

NEAFCS Network
July 2021

President's Message

Dianne Gertson (TX), President



Please click the image above to view this month's President's Message

The first 5 people to [email me](#) with the location of the icon will be entered into a drawing for a free registration to the 2021 NEAFCS Annual Session.

Strategic Planning, Begin with the End in Mind

Roxie Price (GA), Immediate Past President

Start now and develop a strategic plan for your professional development experience during our annual conference in Michigan. Think about your intentions. What would you like to get out of the conference? What sessions will you attend? Prepare to meet fellow professionals with common goals, possibly from other states. This is the perfect opportunity to start multi-state collaborative efforts. It is not possible to attend every session; however, you can form an alliance of colleagues to bring back as much material as possible. Begin with a mission of meeting colleagues from other states to form multi-state partnerships. Networking is one of the great benefits of being a member. Working smarter has never been more fun.



Throughout the years, the NEAFCS Strategic Plan has not changed a whole lot due to the nature of our goals. What does change are the methods we utilize to reach these goals. According to member surveys released prior to the 2020 Strategic Plan review, topics that rose to the top included: using technology to benefit members, mentorship opportunities, and making resources available to members through our website. In less than a year of the strategic plan implementation, we have released a mentoring program titled *NEAFCS Leadership Experience*. Using technology, recordings of concurrent sessions will be made available for members after the conference. New this year, members will be able to attend national committee meetings by video conferencing. A webpage was added to our website to make resources available to members by subject area. Finally, be on the lookout for a new ambassador program. You can review the NEAFCS strategic plan [by clicking here](#).

A plan is good, but a strategic plan is great. It all starts with an end in mind. The best plans begin with visualizing the victory ahead.

\$21 or more in 2021 to the NEAFCS Endowment

Help support the **President's Charity** by joining members in donating \$21 or more in 2021 to the NEAFCS Endowment. The interest from the NEAFCS Endowment Fund will provide stable, continuing resources for targeted projects such as awards and fellowships, marketing efforts or public issues education. Help us reach our goal of \$21,000.

For more information on the Endowment and the President's Charity, please read the article in the [June NEAFCS Network here](#). To donate today, [click here](#).

Thank you to those who contributed to the Endowment so far in 2021! We hope to see more names on this list next month.

(as of June 30, 2021)

- Ellen Bjelland, NC
- Pat Brinkman, OH
- Ivelisse Colon, NC
- Lorrie Coop, TX
- Suzanne Driessen, MN
- Peg Ehlers, IN
- Sheila Gains, CO
- Julie Garden-Robinson, ND
- Dianne Gertson, TX
- Rick Griffiths, NM
- Jane Henderson, VA
- LaDonna Hines, OK
- Sharon Hoelscher Day, NV
- Janet Johnson, AL
- Marsha Lockard, ID



- Virginia Lopez, NC
- Terry Mayhew, NY
- Sharon McDonald, PA
- Brenda Miller, OK
- Nyla Musser, WI
- Amy Ressler, TX
- Susan Routh, OK
- Katharine Shumaker, OH
- Kristy Spalding, OK
- Barbara Wollan, IA

NEAFCS Awards Scholarships and RSVP Process

Julie Garden-Robinson (ND), Vice President of Awards and Recognition

Congratulations again to all the 2021 regional and national NEAFCS award winners. Every applicant was informed on the status of their entry this past spring, along with comments from the judges. The four NEAFCS regional directors have received a listing of their region's award winners, and your state's Vice President of Awards and Recognition also received a listing of your state's award recipients.

We also applaud all of the applicants for your efforts and the judges for their work on our award program. If you did not receive an award, we encourage you to apply for the 2022 awards.



Scholarship Process for Award Winners

If you are a Regional or National Award winner, we need to hear from you regarding your attendance at the 2021 Annual Session so we can plan the Regional Awards Luncheons and the Friday Awards Banquet appropriately. An email has been sent to your address on file with the RSVP link. You'll notice that this year there is only one RSVP form for both National and Regional winners instead of one form for each. Just indicate in each section what award(s) you are accepting.

- **Please note:** the RSVP should ONLY be filled out by the Individual winner, or the Team Lead of a winning team.

Also, please don't forget to use your scholarship if you won one! Emails were sent to all National Award winners who receive a scholarship as part of their accomplishment. Codes were sent to the Individual winner or Team Lead of a winning team within the last two weeks. A code may only be used by *one person* and must be entered at the time of registration. There is a field to type in your discount code on the "Summary Page" of the registration. Type in your code and click "Apply" to make sure the discount is reflected in the amount due before you pay for your registration.

If you have any questions about your scholarship or RSVP, please contact us at awards@neafcs.org

Grand Rapids here we come!

