

## 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.