



Karin Athanas

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AAFCS

Karin Athanas is a standards and conformity assessment expert and nonprofit leader with over a decade of experience working with industry and government agencies on issues of conformance, quality, and reliability.

An experienced lead auditor to international standards such as ISO/IEC 17025 and ISO/IEC 17020, Karin's past accomplishments includes participation on the working group that developed International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Guide 19 Modules in a Forensic Science Process, on the Maryland Forensic Laboratory Advisory Committee (FLAC) that developed COMAR 10.51 Forensic Laboratories, requirements for licensure, and on the National Commission on Forensic Science subcommittee on Accreditation and Proficiency Testing to develop recommendations for forensic science including Views of the Commission on Proficiency Testing in Forensic Science and Views on Critical Steps to Accreditation.

Karin also serves as a Board member of the International Consumer Product Health and Safety Organization (ICPHSO) and the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and is an active member of ISO TC 272 on Forensic Science and ASTM E30 and E36 committees.

Karin has a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Arizona State University and a Master in Forensic Science from George Washington University.

The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS), is a 501c3 nonprofit organization working to enhance the lives of individuals, families, and communities, through education, outreach, and the development of competent, caring FCS professionals.



Lori Myers, PhD, CFCS, ICE-CCP

**CHIEF OF STAFF AND SENIOR DIRECTOR
OF CORE COMPETENCY OF AAFCS**

Dr. Lori Myers is a recognized family and consumer sciences (FCS) leader with over thirty years of experience working with middle schools, high schools and postsecondary educational programs in the areas of curriculum and professional development, credentialing, and research.

In her current role, Lori provides leadership for the organization's programs and initiatives focused on high quality professional development, higher education accreditation, credentialing for FCS pre-professionals and professionals, and evidence-based research across FCS content areas and practice settings.

As an experienced educator, Lori has made numerous presentations on the state, regional, national, and international levels, served in various leadership capacities for FCS related professional organizations, published scholarly articles in FCS related journals, and received teaching and professional awards on the local, state, regional, and national levels.

Lori has a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science degree from Louisiana Tech University in Family and Consumer Science Education and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Family and Consumer Sciences Education from Iowa State University.

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Cara Winston Simmons, CFCS

PRESIDENT OF AAFCS

Dr. Cara Winston Simmons, CFCS, is a committed leader whose journey in the field began in eighth grade when she managed a pop-up restaurant in her home economics class. That early experience sparked a passion for service and leadership that has guided her through more than two decades of transformative work in higher education.

Dr. Simmons has led initiatives in academic advising, student leadership, career development, and support services such as Bulldog Basics. Her innovative redesign, alongside a colleague, of FACS 2000: Introduction to Family and Consumer Sciences, a foundational course at the University of Georgia's (UGA) College of Family and Consumer Sciences, introduced the discipline's Body of Knowledge. The course is required for students pursuing a BSFCS degree. Their work was featured in the 2022-2023 AAFCS webinar series and shared during the 2024 AAFCS conference. At UGA, she planned and led several Family and Consumer Sciences Day at the Capitol events.

An active member of AAFCS since 2015, Dr. Simmons has held numerous leadership roles within the Georgia affiliate, including President, Student Unit Advisor, and Chair of the inaugural Committee on Diversity and Inclusion. In recognition of her contributions, she received the Georgia Affiliate Leader Award in 2023. At the national level, she has presented, served on panels, and contributed to committees in various capacities, all in support of advancing FCS. Her deep commitment to the values and mission of family and consumer sciences led to her election as the 2025-2026 AAFCS President.

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