

# NEAFCS Network Newsletter

## September 2021

### President's Video Message

*Dianne Gertson (TX), President*



Please click the image above or visit <https://youtu.be/7zVrYuNz-Ys> to watch this month's President's Message.

### Clear your Schedule to Participate in Annual Session Events!

*Pat Brinkman (OH), Vice President for Professional Development*

Annual Session will soon be here! Committee meetings start on Monday, November 1. Some committees may be meeting earlier. I know the Program Committee will meet on October 27th, so watch your emails for announcements of committee meetings, times, and connection information. I am sure the Vice Presidents will be sending out announcements of when committees will meet. Affiliate Officer meetings will also happen Monday from 2-3:30 pm ET. If you are a state officer, be sure to attend the meeting for your office.



Check out the networking opportunities we have this year. To join, click the Zoom link during the Networking times and then on the breakout room you want to join. Breakout rooms will follow the educational tracks. You will be able to go to other breakout rooms at other times of networking.

Pre-conference and In-Depth sessions are on Tuesday, November 2nd before Opening General Session. Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday will have Concurrent and Ignite sessions, along with other happenings. If there is more than one presentation at a time you want to attend, you will be able to watch it later. We will have the opportunity to watch or re-watch all the sessions for up to six months. Check out the Showcase of Excellence on Thursday afternoon.

If you didn't register for a pre-conference you may want to attend the FCS Alliance/Partnership meeting Tuesday morning. We will have a forum discussing how Family and Consumer Sciences' organizations at the state level can work together to promote FCS. Discover what the National FCS Alliance has initiated, explore what some state affiliates are doing to support the FCS Alliance and partner with others in their state. Create a Plan of Action for your state. No pre-registration is necessary. Come and join the discussion.

### **Updates and Gratitude from the Vice President of Awards and Recognition**

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

As I wrap up my two years as the Vice President of Awards and Recognition, I want to thank the energetic, creative leaders and members of the three committees (training, sponsorship and support, and ceremony). I appreciate the volunteers who judged numerous applications. We also thank all of you who interact on our Facebook page.



We look forward to celebrating the successes of all our friends across the U.S. during the virtual conference and through Facebook posts after the conference. We thank affiliates and individual members for their generosity in donating items to the Silent Auction and to all who have become Star Donors.

### **Join a Committee**

I encourage you to get involved in any of the committees for NEAFCS. I wouldn't be on the board if I hadn't decided to pop into a committee session several years ago. Check out the action plans posted on the NEAFCS website to learn about the work of the committees. For me, one thing led to another, and I served in two vice president roles. Although we do not have the opportunity to see conference attendees in person, we hope that participants will watch the virtual awards ceremony. Please enjoy some online shopping at the silent auction and pop in to join the committee sessions and training opportunities.

I believe the pandemic has spurred us on to pivot and try new things, whether that is new programming or new leadership adventures. As I can attest, you will grow from the experience in serving at the state and/or national organization level - and meet many new friends in the process.

## 2022 Awards

Our new award application process will begin soon after our annual conference, and the updated 2022 awards manual is in the capable, creative hands of Will Ferguson from the NEAFCS management group and soon will be in the hands of the new Vice President of Awards and Recognition.

Thank you again, and we will “see” many of you soon!

## The Perfect Match - The NEAFCS Leadership Experience

*Lori Korthals (IA) and Michelle Wright (TX), NEAFCS Leadership Experience*



The NEAFCS Leadership Experience is off and running full steam ahead! The Mentoring and Leadership Committee, chaired by Gina Lucas, has defied gravity by taking this leadership opportunity to a new level. This committee has spent countless hours planning and preparing for fall kick off. Thirty-four Extension professionals from all over the United States officially began their journey on September 1st. To ensure their success, the Mentoring and Leadership Committee provided both mentors and resources to both build and equip them on their Leadership Experience. Mentors and mentees were paired strategically in hopes of fostering a “perfect match”. With the goal that two complete strangers would ultimately become a dynamic duo in NEAFCS. The Leadership Experience aims to grow the mentees through four key outcomes: learning the importance of leading themselves (working on their strengths), leading in their communities (working with authentic relationships), leading in their affiliate (working as an Extension professional in the area of Family and Consumer Science) and leading in NEAFCS (working at the next level). So, please join in the celebration of these fantastic Extension Educators. We are looking extremely forward to watching them soar to much greater heights through the NEAFCS Leadership Experience.

## **Surprised?**

*Cory Alvarado (TX), NEAFCS Diversity Committee Member*

When you see my name, you may already have some preconceived ideas about who I am or what I may look like. Many people think Cory is a man's name. Surprise, I was born a woman (60+ years ago). Many people think that with the last name of Alvarado, I am Hispanic. Surprise, I am a blond(ish) white woman. When you see me, without even knowing my name, you may have other preconceived ideas about me.



