

## American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Announces Development of National Housing and Furnishings Competency Assessment and Pre-Professional Certification

Given that housing is considered a basic human need, that the housing industry is linked to 20-25% of the U.S. economy, that home sales and home building are improving, and that there is a renewed emphasis on living in a functional, safe, energy-efficient, and aesthetically pleasing space, there is a demand for those employed in the residential housing and furnishings industry. To help ensure a quality workforce, the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) announces the development of a national standards-based competency assessment measuring fundamental knowledge and skills in housing and furnishings. The assessment is aligned with industry standards, the National Career Clusters Initiative, and the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education.

Adhering to gold standards for effective testing, the computer-based assessment provides a mechanism for competency measurement, program accountability, and program improvement. Successful testing qualifies individuals for recognition and documentation through a corresponding Pre-professional Certification in Housing and Furnishings. The assessment and certification address competencies and a skill set necessary for success as a pre-professional in careers focusing on various aspects of housing and its furnishings. There are usage applications in a broad range of secondary and post-secondary education, staff development, and human resource settings. This assessment and certification will facilitate employment in early career ladder positions and promote continuing education at the post-secondary level preparing for careers found in public and private sector housing programs, real estate, residential properties, retail furnishings, and interior decorating and/or staging.

### Developed by National Housing and Furnishings Industry Professionals

AAFCS has engaged the assistance of a broad range of esteemed housing and furnishings industry professionals and educators from across the nation to assist in identifying relevant industry standards and to develop the assessment instrument. Recognizing the value of a solid assessment tool in assuring effective preparation of individuals with appropriate housing knowledge and skills, the following stakeholders participated on the development panel for the assessment and certification:

- Joseph L. Wysocki, National Institute for Food and Agriculture (Retired), Amissville, VA
- Mary Wynn Ryan, *Home Furnishings Retailer Magazine*, National Home Furnishings Association, High Point, NC
- Amy W. Garrard, Franklin Furniture Institute, Mississippi State, MS
- Amber W. Stewart, Energy Star for New Homes, ICF International, Vienna, VA
- Rachel M. Riley, Office of Healthy Homes, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Washington, DC
- C. Deanna Lewis, Home Builders Institute, Washington, DC
- Debbie Phillips, Georgia Apartment Industry Education Foundation, Marietta, GA
- Heidi Ross, ShowHomes, Little Rock, AR
- Peggy Spitaletto, Decorating Den Interiors, Plano, TX
- Matalie Howard, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA
- Janie L. Harris, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, College Station, TX
- Judy Daves, Trumann High School, Trumann, AR
- Victoria Sandford, Lake City High School, Coeur d'Alene, ID

### Assessment Launch and Further Information

The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) national organization has a proud 101-year history of providing support and leadership for family and consumer sciences professionals. AAFCS has a well-established credentialing center that includes accreditation of university programs, professional level assessments and certifications, and the assessment and certification of pre-professionals. The Housing and Furnishings assessment and certification are part of a portfolio of pre-professional level assessment and industry-recognized certification products by AAFCS and will be available for use in 2010-11. For further information please contact: Lori Myers; Director of Pre-Professional Assessment and Certification; 703-706-4600; [LMyers@aafcs.org](mailto:LMyers@aafcs.org).

