

NEAFCS Network Newsletter
January 2022

President's Message

Susan Routh (OK), NEAFCS President



What YOU Need to Know NOW in NEAFCS!

National Office Staff

- **January 31, 2022** - Annual Session Call for Proposal Portal Closes
- **January 31, 2022** - Endowment Grant Deadline
- **February 1, 2022** - Impact Statements Due
- **March 15, 2022** – National Awards Submission deadline (Affiliate Deadline for submission may be earlier – check with your Awards VP)

Proof, Proof, Proof Your Application!

Judy Corbus (FL), Awards Training Committee

You've just finished your award application for that stellar program and you're ready to submit it. But wait! Have other eyes looked at it?

After you've composed and re-read your application multiple times, it's easy to miss grammar, syntax, and punctuation errors. Enlist the help of at least one other person with an editor's eagle eye to review your application before uploading it. Also, you know in your mind what you want to say, but have you expressed that clearly in your writing? Include a copy of the award application guidelines and judging criteria so the reviewer(s) can compare your application against them. Have you addressed each item in the Program Outline clearly? Can the reader understand the program and the results? Do the supporting documents, if required, further tell your story? Your reviewer(s) can identify areas that may need tweaking to make your application stronger.



Remember the Three Cs – make sure your application is clean, clear, and concise! In addition to a colleague, consider asking someone outside Extension, such as an English teacher, to review your application. If they can understand your program from your application, chances are the judges will understand it, too. Budget plenty of time for a review before your affiliate's submission deadline. Taking this extra step to polish your application will reflect you and your hard work in the best possible light!

Make It Public! Impact Statements, PILD and More!

Jennifer Bridge (KY), NEAFCS Vice President for Public Affairs

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Vice President for Public Affairs. I look forward to serving you and meeting with you throughout the year. As members we have several great opportunities to develop skills and gain information. The JCEP Public Issues and Leadership Development (PILD) conference has been one of my most valuable experiences within the association. I've had the opportunity to attend several and each time I gained information which has positively impacted me professionally. As a member you can attend, and scholarship opportunities are available to possibly offset the cost. For more information, go to the [PILD section](#) of the Public Affairs tab on the NEAFCS website. The deadline to apply for PILD Scholarships is February 1.



We do great work, and we need to share our successes with stakeholders! Please take time to submit program successes to your state Vice President for Public Affairs to be included in this years Impact Statements. Past statements and categories are available [here](#) on the NEAFCS website under the Public Affairs tab. The deadline for affiliates to submit is February 1 so now is the time to share.

I hope to see you at PILD!

Is Your New Year's Resolution to Seek Self-Development? Apply for the 2022 NEAFCS Leadership Experience

Kyleigh Brown (MO), Chair Mentoring and Leadership Committee



If you are ready to learn more about yourself and this Extension profession, consider applying for the NEAFCS Leadership Experience. You'll have the opportunity to meet colleagues from around the nation and experience exclusive professional development; all while meeting regularly with an experienced mentor selected specifically for you! Participants in the 2021 class are having a great time and already seeing improvement in their perceived leadership skills. Just halfway through the program 50% of participants agree or strongly agree that "With confidence, I can lead across age, gender, racial and other differences." That's up from just 6% prior to the Leadership Experience! And that's not all, at the beginning of the program only 12% of participants said they would pursue a leadership role within NEAFCS. And now, just under 40% say that they will.

One participant said, "The Leadership Experience has given me the opportunity to network with colleagues from around the country. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know my mentor and learn from her expertise in the field."

To apply as a mentee to the NEAFCS Leadership Experience one must be a member. There is no minimum or maximum amount of time spent in Extension or NEAFCS just a desire to grow in the profession. We ask that applicants be prepared to be an active participant in the professional development opportunities as well as in their relationship with their mentor.



Don't forget we'll be looking for mentors too! More on that next month...

Dinah E. Gore Kitchens

Sydney Knowles (NC), NEAFCS Annual Session Planning Committee Tri-Liaison

Happy New Year! We are looking forward to welcoming you to Raleigh in September! My name is Sydney Knowles and I am serving as a tri-liaison for our 2022 Annual Session.



We can't wait for you to experience North Carolina, including our new state-of-the-art kitchen complex at NC State University. The Dinah E. Gore Teaching and Research Kitchens were built in 2019 to enhance and extend our work in teaching, research, and extension. The complex is named for a longtime benefactor of family and consumer sciences programs at NC State University. Dinah Gore and her husband, Edward, have supported numerous educational programs in NC schools, colleges, and universities. Mrs. Gore has been especially generous in enhancing NC State Extension's educational programs related to health, food, nutrition, and fitness.

NC State University has utilized the teaching kitchens to host living lecture series, training videos, develop recipes for agents and specialists to share with the public, and to research questions related to labeling, ingredient use, food safety, and healthy cooking. Our kitchen philosophy includes:

- The best way to learn to cook is by being in the kitchen, cooking.
- Everyone can learn to cook delicious, healthy, and safe meals.
- Cooking does not have to be complicated.
- Cooking is an art guided by science.
- Healthy food is essential to a healthy life.
- Food is medicine.

