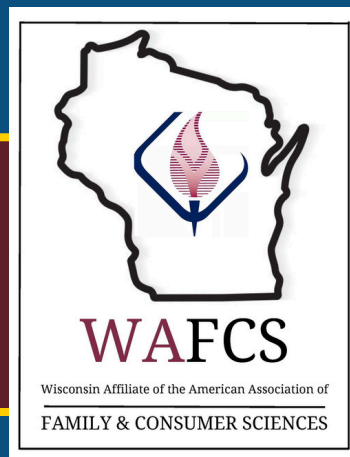


WAFCS News – May, 2026

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCES



Congratulations, Dee Dee Giovingo!
Teacher of the Year for Badger High School



Badger High School- FCS

Apr 9 • 🌐

The FCS Department is beyond proud to celebrate Mrs. Giovingo, who has been named Teacher of the Year for Badger High School! 🏆👏

Anyone who has had Mrs. G as a teacher, worked with her as a coach, or taught alongside her knows just how deserving she is of this incredible honor. She goes above and beyond every single day—building meaningful connections, mentoring her students and athletes, and making a lasting impact in everything she does. Her kindness, dedication, and willingness to support everyone around her truly set her apart.

She is an inspiration to colleagues and students alike, and we are so lucky to have her as part of our department! ⭐❤️



Congratulations to the 2026-2027 Executive Board!

President Elect – Sadie Hooker
Secretary – Rebecca Marquard
Treasurer – Ryan Lehman
VP of Awards and Recognition
– Tara Weber
VP of Technology and Communications
– Amber Miller

AAFCS Annual Conference

Will you be attending? If so, connect with Jenny at
wehmje@elkhorn.k12.wi.us



Don't Miss the 2026 Emerging FCS Teacher Summer Institute!

July 21-22, 2026 – [Register Here](#)



**Emerging
FCS Teacher**
SUMMER INSTITUTE



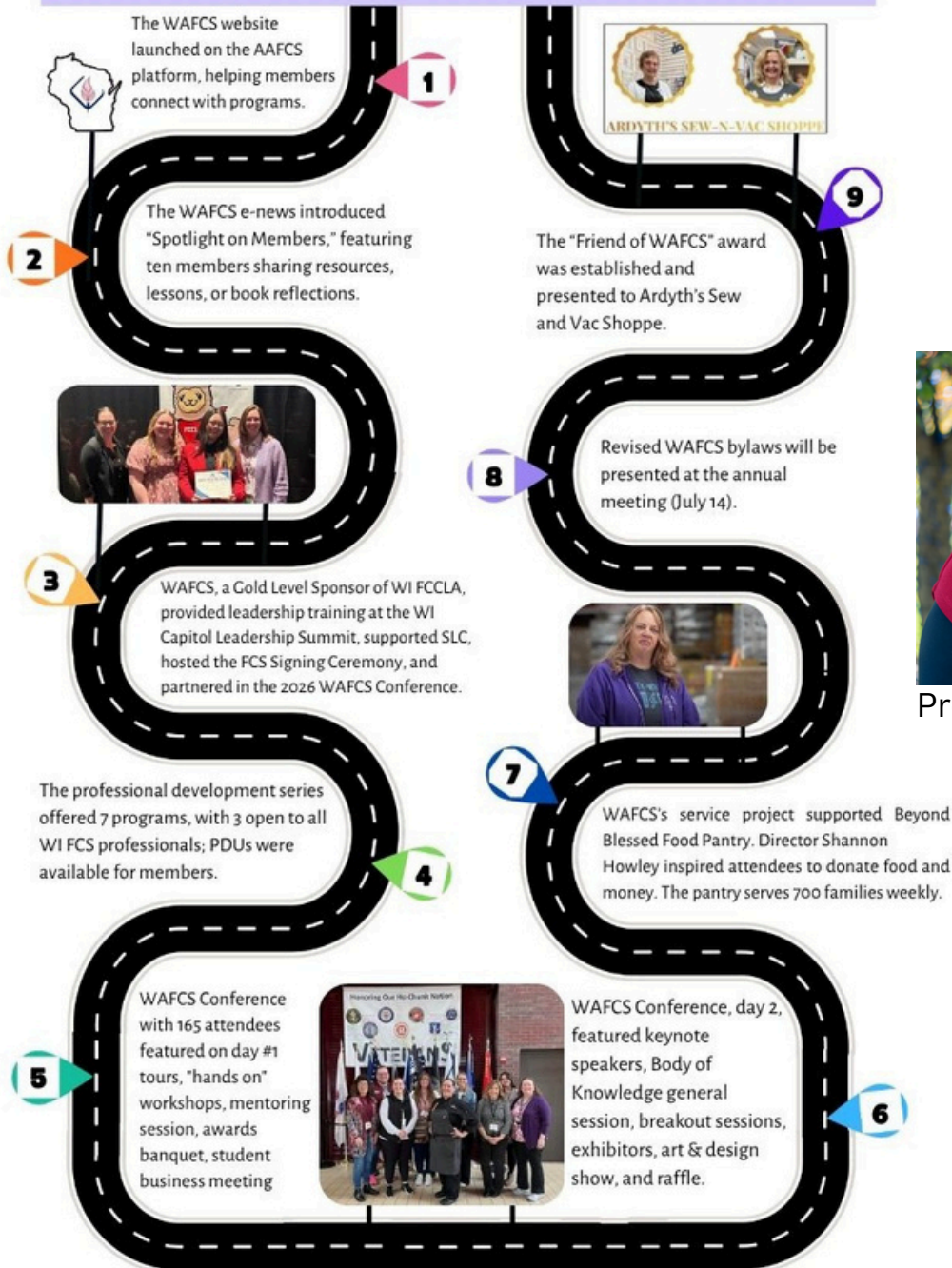
A two-day summer institute featuring dynamic, hands-on professional development sessions in Family and Consumer Sciences

