2018 Annual Conference Wrap-Up

The Colorado and Wyoming AAFCS Affiliates hosted another successful professional conference April 14. In this issue you’ll find summaries of speakers and other conference events. There will be more about this and the 2019 conference in the next newsletter. Information is also on the CAFCS website, www.AAFCS-colorado.org

The date for the 2019 Conference will be announced late summer or early fall so you can put it on your calendar and plan to attend. The affiliates would appreciate any suggestions you may have to make the conference better meet your needs such as location, dates/days (weekend or weekday or combo), length (1 day vs evening & the next day) themes, and speakers. Please share your ideas with ED Luann Boyer (contact info on last page) or contact board members who are listed on the CAFCS website.

CAFCS President’s Message

by Laurel Kubin
2018-2019 Colorado President

As I step into the president’s role on June 1 for the 2018-2019 year, I want to thank the CAFCS members for placing their confidence in me to provide leadership for our organization. When we were responding to the questions asked about serving as an officer during the installation at the 2018 Annual Meeting, I was reminded about the honor and great responsibility of being in this leadership role.

During the 2018 Annual Meeting, one of our long-time members, Nancy Johnson, eloquently spoke about the importance of our profession and how proud she is to be a 62-year AAFCS member. This was quite inspiring for our newer members and was reaffirmed by members of longer tenure.

Evaluations of the 2018 Colorado/Wyoming Affiliates Conference were very positive. Nearly every respondent said the topics were relevant to them personally and/or professionally and the presentations included new information they will be able to use. The logistics, presentations, and networking opportunities were also rated very high. Many thanks to every member who helped make the conference a success!

I look forward to working with the members during the next year. Join me in encouraging more people to join our profession and become members of AAFCS and the affiliate!

Laurel Kubin
WAFCS President’s Message
by Patty Johnson
2018-2019 Wyoming President

The recent CAFCS/WAFCS Annual Conference is in the books. The Wyoming Association appreciates the opportunity to network with other professionals on topics relevant to our profession. Thank you Laurel Kubin and the Colorado Executive Board for your hard work. Talking with participants, the one thing that was a constant is change and it was being embraced with enthusiasm. People were enthusiastic about the new chapter in their lives whether it was professional or personal.

The workshops on emotional health were informative and can be used in navigating our daily lives. Society has to deal with more children who do not live “The Leave it to Beaver” life with the security of a home, loving parents, and stability. Hopefully members returned home with renewed enthusiasm and knowledge to better deal with students, clients or family in their professional and personal life.

Just a reminder about the AAFCS Webinars which provide members an opportunity to expand their knowledge at no charge.

Recently Dr. Virginia Vincenti from University of Wyoming partnered with Dr. Axton Betz-Hamilton from South Dakota State University to present Beyond Estate Planning: What Families Need to Proactively Prepare for Success During Late-Life Dependency of Relatives. If you missed the May 3 presentation you can find it in the AAFCS webinar archives.

After the Annual Conference on Saturday afternoon I took a stroll through the CSU Campus. The spring flowers were abundant, lawns were green and Spring had arrived. Take time to rejuvenate your spirit.

Patty Johnson

Wyoming AAFCS Student News
by Lyndee Johnston
2017-2018 Student President

This spring semester had been a busy one for the AAFCS student chapter at the University of Wyoming. After hosting a successful event in the fall, we turned our focus mainly on fundraising as we plan to host a similar event next fall. Not only did we host fundraisers for our organization, we also held one for the Wade’s Trailer Park fire which happened in March. All the proceeds were donated to the fire survivors to help them get back on their feet.

Also, throughout the semester we hosted Life-Style workshops with the goal to provide students with skills which perhaps they hadn’t been taught or even thought about needing. The three workshops involved going to a Cowboy Cooking class on campus to teach the students simple tips of how to cook; and also incorporated financial management skills and sustainable habits into their everyday lives.

Our advisors and teachers, Virginia Vincenti and Erin Irick, were the featured speakers at the financial management and sustainability workshops.

Our student group also focused on recruiting new members during the semester, but had very little luck. As this year ends, we are losing several members including Jubilee Hoover (Treasurer) and Lyndee Johnston (President) who graduate. To help the other members continue to put on events, fundraisers, and community activities, we encourage the FCS students to become members of the Wyoming AAFCS Student Group!