We can't wait for you to experience the Dinah E. Gore kitchens yourself during our pre-conference workshops! Watch the journey from concept to kitchen at <https://go.ncsu.edu/kitchensconstruction>.

New Corporate Sponsor Program

National Office Staff

Your association has been championed over the years by many organizations, companies, and individuals who believe in the mission of NEAFCS. We are so grateful to have enjoyed their support that we wanted to take just a moment of your time to remind you who they are, why they're so important, and invite you to tell us who YOU want to see in the Exhibit Hall in the future!

NEAFCS Sponsors are limited to a select group of companies/organizations offering products, educational programs, resources and/or services in health, financial management, food and nutrition, food safety, healthy homes and environments, family life and technology, that our members can utilize in their programs for individuals, families and their communities. NEAFCS reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to not accept sponsorship from companies whose message NEAFCS deems controversial and/or contrary to the goals, ethics and mission of NEAFCS.

For the Annual Session each year, we offer sponsorship opportunities as well as booths in our Exhibit Hall. These sponsors and exhibitors may also offer educational sessions during the course of the event. In the past, some of our Sponsors and Exhibitors have been: Active Parenting Publishers, The Alzheimer's Association, American Income Life Special Risk Division, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), Edible Education, Fresh Baby, FSIS-USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline, National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFC), National Presto Industries, Inc., National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage & Families, Real Colors, The Dibble Institute, The OrganWise Guys, Inc., The Sugar Association, and Visualz.

New for 2022, NEAFCS is launching a Corporate Sponsor Program. The Corporate Sponsor program allows for collaboration with like-minded organizations whose purpose is to help advocate the mission of NEAFCS including building awareness of FCS and its members, and to share evidence and science-based information with its members that are useful in their professional work with the public.

The NEAFCS membership is as a patchwork quilt when it comes to the variety of programming and needs you each have. We do our best to bring you companies and organizations that have the tools and information you are looking for. When you attend Annual Session we ask you to fill out a survey to give us feedback not only about the educational opportunities, but also about our Exhibit Hall. Today, we'd like to invite you to tell us what you want to see at future Annual Sessions. What tools, services, or training are you looking for? How can we help you make those connections? If you've got just a few minutes, please let us know by visiting: <https://neafcs.memberclicks.net/2022-member-survey-for-sponsors-and-exhibitors>

A huge thank you to all of our previous sponsors and exhibitors for helping us continue to serve our members and the FCS Extension profession in general. We hope to see everyone in Raleigh, NC this year!

Diversity and Inclusion: Touching on Neurodiversity and Neurodivergence

Traci Armstrong Florian (AZ), MS, RDN, Member Resources Diversity Subcommittee



Neurodiversity refers to the virtually infinite neuro-cognitive variability within Earth's human population. It points to the fact that every human has a unique nervous system with a unique combination of abilities and needs. (Judy Singer, Australian Sociologist).

At the turn of the millennium, advocates began to increasingly fight to recognize neurodiversity. These advocates felt that certain classifications of mental abilities and disabilities given to people oftentimes led to their mistreatment, especially people suffering from disabilities that were stigmatizing. Advocates wanted to help prevent discriminatory practices that were frequently taking place and leading to the lack of advancement in careers and other societal benefits neurotypical individuals receive without further consideration. Recognizing the spectrum of neurodiversity allows inclusivity and recognition of the rights of all people while providing space for neurotypical and neurodiverse strengths in all environments from home to professional, along with school, work, and community settings.

Advocates are pointing out that the differences in neurodiversity are called neurodivergence. Neurodivergence is when a brain learns, behaves, and processes information differently than neurotypical individuals due to environmental factors, genetic factors, or a mix of both. The differences in people that are neurodivergent could be mild to severe; unnoticeable with typical daily living to requiring high-level assistance in everyday activities.

The term neurodivergent used to refer exclusively to people with autism, but over time, it has come to encompass all people that are mentally different from what society considers "neurotypical". This broadening of the term allows all people of all types of neuro-differences to have protected rights and equal opportunities.

Interestingly, there is a large array of examples of neurodivergence. To name just a few with very brief, non-encompassing definitions and examples to demonstrate the wide range of neurodivergence, please see below:

- Hyperlexia-a child's exceptional ability to read at an early age
- ADHD/ADD-difficulty paying attention, staying focused
- Dyscalculia- having difficulties understanding mathematical processes and some math concepts
- Synesthesia-experiencing a sensation using other senses like hearing colors and smelling music
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder-people who are driven to engage in repetitive behaviors
- Personality Disorder-people who have complex difficulties in relationships due to an inflexible pattern of thinking and behavior

- Multiple Sclerosis-damage to nerve fibers causing a signal problem from the brain to the muscles causing numbness, tremors, and tingling sensations; the disease can be progressive

As we work to acquaint ourselves and dive deeper into all facets of diversity and inclusion, we can learn more about neurodiversity. The more we learn about all facets of diversity and inclusion, we can more fully support and champion all people in our programming, communities, and universities.