The assumptions we make can impact how we treat the community we serve. By looking at me, you may not know that my late husband (with whom I was very deeply in love with) was a black man and yet many people have tried throwing the racist word at me without even knowing me. My present husband is Hispanic (100% Mayan from Guatemala). We need to be vigilant about uncovering our own assumptions.

You may not know that the person next to you even speaks another language or not. Revealing biases are crucial to us successfully accomplishing our missions to serve all our communities. Many people, when they see this white woman, they say things in Spanish not knowing that I understand every word that they say. Insults to this "white woman" because she is "white" or doesn't understand is wrong.

My Lord says love our neighbor as ourselves but who is our neighbor? ANY human being is a neighbor! Treat others as you would have yourself be treated is ALWAYS the best!

All should be treated with dignity and respect! Others will do likewise if they see you start!

## **Healthy for Life® Grants Awarded!**

*Danielle Jessup, CMP, NEAFCS Executive Director*

NEAFCS announced to its members in May of 2021 a new grant opportunity supporting the Healthy for Life® community nutrition program, an initiative led by Aramark and the American Heart Association (AHA). The Healthy for Life® evidence-based nutrition education experiences are supported by American Heart Association science and developed by food and nutrition experts. Five Healthy for Life® community nutrition program grants were available up to \$2,500 each. The funds are to be used to implement four educational experiences over a two to three-month period for an audience of 20-25 participants each time.



NEAFCS received 27 applications, which went on to be reviewed by 5 individuals. We are excited to announce that the following 5 agencies received the full funding grant at \$2,500 to implement their program from November 2021 – April 2022. Congratulations and we look forward to hearing about your programs!

- Jennifer Shukaitis, Rutgers University - Highland Park Healthy for Life
- Mary Alice Gettings, Penn State Extension - Healthy for Life Cooking Classes
- Leigh Anne Aaron, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension - Senior Sense
- Christine Jessen, Utah State University – TBA (New Program)
- Jessie Piper, Kansas State University - Promoting Intergenerational Nutritional Wellness: An Intervention for Grandparent Caregivers

Thank you to the following NEAFCS members who spent their valuable time, knowledge, and experience to review the 27 applications.

- Mary Blackburn, California
- Diane Mason, Kentucky
- Misty Harmon, Ohio
- Kimberly Cripps, Oklahoma
- Stephanie Polizzi, Oregon

## Meet the Board

*Lorrie Coop (TX), Southern Region Director*

It has been an honor to serve our organization in different leadership roles throughout my career with Extension. Working with the board, first as co-liaison for the 2018 Annual Session and now in my current role as Southern Region Director, has truly been a memorable experience that I will always treasure. After attending my first national meeting, I was hooked. Although I didn't really aspire to serve on the board at that time, I knew I wanted to continue to be involved in this organization. As the years passed and I served in different leadership roles at the state level and on national committees, I naturally looked for other ways to grow in my professional development. (If you're familiar with the great new [Leadership Ladder](#) handout found on our website, my climb up the ladder follows it pretty closely.) Not only have I grown professionally, but I have learned so much from others and been able to make connections and friends that I never would have been able to make before.



I began my professional career as a Child Protective Services Specialist, after receiving my undergraduate degree in psychology. After serving in that role for 11 years, I realized that I wanted a change, but wanted to continue to help families better their lives. Having grown up in the 4-H program and being very familiar with Extension and working with families, I jumped at the chance to apply for the position of Family and Community Health agent for the county in which I was raised and continued in that role for 16 years. I also received a master's degree in Agriculture Science during that time as well. My two degrees, however unrelated they may seem, helped to prepare me for current role of District Extension Administrator, which began in January of this year, working with FCH, 4-H and Ag. Agents in 24 counties.

I have several interests outside of work that keep me busy. I love to cook and try out new recipes, although I'm not always good at following them. I like to experiment with new ingredients to come up with unique dishes. I love learning new things and am

always seeking opportunities to explore new things, such as taking a cooking class or learning how to quilt, which is my newest endeavor.

But, most of all, I love spending time with family. I adore spending time with my three grandchildren, Clayton (14), Lainey (2 going on 20) and Anson (2 months), traveling to conferences with my daughter, who also works in Extension, or just going for a drive with my husband, who recently retired.