Pat Brinkman (OH), Vice President of Professional Development

Grand Rapids here we come! I can't wait until Grand Rapids! I know our Michigan affiliate has been busy planning and preparing for us. The Amway Grand Plaza Hotel is recognized as one of the finest historic hotels across America. NEAFCS will also utilize space at the DeVos Place Convention Center, connected to the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel by a climate-controlled skywalk. The hotel is in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids and many things are within walking distance. Forbes Magazine calls Grand Rapids, "One of the 10 best downtowns in the USA." Our Welcome Event will be at the Grand Rapids Public Museum with many different exhibits to explore along with a carousel. The Downtown Market is within easy walking distance with lots of food options. Don't forget we will have our own silent auction and marketplace to shop. Looking at our options for In-Depth sessions it's going to be hard to decide on only one. Plus, we have so many presentations and Ignite sessions that will provide us with inspiration and ideas to put into use. Register now and I will see you in Grand Rapids!



[Register](#) to join our webinar this month with Sherri M. Cirignano providing us with a practical look at the link between nutrition, physical activity and cancer prevention including simple yet important ways to embrace the power of prevention in your daily life. She will explore new information on cancer prevention and the recommendations. Join us on July 21st at 3 pm Eastern time.

Extra! Extra! Read all about it!!! Annual Session is in the air!

Michelle Wright (TX), Vice President of Member Resources

Extra! Extra! Read all about it!!! Annual Session is in the air! The moment we all have been waiting for has arrived. Early-bird registration is in full swing and our sights are set on Michigan! The question is... have YOU registered? Annual Session will be held both in-person and virtual. The in-person conference will be held November 2nd through the 5th in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At this time, there are no limitations on attendance. Currently, we plan to offer all concurrent sessions and ignite presentations via on-demand recordings, images of poster presentations, potential on-demand recording of the Opening General Session, live access to the Affiliate Officer Meetings and Committee Plans of Work Meetings as well as discussion forums following the in-person event for continued conversations for all participants. So...register today! By registering today, you will save money! Early-bird registration will be extended until October 1st. As always, if you know someone who isn't a member of NEAFCS, ask them to join! The member benefits are limitless. Take care and if you have any questions or need to speak with me, don't hesitate to call (979-865-2078). My email is michelle.wright@aq.tamu.edu. It is my privilege to serve as your Vice President of Member Resources.



Grand Rapids Attractions for NEAFCS 2021 Conference

Erin E. Powell (MI), 2021 Annual Session Planning Committee Member

We've all been stuck in the house for way too long. When you come to Michigan for the NEAFCS 2021 conference, Grand Rapids offers many activities to make up for the last year at home! We know if you're able to attend in person, you'll find many activities to occupy your time outside of the conference.

Grand Rapids has so much to do, they offer a "Culture Pass" for \$20 which allows you to explore the abundance of art and culture in Grand Rapids for three days. With the pass, you'll receive admission into many cultural attractions around Grand Rapids, as well as additional discounts. Attractions include Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, Grand Rapids African American Museum and Archives, Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Rapids Public Museum, and John Ball Zoo with discounts at theatres and performance halls. You can also visit these attractions individually, without purchasing the pass, if you'd rather.

If food is your game, Grand Rapids offers a plethora of dining opportunities including carryout, delivery, and food truck options.

Start planning your out of conference time and find more information at www.experiencegr.com.



Be a Star

Melissa Rupp (OH), Sponsorship and Support Subcommittee Chair

When we elevate the quality of our common mission, we all succeed. Help us raise the bar of excellence by supporting our colleagues and friends through awards sponsorship and support. We invite you to "Be a Star", a new sponsorship framework, or dare I say constellation, for supporting our NEAFCS annual session awards. This year we are launching a 5-tiered structure that seeks donor support from our corporate partners, invested friends and supporting peers. The final tier is a new member giving challenge called the **Star Donor Club!** The first 100 individuals to step up to the challenge will donate \$50 to the awards program and **receive a collectible recognition star pin** on their name badge at the annual session. Consider paying it forward by becoming a Star Donor to keep our awards program vibrant. [Click on the link to donate now](#). Remember, this is limited to the first 100 star donors. Will you join the constellation?



Central Region Update

Vanessa Hoines (ND), Central Region Director

Greetings from the Central Region! It's time to register for Annual Session. Members of Michigan and the central region affiliates are anxious to greet you in Grand Rapids. You won't want to miss it.

Below are a few updates. Read on to find an opportunity for you to join Minnesota for their Professional Development Day!



Iowa - Sara Sprouse

A virtual Coffee Break and New (Fiscal) Year's Eve Party was hosted by the Iowa affiliate on June 30 @ 9 am. We shared successes from the last year and resolutions for the new year. Twenty were in attendance including Iowa affiliate members of ESP, NACAA, and NAE4-HYDP, and NEAFCS (active and life members), as well as fellow NEAFCS members from South Dakota. We also challenged Iowa NEAFCS members to review Who Should Join in the NEAFCS Membership Brochure and invite a colleague that is not a member, but could be, to join us for this celebration. Very special guest Dianne Gertson, NEAFCS President, joined us as well!

