

## President's Message: Shine through awards & changes to the Hall of Fame

*Rick Griffiths (NM), NEAFCS President*

It's a busy time for the Association, with many deadlines having already come or quickly approaching. By the time you read this many of your state award deadlines will be fast approaching. I hope each of you will take the time to complete an awards application to be recognized for your outstanding work every day.



**As you are completing your rewards applications one piece of advice, I would give each of you is to review the rubric for your award at the back of the manual, and make sure that your award application covers the information included in that rubric.**

On the topic of Awards, I would like to make sure that everyone is aware of a change that has been made to the Hall of Fame Award. This award recognizes an outstanding NEAFCS member/s who contributed their time, skills, abilities, and/or financial resources to the NEAFCS. The recognition will be given to NEAFCS members who have demonstrated their commitment, dedication, effective leadership, and involvement in NEAFCS at the state, regional, and/or national level. Changes have been made to the selection process for this award starting this year; the most notable is that **nominations for the Hall of Fame award may only be submitted by current State Presidents**. More information on this award and the nomination process can be found at <https://neafcs.memberclicks.net/neafcs-hall-of-fame#!/>



Another event that is quickly approaching that I hope you are considering attending is the Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) conference sponsored by the Joint Council Extension Professionals (JCEP). **This year the conference is being co-chaired by Past President Susan Routh. Read more about it from Susan herself in this month's newsletter!**

## What YOU Need to Know NOW in NEAFCS!

*National Office Staff*

**Be entered to win conference registration  
by answering the question:**

**Unscramble the letters to the word hidden in the  
newsletter and email your answer to Rick Griffiths.  
The first five correct answers will be entered to win!  
The letters for the answer are hidden throughout the  
newsletter in **orange**.**



**Curious about what is discussed at the  
monthly Executive Board meetings?**

**Log in to [neafcs.org](https://neafcs.org) and click document  
library in the member center tab to find  
monthly meeting notes!**

## Are you attending the Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) conference?

*Susan Routh (OK), PILD Conference Co-Chair*

The Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) is pleased to announce that registration for the 2024 Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) conference is now open. **PILD is scheduled for April 15 to 17, 2024, at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City at Regan National Airport, Arlington, Virginia.** The conference aims to:

- **Increase understanding of public policy issues**
- **Build support for Extension**
- **Strengthen partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies**



The conference is open to all Association members, including state Association officers. Additionally, the PILD experience includes participation in various collaborative activities.

NEAFCS members are encouraged to attend PILD. The Association will offer a limited number of registration scholarships to members, more information will be emailed out this spring about the application process. The Association meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 16 in the afternoon before an evening out with Association members. If you plan to attend PILD and participate in the Capitol Hill visits, you are requested to arrange appointments for Capitol Hill visits by contacting your state Extension Program Director to gain approval. **Participants should request and arrange these appointments before traveling to the conference.** These appointments are not made nor coordinated by JCEP or the PILD team.

### Why should NEAFCS members attend PILD?

Oklahoma State University Associate Vice President and Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Director, Dr. Damona Doye, was asked about the value of attending PILD and participating in the Hill visits by Oklahoma Extension professionals. Dr. Doye stated, **"From pre-conference events to the Congressional visits, I found the PILD experience to be a great one for our state delegation of educators who are leaders in their professional associations. They gained valuable perspectives on the federal Extension partnerships, priorities and funding. And they had an opportunity to share how their educational work helps Oklahomans and provides a great return on the federal investment with some of our Congressional delegation and staff."**

Dr. Jorge Atiles, Dean of Extension and Engagement and Director of West Virginia University Extension state, "I value participating at the PILD conference each year. I find it not only useful to deans and directors but also a tremendous opportunity for state and county extension personnel to learn about the process of funding Extension at the federal level. It also teaches accountability for said funds as we visit our legislators and share how we put the funding to work. When we also coincide with 4-H Hill Visits, then we can underscore how important Extension is to the future of our nation."