## **21 tips for '21**

*Georgina Perry (MI), 2021 Annual Session Planning Co Liaison*

Being a caregiver for a loved one can be rewarding but it also brings on a lot of extra responsibilities, worries, and challenges which result in added stress. As a caregiver it is easy to push aside your own needs. The stress that results from failing to take care of one's own self-care can result in emotional distress, health issues, anger, and social isolation. Here are some tips that I have found helpful in my caregiver journey:



1. Make a list of all the caregiving tasks that are causing you stress. Circle the things which you have no control over and resolve to let them go. Look at what is left on the list and focus on items where you have some degree of control and tackle these items one at a time.
2. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. Family and friends may want to help but don't know how. Consider making another list of simple tasks that they could help with such as running an errand or making a meal for your family. If you are sharing the caregiving responsibility with family members schedule periodic family meetings to talk about how things are going, and how everyone is feeling. Join a support group, in-person or online.
3. Take time for yourself. Practice Mindfulness and learn some relaxation techniques such as meditation, deep breathing, guided imagery, yoga, laughter yoga, progressive muscle relaxation and aromatherapy. Spend time with family and friends doing the things you enjoy.

It is also helpful and important to familiarize yourself with resources in your community that offer home care, respite care, hospice, and adult day care services. Remember, you must be at your best to continue to care for your loved one.

## Eastern Region Update

Lisa McCoy (MD), Eastern Regional Director



The Eastern region has been busy in the past few months as most states are incorporating a hybrid approach with virtual as well as some in-person classes.

- Penn State Extension has continued to offer and expand their Mental Health first aid classes to include special audiences including Fire & EMS employees, veterans and their families as well as offering programs for adults working with youth.
- WVU Extension has had success with teaching their Dining with Diabetes classes virtually and plan to continue through 2022.
- Rutgers University Extension is participating in food waste audits in their local community schools.
- Cornell University Extension invites members to **Join the Eastern Region Food Preservation Educators Group**. Kathleen Savoie, NEAFCS Maine Affiliate member, initiated an Eastern Region Food Preservation Educators group which has been meeting virtually since the summer. Cooperative Extension educators from nearly all the Eastern Region states have been discussing common issues pertaining to home food preservation. In September they met with Tracey Brigman, the interim director of the National Center for Home Food Preservation, to exchange thoughts, concerns, and ideas. A sub-committee is working on Master Food Preserver training. Anyone interested in joining the group can contact Kathy Savoie at [ksavoie@maine.edu](mailto:ksavoie@maine.edu).
- University of Maryland Extension is excited to return to in-person teaching of their Fresh Conversations for Older Adults Nutrition education series in the fall. These classes are offered in senior centers across the state.
- University of Maryland and University of Delaware Extensions are collaborating on an EXCITE COVID-19 Vaccination Education and Engagement grant. We will be interviewing stakeholders and agricultural workers to identify barriers to receiving the COVID 19 vaccine in this population. From this information, we plan to develop strategies to break down some of these barriers and promote vaccine education for these individuals.

## 21 Tips for '21 – RECAP

Some of you noticed that we weren't giving you 21 tips each month. That's because we were accumulating 21 tips before Annual Session. Here's a look back at all 21 tips offered by our Board since January. You might notice some recurring themes...

1. Pick a word of the year.
2. Choose Joy.
3. Save half of mileage checks.
4. Finish at least a few things every day.
5. Challenges are like hurdles. Jumping high enough will help you clear them all.
6. Pessimism is like a flat tire. You cannot get anywhere until it's changed.
7. Commit time daily for "me-time."
8. Reach for your potential.

9. Focus
10. Relax
11. Use the "Pomodoro technique".
12. Find "joy" every day.
13. Be an encourager.
14. Expressing gratitude.
15. Embrace the transitions in life, and slow down to enjoy them.
16. Reinvent yourself now and then, start small and ask for help when needed.
17. Set priorities to stay focused on what you were trying to achieve.
18. Remember to put on your oxygen mask first.
19. Make a list of all the caregiving tasks that are causing you stress.
20. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.
21. Take time for yourself.



*Future issues of the NEAFCS Network will include recognition of members who have passed. If you would like to report the death of a NEAFCS member, [please click here](#).*

Click the names below to view obituary (if available):



**[Barbara Bell Abo \(ID\)](#), Life Member**

Family was important to Barb and she cherished time with her husband, her sons and their families. The 4-H & FCS program in Idaho grew in after school programming in the 1990's because of her commitment and desire to provide a safe place for all kids to belong. (Barb Abo passed from lung cancer in June 2021. "She was never afraid to teach or accept a challenge. She taught kids 4-H skills that

had lifelong impacts.



**[Charlotte Young](#) (IA), Life Member**

Charlotte was a former National President of NEAFCS, and she presided over the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Annual Session in New York City. She modeled in every way what it meant to be a professional.



**[Jean Bauman](#) (OH), Life Member**

Jean Grover Bauman, of Chillicothe, died on September 29, 2021, at 12:13am at the age of 84, following a long and courageous battle with cancer.