During the event, each association was given time to highlight upcoming events and initiatives. The Iowa affiliate of NEAFCS highlight included: 1) Recognizing two members, Barb Wollan and Cindy Thompson, who are serving as Mentors for the new Leadership Experience. 2) The Leadership Ladder document, designed by Iowa member Mackenzie DeJong, was reviewed and an opportunity to fill an open officer position was discussed. 3) Events planned to promote members' professional and personal growth and development, including coffee breaks, annual spring social event, and, of course, Annual Session. We wrapped up the event by sharing about professional development opportunities currently happening and ones we are looking forward to in the future.

Minnesota - Suzanne Driessen

NEAFCS-MN is holding a Professional Development Day 2021, **Silver Lining and Sifting Through the Pieces**, to be held on August 4, 2021, from 9 am-1pm CDT over Zoom and you are all invited!

Anyone is welcome to attend. Invite your colleagues to attend. There is no registration fee for members and guests register for just \$10. Register here: <https://z.umn.edu/NEAFCSProfDev>

A great line up of speakers will share:

- How to use art throughout our work, the art of storytelling for evaluation and stress relief.
- Camera angles, lighting, and techniques for teaching online classes.
- Engaging games over zoom.
- Virtual lunch to celebrate our Minnesota award winners.

The NEAFCS Minnesota Affiliate's monthly memo celebrates members' successes, shares upcoming events and announcements, and spotlights a member each month. Take time to check this out. (<https://neafcsmn.wordpress.com/>)

Celebrate Diversity!

Diana Romano (OK), Diversity Subcommittee Member

Multicultural Diversity celebrates the diverse cultures that contribute to America's heritage. Nowadays we have more opportunities to learn about different backgrounds, countries, experiences, languages, and cultures. To increase your knowledge of diverse cultures, you can do some of these: learn a new language, browse the internet, talk with a friend, coworker, or neighbor, take folk dance classes or search for videos online, read a book about it, visit local ethnic markets and restaurants, listen to music from different countries, and cook recipes from different countries. There are many things we can do at home and at the workplace to increase awareness of multicultural diversity.



I agree totally with the National Education Association which believes a diverse society enriches all individuals. Similarities and differences among race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of a society. Most of us think of Diversity as culture, race, or ethnicity but it is much more than that!

Western Region Update

Rick Griffiths (NM), Western Region Director

The western region held a Zoom Leadership meeting in July. At the meeting, options for Annual Session were discussed as well as what the Affiliate Presidents saw as the needs of the region.

Affiliate Updates

The Idaho Affiliate reported Julie Buck is offering an in-person Dining with Diabetes course in Blackfoot ID. The first class begins August 25th, and the Registration deadline is August 18th. For more information, call Julie Buck at 208-785-8060.



Meet the Board

Vanessa Hoines (ND), Central Region Director

Greetings from sunny North Dakota! I am Vanessa Hoines and am honored to serve as your Central Region Director. My involvement through NEAFCS has led to tremendous growth for me professionally, from attending several Annual Sessions to PILD to connecting with the network of friends and colleagues across the states. I am excited by the work of our association. We were able to move through the past year with a successful virtual conference and we have found more ways to connect as members, like Connecting with Colleagues. When we encounter a barrier, we find a way through it!



I grew up on a small farm in the red river valley of North Dakota, where some of the most fertile soil in the country is found. I joined 4-H at 7 years of age, and I like to say I never quit – I'm still in 4-H! I attended North Dakota State University and earned a bachelor's degree in Family Consumer Science Education and a master's degree in Human Development and Family Science. I began work with NDSU Extension soon after I graduated and have worked here my entire career. I enjoy programming for youth and adults in nutrition, food safety, food preservation, aging issues, child development and financial management. I am blessed to work with a great group of colleagues both in my county and across the state.

My husband and I have two college age children, a daughter and son, who were both involved in 4-H, and I still serve as a 4-H leader for our 4-H club. As an empty nester, I'm beginning to renew my love for past hobbies. I enjoy knitting, gardening, cooking, singing in choir and volunteering at my church. I have also been called a "Ding Dong" – I play in a handbell choir!



I look forward to seeing you in Grand Rapids, Michigan! 😊

21 tips for '21

Pat Brinkman (OH), Vice President of Professional Development

As I began to think about tips, I immediately thought of eating healthy and be physically active as that is what I have been teaching for years and try to practice. But I decided to share some others:

- Be an encourager – It's easy to get frustrated and upset when someone doesn't follow through. Instead of jumping to conclusions, check that they understood what you wanted them to do and how to do it. As a parent and a teacher, I realized we need to be our child's cheerleader. I have used that with co-workers too. One example is a previous county director before me didn't follow this and at least one employee in the office was very frustrated and failing. When I became county director, I tried to practice being an encourager. That same employee took on more responsibilities and became a shining star in our office.
- Expressing gratitude. I think having a gratitude journal has helped me be more positive and show more gratitude to others. [Numerous studies](#) have discovered benefits from gratitude journaling and expressing gratitude to others such as increasing one's happiness and mood, less inflammation in one's body, decreasing stress, and greater resiliency. If you don't have a gratitude journal or write down at least three things each day you are thankful for, I challenge you to start one.