More information about registration and the conference is located on the JCEP website at [www.jcep.org](http://www.jcep.org).

## 2024 Annual Session Keynote Speaker Announced!

*Katherine Speirs (AZ), Educational Offerings Subcommittee Chair,  
2024 NEAFCS Annual Session Planning Committee*

The Arizona Affiliate is excited to announce that the 2024 Annual Session keynote speaker will be Nia Imani Fields. Dr. Fields will present a talk titled "Grassroots Engagement and Social Justice through Cooperative Extension."

You can learn more about Dr. Fields and her work here:

<https://www.niainanifields.com/>



2024 Keynote Speaker

**Nia Imani Fields, Ed.D.**  
Deputy Director  
National Youth Employment Coalition

**Dr. Fields is the Deputy Director of the National Youth Employment Coalition and a retired faculty member from University of Maryland Extension. At Maryland Extension, she served as the Assistant Director of Extension and the 4-H Program Leader.**

Annual Session 2024  
September 16-19, 2024 - Tucson, AZ

During her keynote address, Dr. Fields will explore concepts and practices that foster culturally relevant and equitable Extension programs and present a vision for the future of Extension which includes addressing issues of systemic injustice in the communities we serve. Attendees will learn about the historical context of the land-grant system and present-day examples of grassroots engagement.

We are looking forward to an engaging talk that will set the stage for our annual session and challenge us to think about how our work can promote equity and social justice.

## Start Planning for Living Well Month

Rosie Stewart (AZ), Public Affairs Advocacy Committee Chair



As we approach **Living Well Month in March**, the Public Affairs Advocacy Committee has been hard at work reviewing materials and working with the National Office to update the calendar to assist in promoting this initiative. **Living Well Month serves as a public awareness campaign by NEAFCS, aiming to spotlight the valuable services provided by Cooperative Extension Family and Consumer Science (FCS) across the country.**



Start developing a plan for how to use the materials provided on the NEAFCS website (<https://neafcs.memberclicks.net/living-well-month-campaign>) to promote the vital work we do. Another quick way to find the living well month campaign materials is visit [neafcs.org](http://neafcs.org), click "Public Affairs" in the top tabs, and scroll down to "Living Well Month Campaign."

Personalize your *Living Well Month* public service campaign using the provided materials or showcase your creativity, such as the innovative flip-style calendar created by the Kentucky Affiliate. Include the *Living Well* logo with the slogan, "Raising Kids, Eating Right, Spending Smart, Living Well" on your email signature. Distribute the *Living Well Month* calendar via social media. Keep it simple, so it stays manageable.



Our Kentucky affiliate is Living Well by promoting the Eight Dimensions of Wellness through a year round message. This undated, flip style, calendar is a reminder to focus on Living Well everyday. Feel free to reach out to Amanda Dame or Mindy McCulley for more information.

**We ask you to share your March activities on the NEAFCS social media page to foster a collaborative environment where ideas are exchanged and others can be inspired by your initiatives.**

## NEAFCS Leadership Book Club

Jennifer Bridge (KY), President-Elect

**Get ready for a new NEAFCS experience!** The virtual NEAFCS Leadership Book Club kicks off in February with a three session discussion series on the four pillars of leadership in *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts*, Brené Brown, PhD, MSW.

**The book club is open to all NEAFCS members and is a wonderful way to connect with colleagues and grow personally and professionally.**

To participate, register in advance for this meeting at the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMpcuGtqDgoHNzhxZvF5kqKvOE5n5tL929Q>



After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the discussions.

