state treasurer and vice president, advocacy committee apprentice, vice chair, chairperson, and currently as Vice President of Public Affairs. Beyond NEAFCS, she actively contributes to the field through her involvement with the Society of Nutrition Education and Behavior, as well as numerous state and local committees in New Jersey and Cape May County.

As an FCHS Educator, Ms. Zellers upholds the highest standards of her profession. She is a highly effective educator, consistently receiving outstanding teaching evaluations for her direct instruction, as well as for training volunteers and staff under her supervision. Her scholarly and programmatic expertise centers on wellness and physical activity, areas in which she has published research and received multiple state and national awards. She is a regular presenter at national conferences and a valued colleague among her peers.

Ms. Zellers exemplifies the qualities of a dedicated Cooperative Extension professional. She is a team player who skillfully balances her job responsibilities while navigating the demands of tenure and representing her county, department, and Extension at local, state, and national levels. She is deeply engaged in her community, continuously seeking innovative ways to expand outreach while fulfilling her scholarly responsibilities.

I strongly recommend Ms. Zellers for the position of President-Elect. Her experience managing volunteers, staff, and interns, along with her leadership in previous professional roles, makes her exceptionally well-suited for this position. I have no doubt in her ability to support and advance NEAFCS's mission. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you require any further information.

Sincerely,



Sara Elnakib, PhD, MPH, RDN
Chair/Associate Professor
Department of Family & Community Health Sciences

March 17, 2025

Nominations Committee
National Extension Associate of Family and Consumer Sciences

Dear Members of the Nominations Committee:

I write to support Chris Zellers' application for President-Elect of the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. Chris has been involved in various capacities for NEAFCS since she joined in 2020, beginning as a member and thereafter assuming roles as state treasurer and president-elect, advocacy committee apprentice, vice chair, chairperson, and most recently, Vice President of Public Affairs. Additionally, she serves on professional committees for the Society of Nutrition Education and Behavior and various state and local committees in New Jersey and Cape May County. In her current role within Rutgers Cooperative Extension as a Family and Community Health Sciences educator, Chris manages volunteers and staff for Cape May County FCHS. She has also managed volunteers in previous professional roles and has served as a volunteer leader.

Chris upholds the standard for her profession as an FCHS Educator by attending national conferences, presenting at professional forums, being an active committee member, and publishing articles in peer-reviewed journals. She embodies the ethos of her profession by being the 'boots on the ground' expert in her field in the local community and seeking novel ways to positively impact the community while attending to scholarly responsibilities as an extension professional. As a Cooperative Extension professional, Ms. Zellers has demonstrated her willingness to be a team player. She is very conscious of her job responsibilities while managing the rigorous schedule of tenure and representing her county, department, and extension on the local, state, and national levels.

I fully and without reservation recommend Chris for the position of President-Elect for NEAFCS. I am confident that she will be a productive leader and representative for the Association.

Sincerely,



Brian J. Schilling
Director, Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Senior Associate Director, New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

