



*From the President's Desk: a new year, a new president*



As I begin my tenure as President of the Washington Affiliate of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (WAFCS) in 2025, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to connect with more members of our unique Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) community. FCS is distinguished by its shared mission to enhance the quality of life for families, individuals, and communities. It is a privilege to assume this leadership role and collaborate with others who are committed to this important work. I want to thank our past president Sharleen Kato for being my mentor as well as all of the hard work she has done for bettering our profession.

I have the pleasure of working alongside our new President-Elect, Bilen Yitbarek, an FCS educator who currently teaches creative cooking at Kentridge High School. She joined the WAFCS board last year, and we are fortunate to benefit from her innovative ideas and her passion for bringing diverse perspectives to the field of FCS.

This marks my seventh year as an educator, and after spending the past year and a half as an instructional coach, I am excited to be back in the classroom. I truly enjoy working with my middle school students, who bring immense joy and authenticity to the learning environment. Every day is filled with new personalities and perspectives, making it a dynamic and rewarding experience. As I teach cooking basics, sewing, and personal finance, I am reminded daily that my role involves both controlled chaos and immeasurable fun. There is never a dull moment, and I never know exactly what each day will bring.

In a world that can often seem uncertain and filled with challenges, I find hope and inspiration in my students. Their enthusiasm, whether it's about accurately measuring ingredients in our muffin lab or creating their own aprons in our sewing unit, infuses the classroom with energy and positivity. I am continuously learning how to better meet my students' needs through self-reflection and ongoing professional development.

One of the many reasons I am so thankful to be part of the FCS community is the opportunity to learn from my peers. At the state conference in Wenatchee last October, I gained valuable insights into helping my students navigate the world of artificial intelligence and the challenges posed by distracting technology. I also had the opportunity to collaborate with fellow middle school educators, exchanging ideas on popular recipes, classroom management strategies, and best practices for conducting successful lab activities.

I look forward to continuing this journey alongside so many dedicated professionals who share a passion for equipping individuals, families and communities with the skills to thrive.