### NEAFCS Bookclub

Tuesday  
**27 Feb., 2024**

Tuesday  
**26 March, 2024**

Tuesday  
**30 April, 2024**

**3:15 pm**  
Eastern Time

Zoom

**REGISTER NOW**

### TASKS BEFORE THE FIRST MEETING

1. Prior to the first session, borrow or purchase the *Dare to Lead* book and go to the Dare to Lead hub at <https://brenebrown.com/book/dare-to-lead>. Once there, take the free assessment and print the free Dare to Lead workbook.
2. Once you secure the book, read the Introduction and Part 1: Rumbling with Vulnerability, Section 1, pages 1-43.
3. In the workbook, complete Section 1 Exercise 1: Square Squad and Section 1 Exercise 2: The Six Myths of Vulnerability (to share with group).

Feel free to reach out with any questions you may have. I look forward to meeting you and learning together!

## Read about our 2023 National Award Winners Monthly!

Learn more about the award winners and get inspired at <https://neafcs.memberclicks.net/2023-award-winners>.

Don't forget to apply this year!

**Nourished and Thriving Children Trauma-Informed Nutrition Online Course**  
 Jenny Rudolph & Team  
 Oregon State University Extension

**This self-paced course introduces:**

- Six principles of trauma-informed feeding and nutrition
- Nutrition and mealtime challenges specific to children who have experienced trauma
- Offers guidance in addressing these challenges using trauma-informed principles.




**1st Place National Winner: Early Childhood Child Care Training Award**




**FAFSA: Ready, Set, Go, A novel college financial aid curriculum**  
 Portia Johnson & Team  
 Alabama Cooperative Extension

**FAFSA: Ready, Set, Go curriculum, designed by Human Resource Development, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, promotes informed FAFSA decision-making among high school seniors and juniors.**




**1st Place National Winner: Educational Curriculum Package Award**




**Fit and Healthy Kids Multi-State ECE Collaboration**  
 Audrey Rider & Team  
 South Dakota State University Extension

Six states came together to provide training opportunities including a monthly series of classes, on-demand lessons, a virtual conference, and learning circles for childcare providers and parents.

The goal was to support the development of young children and promote family well-being. They leveraged the research and resources of multiple universities to enhance high-quality learning experiences for children, families, and early childhood professionals.



**1st Place National Winner: Excellence in Multi-State Collaboration Award**




**Pollinate Your Plate: Connecting Pollinator Protection with Nutrition and Chronic Disease Prevention**  
 Ashleigh Childs & Team  
 University of Georgia Extension

The Pollinate Your Plate curriculum was created in partnership between FCS and Agricultural and Natural Resources agents

**Agents taught participants about:**

- The role bees have as pollinators in food production
- Basic bee anatomy
- Differences between drones, workers, and queen bee
- The five food groups representing MyPlate



**1st Place National Winner: Environmental Education Award**



## Celebrating Black History Month by Advancing Nutrition Security and Health Equity

*Caree Jackson Cotwright, PhD, RDN, Director of Nutrition Security and Health Equity, USDA Food and Nutrition Service*

Every February, the United States honors and celebrates the rich, cultural heritage of African Americans, including their triumphs and adversities that are integral to our nation's history and success. To pay tribute to those who came before me and cultivate a better future for my three daughters, I share some of my journey to advance nutrition security and health equity through public service and highlight ways I hope each of you can join me in these efforts.



My late father Ernest C. Jackson, Sr. served as the director of community empowerment for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Change.



As a child, I benefitted from the achievements of the Civil Rights era. I attended school in Buckhead, an affluent neighborhood, home to the governor's mansion. Every school day, I got on the bus in my modest Adamsville neighborhood where there weren't many restaurants serving healthy meals, destined for a picturesque neighborhood featuring abundant food options. Though Adamsville didn't have posh restaurants, we had each other. My mother ensured our meals were rich with vegetables from our garden, the nearby supermarket, or Mr. Bell's neighborhood produce truck. I was so lucky to grow up in a neighborhood where neighbors and friends looked out for and cared for one another. As I explained in this video, at the time I didn't truly understand how differences in access to healthy retail food outlets affected our quality of health – really, our quality of life.