Lyndee Johnston
‘Coups for Troops’

Colorado and Wyoming members brought lots of coupons to contribute to the 2018 AAFCS Student Unit (SU) activity. Carole Makela reported over 3,000 coupons were contributed at our conference and have been mailed for military families to use.

You can still participate in this organization which was formed in 2011 to use coupons from manufacturers which are outdated for consumer use. Rather than throw away those coupon supplements from your mailbox or newspaper, consider clipping and shipping. Coupons need to have ‘future’ expiration dates to allow enough time for shipping. *Military families overseas can use manufacturer coupons up to six months past their expiration date (3 months past in Alaska and Hawaii) at military base commissaries.*

For more information about this organization and details on shipping, go to their website [www.coupsfortroops.org](http://www.coupsfortroops.org).

The purpose of the Fitness Breaks was twofold:
1) To provide example questions which families could use to have conversations at family meals or other family events which strengthen family relationships and increase interpersonal understanding without being distracted by people using their electronic devices.
2) To provide directions and short videos demonstrating stretches that could be done during a busy day and even as part of family time to improve physical and emotional well-being.

Fitness Breaks
by Virginia Vincenti

In keeping with the theme of Healthy Relationships and Healthy Bodies, a handout with suggestions and resources was developed to use during the conference breaks.

CAFCS Awards

Congratulations to Michelle Dennis and Debbie Nelson who were CAFCS 2018 award winners recognized at the 2018 Annual Conference.

Michelle Dennis received the **Professional of the Year** recognition. She is the Colorado State Program Director for Family and Consumer Sciences. She has been proactive in working with a network of teachers to expand the Teacher Cadet program to address the shortage of teachers in Colorado. She has...
developed innovative partnerships to provide programs in rural areas and has collaborated with universities and community colleges to promote teacher education.

Michelle is the current President of NASAFACS which recently completed a revision of the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences. These are utilized by Family and Consumer Science Teachers and FCCLA members in development of their projects. She has been in her current position since 2014 and previously taught Family and Consumer Sciences at Greeley West.

Debbie Nelson has been an AAFCS/CAFCS member 39 years and has served in many state and national leadership positions. She has previously received the CAFCS Teacher of the Year and CAFCS Professional of the Year awards. Her recognition as the recipient of the 2018 Marcile Wood Community Service Award is for an activity she does when traveling which touches many lives and brightens their days.

Debbie writes postcards and cards to family, friends and members of her local community. Debbie has this down to a practice with pre-printed address labels and stamps when she travels. In the years she has been sending cards some of these recipients have “travelled” with Debbie to the far parts of the world.

Since her retirement from Jefferson County School District, Debbie has assumed the position of Executive Director of Colorado ACTE. Her enthusiasm for FCS continues to thrive as she works with teachers and other professionals.

2018 Conference Presentations

**Authentic Connections: The Role of Mindful Presence and Listening in Relationships**

reported by Laurel Kubin

Sue Schneider PhD, Family Consumer Science Agent from Colorado State University Extension in Larimer County, guided the conference participants through information and activities that helped us realize the importance of making truly authentic connections with others. She discussed how we easily become disconnected, tune out, and forget how others are feeling when we get caught up in ourselves. We forget to practice mindfulness.

Sue guided us to explore four qualities of connection: presence, mindfulness, attunement, and compassion. For a person to grow, they need an environment that nurtures empathy, genuineness and acceptance according to Carl Rogers.

She suggested our “monkey minds” are continuously looking ahead, ruminating on the past, and often ignoring what is happening right now. This produces a constant mental treadmill. Our minds are often judgmental, of ourselves and others, and this results in deepening our negativity bias. As a result, we miss out on the 90% of our experiences that are neutral. She reminded us a “Mindful STOP” is important. This involves stopping, taking a few breaths, observing, then proceeding with something that will support us in the moment.

We practiced diaphragmatic breathing during the session, noting how our minds became calmer when we were focusing on breathing. This led us to becoming more mindful, which means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally, according to Jon Kabat-Zinn.
Sue then discussed “attunement” which allows us to relate to each other or ourselves with greater acceptance and compassion. She also discussed empathy and the evidence that empathy is transmitted automatically through mirror neurons. Barriers to compassion were discussed, and we learned about levels of listening. To become really attuned to another person we need to practice “other-focused” listening. She reminded us that what we practice becomes stronger, encouraging us to practice authentic connection.