Warmly,

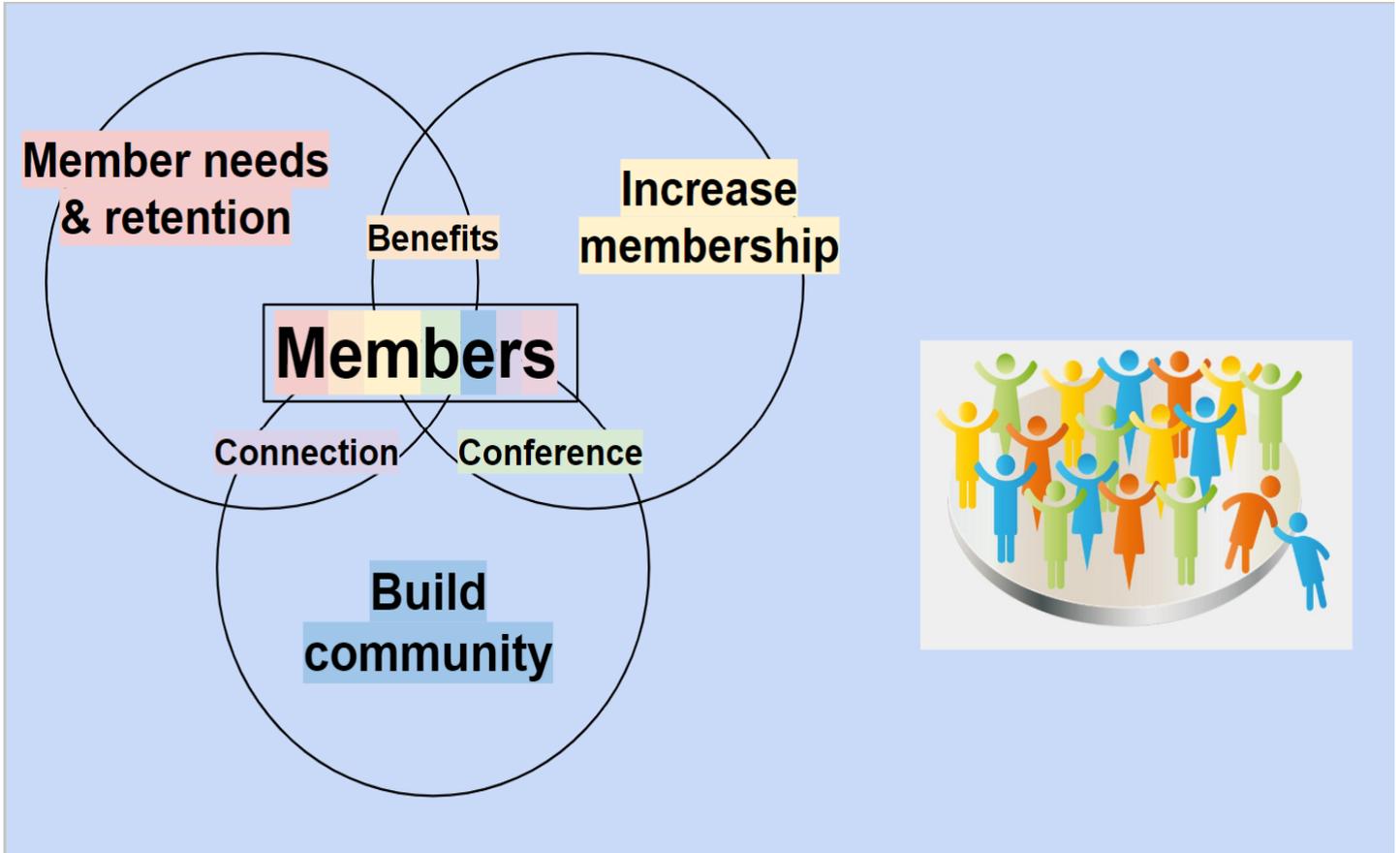
**Jordy Larsen**



*Jordy in her classroom at Dimmitt Middle School in the Renton School District*

## 2025 Affiliate Action Plan & Executive Board

President-Elect, Jordy Larsen, introduced our Affiliate Action Plan at the WAFCS Annual General Meeting on November 18th.



### 2025 Executive Board Officers

President: Jordy Larsen

**President Elect: Bilen Yitbarek\***

Secretary: Carri Smith

Treasurer: Margaret Viebrock

Nominations: René Ketchum

**Membership: Leah Song\* and Cori Schmidt\***

Awards: Karen Bergh, LynDee Lombardo, **Jacky Warnock\***

Executive Director: Diane Grossenbacher

Communications Director: Donna Graham

Counselor: Sharleen Kato

\* Denotes new members to the Executive Board



2024-2025 Executive Board

*I am an FCS Professional: A Continuing Series by WAFCS Members*  
*Jacky Warnock*

### My Journey Within Family and Consumer Sciences



*Dr. Mary Warnock (L) and Jacquelyn Warnock (R) with marbled biodegradable nonwoven dress entered in 2016 Juried Showcase, AAFCS National Conference St. Louis, MO*

Every Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) professional has a unique journey, but the common thread is a passion to empower others with essential life skills. Whether sparked by a love for food science, a talent for financial literacy, or a desire to strengthen families, the path to FCS is as diverse as the field itself. So, “who led me to this rewarding profession?”, my mother, Dr. Mary Warnock. She has been an influential mentor in my life, shaping my values, teaching me essential life skills, and providing unwavering support. Her guidance has molded me into a responsible, resilient, compassionate, and confident person who is able to conquer life’s challenges. Whether offering wisdom through every day experiences, encouraging personal growth, or leading by example, my mother’s mentorship began my journey into the FCS profession.

In retrospect, my mother took our family to various professional development conferences including AAFCS, Beltwide Cotton Conferences, International Federation for Home Economics Councils and Congresses. She would present her textile science research and I would be a supporter in the audience. Sometimes, she would have me model various textiles, such as a traditional African dress, to showcase another culture. Why am I sharing this? Because I learned how to network with other professionals who were passionate about FCS. These experiences became the foundation for my FCS career.