Now, with nutrition security as my focus, I am honored to continue my parents and neighbors' legacy by working to ensure everyone in this country has consistent and equitable access to healthy, safe, and affordable foods. In my role at USDA, it's such a pleasure to remember my roots and blossom in my ability to engage people from all demographics and life stages. So please join me in partnership to advance food and nutrition security. Everyone can put on their imaginary backpacks and "get on the bus" so we can collectively ensure that no child ever wonders why their neighborhood lacks healthy food choices. USDA's suite of 16 federal nutrition assistance programs already reaches 1 in 4 Americans. And with your help, we can reach even more and prevent ZIP codes from defining life expectancy. We have the collective power to ensure everyone in this country is set up to thrive.

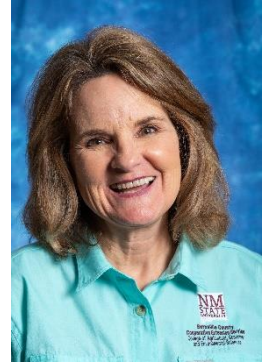
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## Western Region Update: Be Strategic in 2024

*Dianne Christensen (NM), Western Region Director*

The NEAFCS Board of Directors will be creating a new five-year strategic plan in May 2024 at their in person Board meetings. **Your input is important and valuable to this process so please reach out to your Regional Director with input and ideas as you think about our organization in the next five years.** NEAFCS Mission, Vision, and Values follow for your consideration as you form input. A copy of the current plan can be reviewed at [NEAFCS 2021-2024 Strategic Plan FINAL.pdf \(memberclicks.net\)](#)



**Mission Statement** The National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) provides personal and professional development opportunities for its membership and recognizes Extension professionals who impact the quality of life for individuals, families and communities.

**Vision** NEAFCS is the professional organization for Extension Family and Consumer Sciences that:

- Builds leaders for the future
- Provides innovative professional growth and development opportunities
- Recognizes and promotes excellence and scholarship in programming
- Serves members as a nation-wide resource for education, information, networking, and building partnerships
- Promotes the profession and the mission and goals of the Land Grant University Extension System

**Values.** NEAFCS members are dedicated to the beliefs that education is essential across the lifespan; that our clients have the ability to make their own plans and arrive at their own decisions; that respecting and celebrating cultural diversity enhances our work; that innovative solutions enable us to better serve our evolving communities; and that carrying out our work in a professional and ethical manner is vital in our role as Extension Educators.

**Western Region Input.** Information gathered from the western affiliates Annual Reports and surveying key members in various states provided the following thoughts for the Board as they consider the future direction and focus for our organization.

**Annual Session.** With the increasing costs of holding conferences, what will the next five years hold for Annual Session? Are there strategies to create other revenue streams to assist in paying for it? Should the conference be shorter in length to defray costs? Should NEAFCS stay with the regional model or hold the Annual Sessions in locations with lower overall costs?

**Awards and Recognition.** Family and Consumer Sciences is ever evolving, and more of the focus in recent years has moved to personal wellness and mental health. Can the current awards be reviewed and perhaps updated to reflect these new areas of focus? For example, in addition to the Family Health and Wellness award, could there be one more focused on individual wellness? Chronic disease prevention and management? Mental health and wellness?

**Member Resources.** More FCS agents are being hired who do not have Family and Consumer Sciences degrees. Are there ways to have seasoned Life Members serve as Content Resources for newer agents needing content and experience information and guidance?

Can NEAFCS have a stronger marketing program to non-traditional FCS colleagues? For example, how could we encourage 4-H staff without an FCS appointment to feel like they "fit" at NEAFCS because they're still working with families? Or human development colleagues?

**Professional Development.** Are there ways members who cannot attend Annual Session can have access to the professional development after the conference?

**Public Affairs.** For many members, the cost of attending JCEP and PILD is prohibitive. Could funding be considered to assist more members in attending? Both conferences offer excellent professional development and opportunities to present workshops and posters.