Sue’s closing thought: The most precious gift we can offer others is our presence. Thich Nhat Hanh

Healthy Relationships That Cross Generations
reported by Patty Johnson

Karen Caplovitz Barrett PhD discussed emotional health in children who have experienced some type of trauma. Barrett is in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Colorado State University.

Two thirds to three quarters of children experience at least one trauma before the age of seventeen. For professionals working with children and teens it was enlightening to discover why some of our approaches to individual students in the classroom get the opposite response than what was intended.

Trauma is an acute or chronic life event which may threaten the physical or emotional well-being of an individual. The emotional scars are not always evident. So in future relationships the caregiver or teacher may not be aware of the trigger that destabilizes the event.

The trigger in traumatic stress is a signal that something is “dangerous” based on the child’s interpretation of their past. It is associated with specific memories and may or may not be an actual danger to the child. It could be raised voices, a hand on the shoulder, the sound of crying, the smell of fire, etc.

Children of trauma have learned ways of interacting with the maltreating person, but that does not work with a new caregiver. Cultural differences may be misinterpreted such as not looking an adult in the eye or being quiet like in Asian and American Indian cultures. Children of traumatic stress may or may not be in actual danger. But they shift into a self-protection mode with fight or flight after the traumatic stress is experienced.

Thus, the child is lost in their new setting not knowing how to “properly” respond and may regress with behaviors like bed wetting, being more aggressive or disobedient, depression, disrupted eating and or sleep, and extreme attachments with peers. Unfortunately, half the people needing mental health services are children and only half actually receive mental health services.

May is Mental Health Month and a reminder that society needs to be looking at our lifestyles and how our physical, mental, emotional, and social health are intertwined with our past and our present. For a healthier future we need to be mindfully present in our interactions with others: take time to listen, learn to read body language and become better at interpreting what others are trying to tell us.
through their actions, small gestures, and words, and to also find better ways of expressing our own needs to others. Otherwise the effects of the childhood trauma may linger for decades and affect the quality of adult life with more mental and emotional problems becoming evident, and making adults more vulnerable to developing chronic diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, and stroke. Since we only have one chance at life, we need to do it right.

Watch for more about the 2018 Conference Presentations in the August 2018 Newsletter.

2018-2019 CAFCS Board
Congratulations to the Officers and Board Members for 2018 - 2019:

President Laurel Kubin
President-Elect Carole Makela
Secretary Jyll Queen
Treasurer Brenda Guzman
Past President Kim Baldwin
Social Media Chair Nicole Endres
Membership Chair Kim Baldwin

The email contact for each of these board members is posted on the CAFCS website on the About CAFCS page.

The recently revised and updated CAFCS Bylaws are also posted on the website. If a member would like a copy of the CAFCS Policies & Procedures (P&P) which were revised effective February 2018, contact Executive Director Luann Boyer and she will email a copy.

You can still register to attend the 2018 AAFCS Annual Conference & Expo in Atlanta, Georgia. Go to www.AAFCS.org and select Events to get complete details.
**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!**

**2018**

June 24-27: AAFCS 109th Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia

July 12-16: International Association for Relationship Research Conference (IARR) Annual Conference, Hilton University Hotel, Ft. Collins

www.iarrconference.org

July 20: Deadline for August 2018 Newsletter

August 1: Quarterly Newsletter
* AAFCS Annual Conference
* More Program Highlights from 2018 Colorado/Wyoming April Conference
* Student News for Fall Events

**Newsletter Submissions**

This newsletter is your newsletter. Members are encouraged to submit information on programs or conferences (including website links) as well as information on current FCS topics.

Written submissions should be in a WORD document attached to the email. Photos should be saved as jpeg and attached to the email (please don’t put into the body of the email).

Email all submissions to Executive Director at luann.boyer@colostate.edu

**COLORADO/WYOMING NEWS**

is a newsletter for members of the Colorado and Wyoming Affiliates of American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences.

Photos and articles from and about members are welcome.

Members are asked to keep email addresses updated with CAFCS so newsletters can be emailed. Send any contact updates, including address and email to the Editor listed below.

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