Upon graduating from high school (2004) Family and Consumer Sciences was not considered as a college major. I chose athletic training. Working with cadavers confirmed that I had made the wrong choice; therefore, I changed my major to the area I already knew would be rewarding - Family and Consumer Sciences. After earning a bachelor’s degree in Human Environmental Sciences with a major in Apparel Studies and a minor in Global Studies, I accepted a FCS/4-H Agent position with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service.

The best lesson I have learned by studying FCS is that one is prepared to handle any situation. My first day as a county FCS/4-H agent required that I participate, with the State Specialist, in a Financial Workshop. The issue was not the workshop but the clientele attending. Everyone had just lost his/her job due to the closing of a local chicken plant. Tension and stress were high but the workshop provided valuable information plus learning experiences for all attendees, especially me. As a result, I became more empathic, a better active listener, and acquired more patience with myself and others.

By developing FCS Extension educational programs, adults and youth acquired essential life skills in areas such as financial literacy, nutrition, and leadership; gained confidence and skills in preparation for future careers and personal successes; and had the opportunity to participate in highly innovative and creative programs such as 4-H Fashion Boot Camp (my brain child) that covered fashion trends, clothing patterns, hand sewing techniques, and machine sewing.

In May 2011, after earning a master’s degree in Educational Technology, I married and moved to Oswego, NY, where my husband began his career as a nuclear engineer. No FCS jobs were available so I applied, and was hired, as an adjunct instructor within the University of Arkansas – Pine Bluff (UAPB) Department of Merchandising, Textile and Design. By use of Skype and Blackboard, *Principles of Apparel Design*, *Fashion Buying and Merchandising Procedures*, *Visual Merchandising*, and *Dress and Human Behavior* were offered by distance education. Of these courses the most innovative, developed by myself and the Department Head, was *Principles of Apparel Design*, a combination of flat pattern and draping techniques. conducted by distance education at this time (2013-2014).

*(Continued on page 4)*

***I am an FCS Professional: A Continuing Series by WAFCS Members***  
*Jacky Warnock, continued from page 3*

Students attended online lectures to understand sewing techniques and their practical applications in clothing construction and draping while creating design projects in the sewing lab. During sewing labs, I would Skype so that students and teaching assistant could ask questions while cutting pattern pieces; sewing; and draping garments. In addition, guest speakers would make personal appearances. For example, Dr. Warnock taught/demonstrated the draping section. This clothing construction course was one of the few being offered/

During my adjunct teaching position with UAPB my husband, due to over-employment, was released from the nuclear plant. Both of us were job hunting, again. I was interviewing for Extension positions in Georgia and Texas while he, too, was interviewing. My job offer arrived first which was in Odessa, TX as the FCS/4-H Agent; thus, we moved to Midland, TX. During these four years my husband received an engineering position at a nuclear plant in Richland, Washington, which created a “commuter marriage” until I could find an FCS position. Again, FCS and Extension prepared me for the unexpected when I became the site manager for a local middle school and high school through the Washington State University GEAR UP program. My job responsibilities, similar to Extension, included financial management workshops for FASFA, college tours, career exploration workshops, and meetings with school administrators.

While in this position I observed various FCS teachers interacting with students and having a positive impact by sharing life skills that will ready them for their future endeavors in and out of the classroom. Their passion, mentorship, and real-world applications of FCS subjects motivated me to follow in their footsteps. I decided to return to school; earn a second master’s degree in Family and Consumer Sciences along with the Washington State teaching license through the Central Washington Great Plains IDEA program; and obtain a high school teaching position. Goals were met (2022) with the acceptance of an FCS teaching position at Southridge High School, Kennewick, WA. Since this time, I have been teaching FCS Food Science, Independent Living, and Financial Literacy classes.

What’s most exciting about FCS is its real-world impact! It is all about educating individuals, families, and communities about essential life skills. FCS professionals empower people to make informed decisions that can improve their quality of life. The hands-on nature of FCS, from culinary science experiments to textile innovations and early childhood education strategies, makes learning engaging and applicable. Plus, the field constantly evolves with trends in technology, sustainability, and consumer sciences, keeping it dynamic and relevant. The dynamic nature of FCS, constantly adapting to societal needs and emerging trends, keeps my every-day teaching experiences exciting and creative. Knowing that I have the ability to create a lasting, positive impact on my students’ lives reaffirms that becoming a FCS teacher was not just the right decision - it was my calling.