If you have additional thoughts for the board to consider as the strategic plan is developed, please feel free to e-mail your Regional Director, or President Rick Griffiths at [Rickgrif@nmsu.edu](mailto:Rickgrif@nmsu.edu)

## The Gift that Keeps on Giving

*Michelle Wright (TX), Appointed VP Member Resources*

Have you ever had a gift that keeps on giving? If not, do not worry because NEAFCS has one for you! **When you are a member of NEAFCS, you can publish articles in a refereed publication.** Publishing research in our peer-reviewed publication will give you a platform that offers:



- Credibility
- Peer validation
- Networking opportunities
- Enhanced visibility within Family and Consumer Sciences

How exciting is that! Most importantly, it can also create career advancement and build partnerships with like-minded Extension professionals.



NEAFCS can offer members what they need! Allow NEAFCS to assist you with this professional endeavor. Elevating members to reach their potential is our expertise as an organization. Give us the chance to open doors of career growth and opportunity for you! Submitting your research to our peer-reviewed publication will not only highlight your expertise in our field but will contribute to the advancement of our field. **The**

**2024 portal is now open. The deadline is 4/1/24. Use the [link](#) to view submission guidelines or visit [neafcs.org](http://neafcs.org), click the member resources tab, and look for the Journal of NEAFCS for more information!**

## Professional Development Opportunities

*Marcia Parcell (IN), VP Professional Development*

**Have you stopped to reflect on your professional development?** The professional development committee currently has three goals:



- 1. Enhance growth opportunities for our members through professional development**
- 2. Program sharing**
- 3. Leadership/personal development**

Enhance the profession through year-round opportunities for professional development that build core competencies in Extension Program areas and enhance opportunities for asset building for members. My committees as well as other committees and officers are meeting these goals.

The professional development committee has worked to provide webinars from members and external partners. The Arizona liaisons are offering tremendous pre-conferences and in-depth sessions. The committee has expanded educational opportunities through hot topic sessions. They are looking for ways to allow specialized program areas to build their professional networks at Annual Session 2024 Under One Sky. If you plan to attend Annual Session, be looking for these opportunities.

### Questions to Ponder...



Are you taking advantage of opportunities to build your professional networks? I have joined webinars to build my professional network on subject matter. Are you participating in the Dare to Lead book club? I have joined the book club because I see it as a professional network that I need. Are you applying for the Leadership Experience as a mentor or mentee?

**The Leadership Experience is another professional development opportunity. What professional development can most benefit you that NEAFCS provides?**

## Editing and Proofreading Awards Applications

*Natalie Snowden (TX), Awards & Recognition Committee Member*

**Editing and proofreading are critical steps in the writing process that are often rushed or overlooked.** We have all done it; we worked so hard putting a presentation/packet/report together and then hit submit only to realize a typo after our finger left the button. We focus so much on getting the content together, that we neglect to devote the time necessary for proper editing and proofreading. When you are working on a report and spending hours mulling over the words and information, your brain starts to fill in the gaps between what you meant to say versus what you typed. This is why it is so important to have a second and even third set of eyes proofreading your award application.



The University of Arkansas Little Rock Writing Center offers the following tips for effective proofreading:

**Proofread backwards.** Begin at the end and work back through the paper paragraph by paragraph or even line by line. This will force you to look at the surface elements rather than the meaning of the paper.

**Try to take a break between writing and proofreading.** Set the paper aside for the night — or even for twenty minutes.

**Proofread once aloud.** This will slow you down and you will hear the difference between what you meant to write and what you actually wrote.

**Ask someone else to read over your paper** and help you find sentences that aren't clear, places where you're being wordy, and any errors.

**Read through your paper several times**, once looking just at spelling, another time looking just at punctuation, and so on. Again, this can help you focus so you'll do a better job.