It's Proposal Time! Write it – Review It – Submit it!!

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

Don't forget to submit your proposal for our 2022 Annual Session. The application is available on the [2022 Annual Session](#) website under Professional Development on the website. Read through the [FAQ Document](#) for information. Review the webinar on "[Submitting a 2022 NEAFCS Session Proposal](#)" for a step-by-step guide with screen pictures. Tip: Always have another person read your proposal and comment according to the judging criteria. The judging criteria are listed on the [FAQ document](#). The link to submit a proposal for the 2022 Annual Session will **close on January 31st.**



Sign up now to be a reviewer at the bottom of the [2022 Annual Session](#) website. You do not have to be a committee member to be a reviewer. We would like to have at least two people from each state. As a reviewer you decide what track/tracks you are willing to review. Most of the time you only need to review five-seven proposals during the month of February. One way to learn about writing a good proposal is to be a reviewer, so *volunteer*. A webinar on how to review proposals will be presented on February 2 at 1 pm (Eastern).

Do you have a presentation or know of someone who does? Submit a proposal to present a webinar. Complete the online proposal [form](#). Webinar proposals are peer-reviewed.

Central Region Update

Cindy Thompson (IA), NEAFCS Central Region Director

The following update was submitted by Sara Sprouse, Iowa State University Extension Human Sciences Specialist/Food and Health, Affiliate Immediate Past President



Iowa member Donna Donald was recognized for her commitment, dedication, and leadership in NEAFCS and inducted into the 2021 NEAFCS Hall of Fame during the virtual Annual Session. Donna was also honored during the Human Sciences Extension and Outreach Professional Development Day on December 7th in Ames, Iowa to share this recognition with the entire Human Sciences Extension and Outreach community. The crystal award was presented to Donna by Dr. John Lawrence, Iowa State University Vice President for Extension and Outreach. College of Human Sciences Dean Laura Dunn Jolly and Dr. Debra Sellers, Associate Dean and Director for Human Sciences Extension and Outreach also participated in the award presentation. A short video was created by members Cindy Thompson, Sara Sprouse, Mackenzie Johnson, and Mackenzie DeJong to commemorate this occasion. Donna is an

inspiration to all members and has created a legacy of commitment, dedication, and leadership for Iowa affiliate members to continue.



Pictured l-r: Dr. Laura Jolly, Dean of the College of Human Sciences; Dr. Deb Sellers, Associate Dean of the College of Human Sciences and Director of Human Sciences Extension and Outreach; Donna Donald, Field Operations Supervisor; Dr. John Lawrence, Vice President of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. *Photo Credit: Mackenzie Johnson, Human Sciences Specialist/Family Wellbeing, Affiliate President.*

Meet the Board

Pat Brinkman (OH), NEAFCS Vice President of Professional Development

Greetings from Ohio. I hope 2022 will be a good year for you, and we will see each other in-person at Raleigh, North Carolina in September for our Annual Session. This is my second year as Vice President for Professional Development, and I have enjoyed serving you and working together with colleagues throughout the U.S. to make NEAFCS the best. Although the Board never met in-person last year, I feel we developed a respect and friendship for each other and accomplished many things.



I retired from Ohio State University Extension at the end of July last year. I loved my job and Fayette County (a rural county) where I served for 20 years. I applied for Emeritus status and was granted Associate Professor Emeritus with Ohio State University Extension by the OSU Board of Trustees. I am still working on a sun safety and wellness project for farmers with some colleagues. My specializations were health, wellness, and food safety. Thus, eating healthy and being physically active are part of my daily routine.

I moved from Fayette County as none of my family lived near, so I now live in Columbus, Ohio. I have two married children with four (soon to be five) grandchildren 10, 6, 3 ½, and 1 years old nearby. The two oldest are girls, and I am helping both to learn to sew. Together after school, we make healthy snacks to enjoy.

See you in September in Raleigh, North Carolina!

Meet the Board

Cindy Thompson (IA), NEAFCS Central Region Director

I'm Cindy Thompson, human sciences specialist in family wellbeing with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, serving 9 counties in northeast Iowa with programming and outreach across the lifespan. Whew... that's a lot of words, and just the formal introduction. The backstory is I was born and raised in the St. Louis area. Life changed significantly when I fell in love with and married my farmer-boy college sweetheart over 30 years ago. Together we have five "legally" grown children. I'm an army mom who loves plants (indoors and out) and enjoys jigsaw puzzles, cross-stitch, giving gifts and, although I need to constantly work on the skill, reading all sorts of books. I've been a family childcare professional, parent services coordinator, family support worker, training coordinator, and an Extension professional now for almost 10 years. It sounds cliché, I know, but I love my Extension role because of the familiar outreach that grounds me coupled with all the new things to learn and skills to develop. I have a mean old grumpy 12-pound Yorkie/Jack Russell mix who insists on never being more than a few feet from me, especially when I'm on virtual meetings. Despite his ill temper, he loves me wholeheartedly, so I try to always remember to "be the person out in the world my dog thinks I am."