***Congratulations to Jordy Larsen and Bilen Yitbarek***  
***on their acceptance to the 2025 AAFCS Leadership Academy!***

The Leadership Academy is an organized effort to assure that a professional cohort of potential new leaders will be available to assume leadership positions in committees, communities, councils, and as elected officers nationally or at the affiliate level in AAFCS for this decade and beyond. Focusing on new leaders, the Academy will address competencies needed for assessing one’s attributes and skills in Leading Yourself, Leading Others, and Leading AAFCS. Seasoned leaders will serve as mentors. By active participation in the Leadership Academy experience, the participant will meet the following outcomes of the Leadership Academy:

- Gain knowledge and skills that facilitate the development of personal leadership skills
- Assume leadership roles in AAFCS
- Develop a supporting network of colleagues who will link new leaders with resources throughout their professional and volunteer experiences.
- Partner with a mentor to enhance leadership abilities.

***I am an FCS Professional: A Continuing Series by WAFCS Members  
Bilen Yibarek, President-Elect***

**What was your path to becoming an FCS professional?**

My path to becoming an FCS professional was through the connection of Dr. Sharleen Kato at Seattle Pacific University during my undergrad. I came to Washington after graduating high school in the hopes of discovering who I was as an individual away from home. I started as a Physiology major, because growing up, success was depicted as securing a job in the medical field or working in law. I quickly learned within my first two years that the science route was something that did not bring me joy as I spent countless hours on assignments and article readings. I knew I wanted to find a career path that would help people, so the medical route was quickly abandoned after my 2<sup>nd</sup> year. As I thought about other potential majors I could switch into, my admissions counselor recommended I make an appointment with Dr. Kato, who at the time was the department head of the FCS department. I had never heard of FCS before but took a shot by scheduling a 1:1 with Dr. Kato and have not looked back ever since!



I enjoyed the classes I took in the FCS major and appreciated the individuals I made connections with as well. Finding FCS was truly one of my top 3 favorite moments in my undergraduate journey because without it, I wouldn't be in the teaching profession I am today. One of the classes I took that solidified my decision was the lesson planning class I took my senior year with Dr. Kato. I always thought you needed more life experience before entering the classroom, but in Dr. Kato's class I learned that lived experience was more important. I found joy in putting together lesson plans revolving around different aspects of my east African culture and found it rewarding to share those with my fellow peers in the class. I realized that through FCS, educating others about improving one's quality of life could be impactful in more ways than one, and that's something I wanted to be a part of.

After graduating with my undergraduate degree in Human Development & Family Studies, I spent about two and a half years working with elementary students in an afterschool setting and stepped into an administrative role at a K-8 private school before finally taking the plunge and applying to the Seattle Pacific Master's-in-Teaching program. Interning at a high school surrounded by predominately brown and black students gave me immense joy and energy that I knew entering the teaching profession was the right move at the right time for me. Now as I look forward to finishing up my 3rd year as a high school educator, I think back through my journey to finding FCS and am immensely grateful for that 1:1 scheduled with Dr. Kato years ago that led me to say yes to FCS!

**What excites you about what you are doing now?**

What excites me most about what I'm doing right now is seeing the growth in both me and my students. As I'm in my third year of teaching, I have gained a lot more confidence in the classroom, and I feel like I'm able to truly connect with my students and make a lasting impact on their lives. I currently teach Creative Cooking and Food & Fitness at my high school down in Kent, Washington and have spent the last two years building up my resources to achieve my goal of having the students connect more with the content I teach and hopefully see themselves in the curriculum.

I have been taking the time to ask the students what they want to learn, the types of food they want to try and make, and the concepts they want to dig deeper into. I have also been challenging my students in various team building exercises to help them grow in their communication skills with each other as well as encourage those with leadership skills to step up. It has been exciting watching them discover new skills they did not know they had and seeing those "aha" moments when they realize how what we're learning applies to their everyday lives. I feel like I'm really making a difference, and it makes the hard work so rewarding. I feel like I'm really making a difference, and it makes the work so rewarding. It also makes me look forward to my future in education to seeing where else I can go from here!