**Use the spell-checker on your computer but use it carefully and do your own spell-checking.** Computer spell-checkers often make errors – they might suggest a word that isn't what you want at all, and they don't know the difference between there, their, and they're, for example.

# Considering Running for National Office? Hear from the current outgoing officers!

Contact the officers with questions! Applications due to Past-President, Julie Garden-Robinson by **May 1, 2024**



### CALLING NOMINEES FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT

Serving on the board has brought new friendships, insights, professional rejuvenation and growth, great opportunities to listen and engage beyond my circle! -Jennifer



Contact [neafcs.org](http://neafcs.org). Applications are due May 1, 2024



### CALLING NOMINEES FOR VP MEMBER RESOURCES

Running for a national office reshaped my career. Dive into leadership, amplify your impact, and shape a brighter future! - Michelle



Contact [neafcs.org](http://neafcs.org). Applications are due May 1, 2024



### CALLING NOMINEES FOR SECRETARY

Being secretary is a marvelous adventure in learning how our organization works, building friendships, and showcasing NEAFCS through the newsletter. -Lisa



Contact [neafcs.org](http://neafcs.org). Applications are due May 1, 2024



### CALLING NOMINEES FOR VP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

My eyes have been opened to an amazing network of co-workers throughout our nation. I have learned to listen more to the needs of educators at all career levels. -Marcia



Contact [neafcs.org](http://neafcs.org). Applications are due May 1, 2024



### CALLING NOMINEES FOR EASTERN REGION DIRECTOR

Serving as Regional Director provided me with the opportunity to grow as a professional and expand my network of Extension professionals. -Jesse



Contact [neafcs.org](http://neafcs.org). Applications are due May 1, 2024



### CALLING NOMINEES FOR WESTERN REGION DIRECTOR

My mentor said NEAFCS Board service was the highlight of her Extension career and I completely agree. Don't miss this opportunity. -Dianne



Contact [neafcs.org](http://neafcs.org). Applications are due May 1, 2024



## Join one of the Public Affairs Committees – Advocacy, Education or Public Affairs

*Chris Zellers (NJ), VP Public Affairs*

**A great way to kick off the New Year is to become involved with one of NEAFCS State or National Committees.**

I recently received an email from a state Public Affairs Coordinator who was inquiring about what being on the National Public Affairs Committee entailed. It can be as much or as little as you like. I remember when I joined the Public Affairs Advocacy Committee, I had just started my position as an FCS Educator, and it was April of 2020.



Vincent Webb was the chairperson for the Advocacy Committee, and he was very welcoming at a time I really needed to feel part of something, maybe that is why I kept coming to meetings. He was also organized and had clear goals for the committee and now that I am VP of Public Affairs and I am getting to know the three chair people, Rosie Stewart – Advocacy, Amanda Dame, Education and Mindy McCulley, Marketing I see that they too are welcoming and organized and have clear goals that were established with their yearly Action Plans.

The time commitment is up to you as a member, if you want to learn what is going on with NEAFCS, which is a reason I got on that first zoom or if you want a place to lend your skills and services you can tailor what you want to do. **It's really up to you how much you can or want to give. I can say that from a professional perspective, it has been very rewarding to be involved with the NEAFCS Public Affairs committees because it checks some boxes for what I need to do, but more importantly, it's a pleasure to be involved.** If you have great proof-reading skills, you could help to review the impact reports for the education committee; if you like to coach people to get the good word out about our profession and NEAFCS, check out the marketing committee, and if you have great ideas for material development, especially around wellness for wellness month then check out the Advocacy committee.

