Tennessee Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

The Source and Voice for Strong Families July 2026

Visions Newsletter

TnAFCS Annual SUMMER Edition

Web site: https://www.aafcs.org/tennessee/home

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Save the Dates

TnAFCS State Conference

June 4, 2027
Monterey High School
(Monterey, TN)

AAFCS Annual Conference

June 10-13 2027
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

tnafcs@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Welcome to a New Year with TnAFCS!

Dear Tennessee Affiliate Members,

Welcome to an exciting new year with the Tennessee Affiliate of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (TnAFCS)! As we begin this new chapter together, I am filled with enthusiasm for what lies ahead and grateful for the dedication of our members who continue to strengthen our profession.

Last year was one of growth and accomplishment. Through the hard work and commitment of many individuals, TnAFCS regained good standing and established a strong foundation for the future. Now, we are ready to build on that momentum.

This year, our focus is on growing our membership, strengthening advocacy efforts, expanding professional development opportunities, and creating meaningful ways for members to connect and lead. We will be launching new committees, enhancing our communications through newsletters and social media, developing leadership resources, and exploring exciting initiatives such as a statewide scholarship program for future Family and Consumer Sciences professionals.

Most importantly, **there is a place for you.** Whether you are a seasoned professional, new educator, student, retiree, or industry partner, your talents, ideas, and passion are needed. Throughout this year, you'll have opportunities to serve on committees, share your expertise, celebrate member accomplishments, advocate for our profession, and help shape the future of Family and Consumer Sciences in Tennessee.

Together, we can continue moving our affiliate forward while making an even greater impact across our state. I encourage you to stay connected, get involved, and invite a colleague to join us. The future of TnAFCS is bright, and I can't wait to see what we accomplish together.

Here's to a year of collaboration, leadership, service, and success!

Melissa Wood, President

TnAFCS

The Tennessee Affiliate is an AAFCS All-Star Affiliate

During the AAFCS Annual Conference in Louisville, the Tennessee Affiliate was presented with the certificate below indicating we are an All-Star Affiliate. Thanks to the hard work of our members and the board, we have accomplished much this past year. We are proud of being recognized for our accomplishments.

Some of the highlights of our activities include:

-Increased in membership through Miles in the Making (College Freshmen) and Bridge Grant

-Increased communications—4 newsletters, personal emails to each member, communications with FCS public educators

-Conducted the TnAFCS Annual Conference

-Continued Advocacy– Met with Tenn. Legislators, had article published in newspaper about FCS, provided information to members about AAFCS Career research to use locally

-Gained good standing with AAFCS by updating IRS and other documents

-Networked with FCCLA members and sponsoring teachers at state FCCLA Leadership Conference through tabling event



WE NEED YOU!!!!! — 2026-2027 Committee Requests

During the coming year TnAFCS will be working on new initiatives as well as continuing some of our work from last year. We need your help. If you would be interested in being a part of the following committees, please contact President Melissa Wood (mwood85@utm.edu) or complete the following short survey indicating your interest. **https://forms.gle/CCT9uUzH8NTEUyfLA** We plan to get the committees organized by September and begin doing important work.

TnAFCS Committees:

Communications – Purpose to enhance the communications with members, and other FCS professionals (including enhancing our social media presence).

Finance Committee - To provide support and financial growth to the financial aspect of our organization (including performing an audit of our finances yearly).

Public Policy Committee—To provide materials and support for reaching out to stakeholders locally and statewide, and to be involved in advocacy with state legislators.

Membership Committee– To develop and implement a plan to increase membership including encouraging FCS students and professionals to become members and be involved in programs available.

Grant and funding Committee—To explore grants opportunities inside and outside AAFCS for greater involvement.

TnAFCS Board Members

2026-2027 TnAFCS Officers



Melissa Wood
President



Katherine Whatley Vincent
President-Elect



Lauren Freeman
Secretary



Amber Roth Treasurer



Lesley Williams
VP, Program of Work



Sue Byrd
VP, Relations



Amber Watts
Member-at-Large



Hannah Upole
Member-at-Large



Melinda Swafford
Counselor

HIGHLIGHTS of the 2026 TnAFCS Annual Conference

This year's conference was amazing with professional development opportunities including information on the following topics: (If you missed this year's Conference, make sure to come next year!!!)

-Exploring the New Dietary Guidelines

-Designing Educational Media with AI Hands-on

-FCCLA update

-Comparing Extension Nutrition Education Alignment with Tennessee Health Ed. Standards

-Real-World FCS Education: Preparing Future Educators Through Cross-Cultural Service-Learning

-Heirloom Tech-Motive

-Peace by Piece—Flat Bed Knitting Machine Hands-on

-Strategies for FCS Program Growth and Student Success

-Increasing College Students' Fruit and Vegetable Consumption and Improving Health Behaviors

-Exploring Creativity in Fashion Design Through Popular Culture

-From Student to Teacher: The FCS Journey (Kentucky Featured Speakers)

TnAFCS 2026 Award Winners!!!

Each year TnAFCS selects our outstanding members who receive acknowledgement at the Annual Conference for their achievements. (TnAFCS President Melissa Wood is shown here with the awardees.)



Hannah Upole—Leader Award



Katherine Vincent– New Achiever Award



Lesley Williams—Teacher of the Year Award



Kristy Long—Outstanding Student Award

TnAFCS 2026 Annual Conference Highlights

On June 5, 2026, we had a phenomenal conference with wonderful speakers and great research and information shared. Here are some of the highlights in pictures.



Images from Louisville

and the 2026 AAFCS Annual Conference



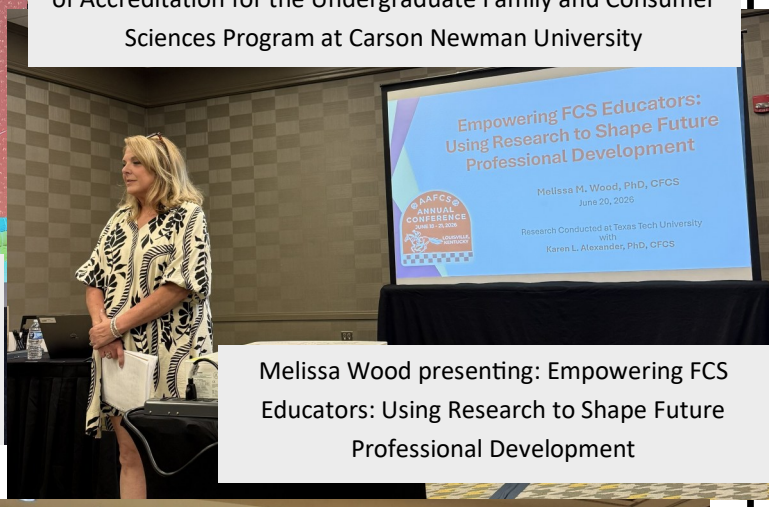
The Tennessee Delegation (+ Hannah)



Amber Roth receiving a certificate indicating the reaffirmation of Accreditation for the Undergraduate Family and Consumer Sciences Program at Carson Newman University



Hannah Upole presenting : The Dress Up Box: Using Dress as a Tool to Communicate Elements and Principles of Design



Melissa Wood presenting: Empowering FCS Educators: Using Research to Shape Future Professional Development



Kristy Long (UTM Student) receives the Betsy Norman Award



Kristy Long (UTM Student) explaining her research poster based on her scholar project while in Kenya:
UTM in Kenya: Taste Buds Across Borders