## AAFCS Annual Conference June 25-27, 2025 Kansas City, Missouri

High quality professional development and networking opportunities for members and non-members is at the core of the AAFCS Annual Conference. The conference objectives help provide a framework for the content to be addressed at, and included in, the 2025 Annual Conference.

### Objectives

The 2025 Annual Conference offers high-quality professional development and opportunities to:

- ◇ Address issues and challenges impacting individuals, families and communities.
- ◇ Engage in critical dialogue and networking to build and strengthen relationships.
- ◇ Showcase the high-quality research and scholarship of FCS students and professionals.
- ◇ Explore emerging topics, technology, and advancements in the FCS field.
- ◇ Promote lifelong learning and continuing education in FCS content areas.
- ◇ Embrace a commitment to create inclusive environments, promote equitable practices and ensure access for all individuals within the organization.

### Tracks

Through its educational sessions, AAFCS is on target to provide high quality professional development and networking opportunities in the following areas:

- ⇒ Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access.
- ⇒ Advocacy, Leadership and Collaboration.
- ⇒ Research and Scholarship.
- ⇒ Technology and Trends
- ⇒ Support and Resources for Emerging Professionals

#### Professional Member

Early Bird: \$350  
Early Bird Bundle: \$445  
Regular: \$450

#### Student Member

Early Bird: \$215  
Early Bird Bundle: \$260  
Regular: \$215

#### Emeritus Member

Early Bird: \$350  
Early Bird Bundle: \$445  
Regular: \$450

### Registration Information

Take advantage of our **Early Bird Registration** and enjoy discounted rates if you register by **April 15th**. It's the perfect opportunity to save while ensuring your participation in this incredible event! Mark your calendars, spread the word, and get ready to connect, learn, and grow in Kansas City!

### Exclusive Bundle Deal!

Why settle for just a conference? Register now and bundle your conference registration with a one-year AAFCS membership. This offer is available for both new and existing members!

Enjoy all the sessions, networking opportunities, and resources at the conference, plus a full year of AAFCS membership perks, including professional development, exclusive content, and a supportive community.

## *WAFCS Membership and Support Programs*

### **Why AAFCS?**

AAFCS is proud to be the only professional association dedicated to Family and Consumer Sciences students and professionals who represent multiple practice settings and content areas and are committed to positively impacting the lives of individuals, families, and communities. AAFCS advances the profession of Family and Consumer Sciences and provides many resources to members. Invest in yourself and the profession and take advantage of the opportunities AAFCS has to offer to you.

### **Membership Benefits: Access to Quality Professional Development**

#### **Annual Conference**

Members receive a significant discount below the non-member registration cost for the AAFCS and WA FCS Annual Conferences.

#### **Virtual Professional Modules**

All VPD Modules include access to on demand video presentations, supplemental materials, instructional resources, and a certificate for professional development.

#### **Ongoing Education**

Members receive access to a wealth of education and resources to stay on the leading edge of their career like virtual professional development modules, webinars, *JFCS in Action* resources, and more!

### *Welcome New Members!*

*These FCS professionals joined through WA FCS Annual Conference registration.*



Stephanie Tetrick - Kettle Falls School District  
 Cassandra Mueller - Puyallup School District  
 William Keliher - Auburn School District  
 Kayla Knaus - Auburn School District  
 Emily Sander - East Valley School District  
 Leah Song - Renton School District  
 Donna Koch - Lind-Ritzville School District  
 Trina Chambers - Clover Park School District  
 Bilen Yitbarek - Kent School District  
 Bonnie Sinclair - Tumwater School District  
 Elizabeth Smith - Bremerton School District  
 Samantha Kartic - Auburn School District  
 Ashley Gregory - Auburn School District  
 Allie Weerts - Bonners Ferry, Idaho

# Easy-Apply Grants may fund your creative ideas!

FCS Educators, WSU Extension employees,  
authorized volunteers, and student teachers  
are eligible to apply.

Two Easy-Apply Grants of \$300 each will be  
available for 2025:

**Due Dates:  
5/1/2025 and 12/1/2025**

Find details and application at  
[washingtonafcs.org](http://washingtonafcs.org)