**I hope to see you on one of the Public Affairs Zoom meetings or at the Annual Conference Public Affairs meeting!**

## What is the Leadership Experience? Why Should I Care?

*Joy West (AR), Mentoring and Leadership Committee Chair and  
Elizabeth Martin (LA), Mentoring and Leadership Committee Member*

**The NEAFCS Leadership Experience application is open! Now is the time to strengthen your leadership skills by applying to become a mentee or mentor.**

**Of the many opportunities NEAFCS offers, participating in the Leadership Experience may be the most beneficial to you. This program helps you develop the skills and confidence you need to improve your leadership skills or to impact the career of someone else.**

### The Need for the Leadership Experience

The Mentoring and Leadership Committee mission is to address the need for more leaders in NEAFCS. **Through interviews and**

**research, the committee noticed a common problem, lack of confidence in leadership abilities.** As a result, the Leadership Experience program was developed to combat this issue and grow leaders from within the association.

This program enhances the opportunities and skills for Mentees by providing guidance, support, encouragement, and empowerment needed for a successful career. A mentee is a member of NEAFCS who desires to grow as an individual, as an FCS professional, and as a leader within NEAFCS and Extension. This is done by focusing on developing skills in self-confidence, self-esteem, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and more. A mentor is a leader within NEAFCS who desires to share their knowledge and passion for NEAFCS, FCS, and the Extension land grant mission.

It provides valuable networking opportunities and encourages personal and professional growth by outlining practical and valuable leadership skills in the areas of:

- Leading Yourself
- Leading in Your Community/Others
- Leading in Family and Consumer Sciences
- Leading in NEAFCS

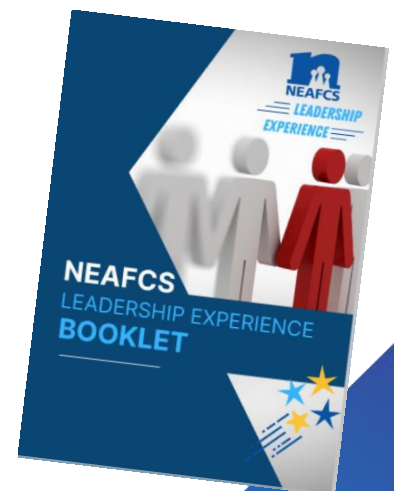
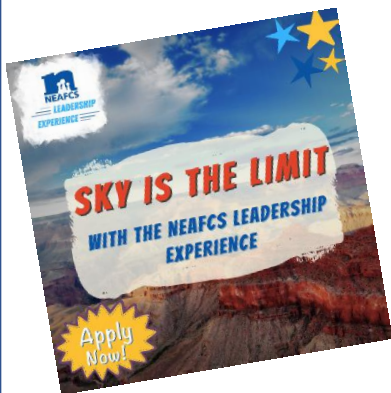
Mentees are matched with an experienced Mentor. A mentor is a leader within NEAFCS who desires to share their knowledge and passion for NEAFCS, FCS, and the Extension land grant mission. They often find they are also renewing their own inspiration to grow as Extension professionals by gaining new insights from their Mentee.

The NEAFCS Leadership Experience encourages networking, personal and professional growth, boosting one's confidence level, and learning from experience. Are you ready to strengthen your leadership while also strengthening our profession? Now is the time to apply for the NEAFCS Leadership Experience! **The application portal will close on March 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**NEW: For more information on the NEAFCS Leadership Experience, visit:**

[Leadership Experience Booklet.](#)

**To apply, visit: [NEAFCS Leadership Experience Application](#)**



## What is the Deal with Pronouns?

*Courtney Aldrich (MI), Diversity Committee Member*

You may have been in a meeting or introduced to someone and they have shared the pronouns they identify with. If you have ever wondered what this is all about, let me share an overview.



**Pronouns are used as a substitute for someone's name, and they are often based on assumptions about the person's gender, appearance, or name.** When we use the pronouns a person identifies with, it shows respect and gives them dignity. When we make pronoun or gender assumptions, it can feel

disrespectful and alienating, especially when we don't get it right. Most importantly, using correct pronouns is about suicide prevention. **According to the Trevor project (<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>), the attempted suicide rate is cut in half for transgender and non-binary youth who have their pronouns respected.**

**When you share your own pronouns, it not only identifies you for others, but also shows support for the transgender community.** In addition to verbal introductions, you can share your pronouns on your e-mail signature line, nametags, and business cards.