WAFCS 2025-2026 YEAR IN REVIEW

The WAFCS Executive Board Program of Work centered on "Connecting FCS Professionals, Enriching Lives," with four focus areas:

- ongoing professional development
- annual conference engagement
- support for new professionals
- celebrating successes.

Board members aligned individual plans to these priorities. Below is an overview of this year's accomplishments..



President Cathy

WAFCS Professional Grant Recipient

Katie Sand- Valders High School FCS Teacher & FCCLA Adviser 2026 Professional Grant - a Reality Works Infant Simulator



Katie Sand

At Valders High School, the gap between conceptual knowledge and reality just got a lot smaller. While textbooks can list the costs of diapers or the hours of sleep lost to a newborn, they often fail to capture the weight of responsibility. Through the WAFCS professional grant, the school introduced the RealCare Baby infant simulator, a high-tech learning tool designed to bridge that gap. The goal was simple but profound: to move beyond the "theory" of parenting and into the demanding, 24/7 reality of infant care.

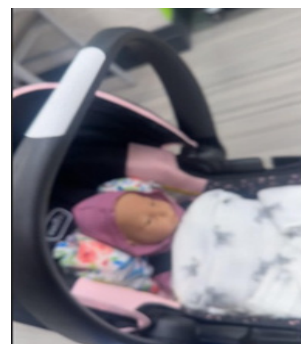
Many students lacked a foundational understanding of the physical, emotional, and financial sacrifices required to raise a child. While our curriculum addresses these topics theoretically, there is a serious need to enhance this through hands-on learning. The RealCare Baby does just this by providing a powerful way for students to gain insight into parenting and improving ways to care for a child, and making decisions. The simulator isn't just a toy; it is a sophisticated piece of technology that requires feeding, burping, rocking, and diaper changes, all while tracking the "parent's" response time and care quality.

The feedback from students who participated in the program suggests that the simulator achieved exactly what the grant intended. For many, the experience was a jarring wake-up call. One of the most common themes in student feedback was the realization of how much personal freedom is surrendered to a child. *"It really is eye-opening and shows just how much sacrifice you would have to make in your daily life to add another life to it,"* one student noted. Another admitted the psychological toll: *"Now that I hear the sound of the beeping before the baby starts crying I get worried... it has changed my perspective even more about teen parents and how much they have to deal with every day."*

The simulation also forced students to navigate the world with a dependent, highlighting the social friction of parenting. *"Carrying the baby is hard when people aren't polite and don't hold doors,"* a student shared. They also touched on the social anxiety of parenting: *"I felt a little embarrassed when the baby started crying in the middle of class when it was quiet."*

Perhaps the most striking takeaway was the "reality check" the simulator provided regarding future life choices. *This is a great way to see if you are ready... because if you can't handle it for 1 day, then maybe you shouldn't have one for 18 years.* Another student went as far as suggesting the program be a requirement: *"I would certainly say this should be a mandatory class for schools because it's a very realistic representation of how demanding and frustrating it can be."*

By integrating the RealCare Baby into the Valders High School curriculum, the grant has provided more than just a lesson in anatomy or finance; it has provided a lesson in empathy and preparedness. As these students return to their normal schedules finally able to sleep through the night they do so with a newfound respect for parents and a much clearer picture of what their own futures might hold. The consensus is clear: if you want to understand the demands of another life, you have to try to live it, even if just for a weekend.



~ Campus Updates ~

UW-Stevens Point

Dr. Susan Turgeson

UWSP Students Study Abroad!

8 UWSP students will be traveling to London, Edinburgh, Oslo, and Dublin from June 10 – 27.

A few highlights of the trip will include: Day trip to Stonehenge, Bath, and Windsor, Buckingham Palace Queen Elizabeth II Anniversary Exhibition, High tea at Edinburgh Castle, visit to Lochcarron, day trip to the Highlands and Loch Ness, Fjord island hopping, visit to St. Angela's University, and a day trip to Blarney Castle.