**Why do some people refer to themselves as "they"?** They/them pronouns can be used by a singular person who does not identify as a man or a woman (we can call this non-binary). If the use of they/them to refer to one person seems foreign to you, it can be helpful to remember that how we use language evolves over time. It may just take some practice to get used to it!

**Finally, if you use the wrong pronouns for someone, just apologize, correct yourself, and move on!**



The information in this article was sourced from the Gender and Sexuality Campus Center of Michigan State University. For a more detailed explanation and additional resources, go to: <https://gscs.msu.edu/education/pronouns.html>



## Creating your own Be NEAFCS Strong Giving Day

*Theresa Mayhew (NY), Endowment Committee Chair*

February might be the shortest month (although we get an extra day this year) but it surely packs a lot of punch! In addition to well-known holidays like Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day and President's Day, it also marks National Jello Week (12-18) and National Pastry Week which starts on the 27th. It's also American Heart, Black History, Haiku and Library Lovers Month!

It seems like there's a day, week, and month for nearly everything so why not pick one day this month to make it **Be NEAFCS**



**Strong** Day? You can start your own personal observance day by contributing to the endowment after reading this article (but promise me you'll go back and digest the rest of this issue!). Just visit <https://neafcs.memberclicks.net/endowment> to make a secure online donation now!



**We've set an ambitious yet attainable goal to raise \$90,000 to honor our organization's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary year** which we'll mark at this year's Annual Session in Tucson and continue on through the following year.

**As of January 31, 2024, we've raised \$16,681.**

If you've already donated, thank you very much! If you haven't, kindly help us move closer to that goal by donating today.

No need to wait till National Procrastinator's Week (which is early next month) to contribute! Do your heart proud and donate today! And while you're at it, maybe compose your own endowment campaign-giving haiku! Here's mine:



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**"Your endowment gift  
Will help us be viable,  
Visible and strong!"**

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## Is it the 90<sup>th</sup> or 91<sup>st</sup> Anniversary?

*Christine Kniep (WI), NEAFCS Historian*

One of the questions that has come my way this past year is...

**“if we organized in 1933, isn’t celebrating our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2024 a year late”?**



And yes, if you subtract 1933 from 2024 you do get 91.... trust me, this question has given me pause more than once and prompted me to do the math multiple times!

**We are celebrating our 90<sup>th</sup> this year because just like our own birthdays and anniversaries, at Annual Session 2024 we will be completing our 90<sup>th</sup> year.**

Annual Session 2024 will include the culminating celebration of our organization’s longevity and history. Because it is such a significant milestone, we decided to celebrate it all year long, with on-going activities for affiliates, a special NEAFCS Creed competition, and many 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary touch points at Annual Session 2024.

With that question aside, I continue to read and re-read our organization’s history this year and every time “new” things pop up, reminding me how our organization has changed over the years. For example, in addition to style shows by McCall’s Pattern Company and equipment demonstrations by Presto Products and the Hoover Corporation, for many years businesses would sponsor meals, breaks, and events at Annual Session. Food companies would feature new product lines, such as in 1955 General Foods Corporation sponsored a luncheon and demonstration of one of their new products – instant pudding. A couple of years later, 1959, The Campbell Soup Company hosted a luncheon at which the new Pumpkin and Mincemeat pies by Swanson and a new combination of Turkey and Vegetables soups were introduced. At that same meeting General Foods Kitchen hosted a luncheon and had as a part of the meal the new Jello glazed Danish sandwiches. I know we can still purchase instant pudding, pies, and soups. I wonder what happened to those Jello glazed sandwiches!

**As the NEAFCS Historian, I am searching out more stories like these to add to our history – where we have been, where we are and where we are going. Help write NEAFCS history, by sharing your experiences as a member!**