You can follow along with the adventure on the UWSP College of Professional Studies blog!



Dr Susan Turgeson



Amanda Drews

UW-Stout

Amanda Drews



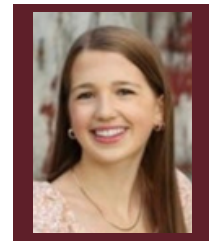
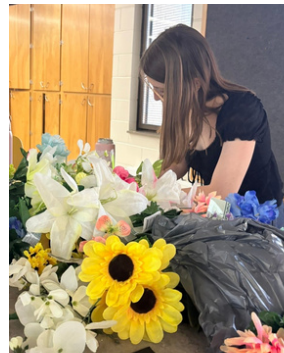
U.W. Stout FCSE is excited to announce **Emily Larson, CFCS**, Family and Consumer Sciences Educator from the School District of Amery, as our 2026 UW–Stout Family & Consumer Sciences Education Conference Keynote Speaker!

Emily's keynote, "The Trials and Smiles of FCS," celebrates the realities, challenges, and rewards of building thriving FCS programs while balancing the demands of teaching and life beyond the classroom. Through stories of perseverance, meaningful moments, and successes from FCS educators across Wisconsin, Emily will explore the unique niches within our profession and help educators discover where they thrive best.

With 21 years of teaching experience, Emily is a nationally recognized FCS educator, founder of the FCS Leadership Academy, and recipient of numerous honors including the 2023 Wisconsin FCS Teacher of the Year and 2024 AAFCS National Merit Finalist. Her passion for innovation, leadership, and authentic student experiences makes this a keynote you will not want to miss.

Join us in celebrating and advancing the future of FCS! Learn more and get involved: [UW–Stout Family & Consumer Sciences Education Conference](#)

~From Our Students~



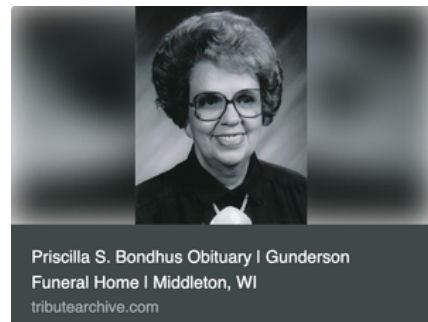
For Teacher Appreciation Week both UW- Stevens Point and UW- Stout, WAFCS Student Unit Leaders; Clara Bartels, Emmalee Johnson, Leah Pasch, and Joey Murawski led a service project at their respective campuses. On April 21st, both campuses connected over Zoom and hosted a shared meeting including ice breaker activities and their service project. Their project, titled, "April Showers bring May Flowers" was aimed at supporting teachers in their local communities by creating flower pens using faux flowers and pens. As well as pen tags that included words of encouragement for teachers finishing the school year that were tied on to the pens. UW- Stevens Point donated their pens to P.J. Jacobs Junior High and UW- Stout donated their pens to Menomonie Middle School staff.

Submitted by Emmalee Johnson



IN SYMPATHY

WAFCS extends it's sympathy to the family of Priscilla Bondhus, former member and Executive Director.



Brew to Receive Canfield Award

JEAN BREW of rural Wisconsin Dells has been chosen as the recipient of the 2026 William H. Canfield History Award. The award was started in 2002 and is presented each year to honor the work of a person who displays the same passion for local history as William Canfield, Sauk County's first historian. Jean has been involved with local history endeavors for decades. Her love of history goes back to an inspirational history teacher at the high school in Prairie du Sac which she attended. After graduating from UW Stout with a bachelor's degree and later master's degree in Home Economics Education, Jean worked as a home economics teacher for over 20 years. She also worked several years for the UW Extension offices in Adams County and Sauk County. In 1981 Jean was part of the founding organizers of the Dells Country Historical Society which was created to save the historic Bowman House. A quilt show fundraiser for the house was started by Jean which was quite popular and ran for over 20 years. In 2013, Jean was elected as president of the Dells Country Historical Society, a position which she held for several years. She also served as

the vice-president and chair of the program committee. Jean and her husband, William, were long-time members of the Badger Steam & Gas Engine Club, which holds an annual show each year. In order to encourage women to attend the show, Jean and her sister Jan were instrumental in getting a Women's Features building constructed at the show grounds which houses historical exhibits every year. Local historical societies, including SCHS, and individuals are invited to set up displays; and the building is visited by thousands of people each year. After her husband died in 2017, Jean constructed a building at the Badger show grounds to display her husband's collection of tractors and other items as well her own collections in order to share them with the public. For over forty years, Jean Brew has been a champion of local history in many ways. The Sauk County Historical Society looks forward to honoring Jean Brew on Canfield Day, **Tuesday, April 14 at 6 pm** at the Carnegie-Schadde Memorial Public Library in Baraboo. A program will be followed by the award ceremony and light refreshments will be served. The public is invited to attend



Congratulations, Jean Brew!
2026 William H Canfield
History Award