



*From the Desk of Jordy Larsen, WAFCS President: AAFCS Leadership*



One of the greatest benefits of being part of AAFCS is the opportunity to grow as a leader. As a classroom teacher, I often feel limited in how much I can contribute outside the four walls of my classroom. However, I've come to realize that leadership isn't about titles or positions—it's about helping others. At its core, Family and Consumer Sciences is a service-oriented profession, and leadership in this field means empowering others, recognizing their strengths, and nurturing their growth.

This year, I had the privilege of participating in the AAFCS Leadership Academy, an experience that truly broadened my perspective on what it means to be a leader. The Academy's mission is to build leadership capacity by supporting emerging leaders in Family and Consumer Sciences. In the application it lists four outcomes participants will meet through this experience:

1. Gain knowledge and skills that facilitate the development of personal leadership skills (Leading Oneself).
2. Assume leadership roles in AAFCS (Leading AAFCS/Leading Others).
3. Develop a supporting network of colleagues who will link new leaders with resources throughout their professional and volunteer experiences (Leading Oneself).
4. Partner with a mentor to enhance leadership abilities.

One of the most impactful outcomes of this experience was the emphasis on being a lifelong learner—continuously striving for self-improvement while positively influencing those around me. Academy involved a few zoom sessions throughout the spring and then the two days prior to the annual conference with the cohort and planning committee. We read materials around emotional intelligence, leadership challenges, and strength finders. While together in Kansas City, the group completed an escape room, discussed challenges and solutions around issues that arise in different affiliates, and so much more. With ten years of experience in Family and Consumer Sciences, I am more committed than ever to deepening my understanding of the field and strengthening my leadership capabilities.

The Leadership Academy challenged my perspective on what it means to lead, both personally and professionally. I've especially appreciated the opportunity to connect with others through networking at both national and state conferences. These connections have been intentional and meaningful—providing guidance, support, and inspiration.

When someone first called me a leader, I dismissed the idea, assuming I didn't fit the traditional mold. But through this experience, I've learned that leadership comes in many forms. It's not about fitting into a specific archetype—it's about showing up with empathy, asking thoughtful questions, and making others feel heard and valued. Leadership isn't always easy; it comes with challenges. But those challenges bring important lessons, especially about the power of relationships in achieving any goal.

While I may not stay in the classroom for the rest of my career, I know I want to remain actively involved in AAFCS and help advance its mission: "AAFCS elevates the profession by inspiring research, leadership, and service to empower individuals, families, and communities." Leadership Academy has opened my eyes to new possibilities for the future and connected me with a network of passionate, like-minded professionals.

I'm incredibly grateful for this experience, and I encourage others to explore how they can get involved—whether as a participant or mentor. Leadership Academy has been a transformative part of my journey, and I hope others will take the opportunity to grow through it as well.

Warmly,  
*Jordy*

***The 2025 AAFCS Leadership Academy  
Bilen Ytibarek, WAFCS President-Elect***



*The Washington Affiliate was honored to have two participants in this year's class from the Missouri, Georgia, Texas, Washington, and Utah Affiliates.*

*Front row, third and fourth from left:  
Bilen Ytibarek and Jordy Larsen*



*One of the activities we did together was an escape room and we accomplished it within the time restraints so we got to take a picture with the big key!*



*Making new friends with AAFCS 2025 Leader recipients Karleah Harris (Arkansas) and Mia Russell (Maryland), and with Past President Deb Andres (Kansas).*

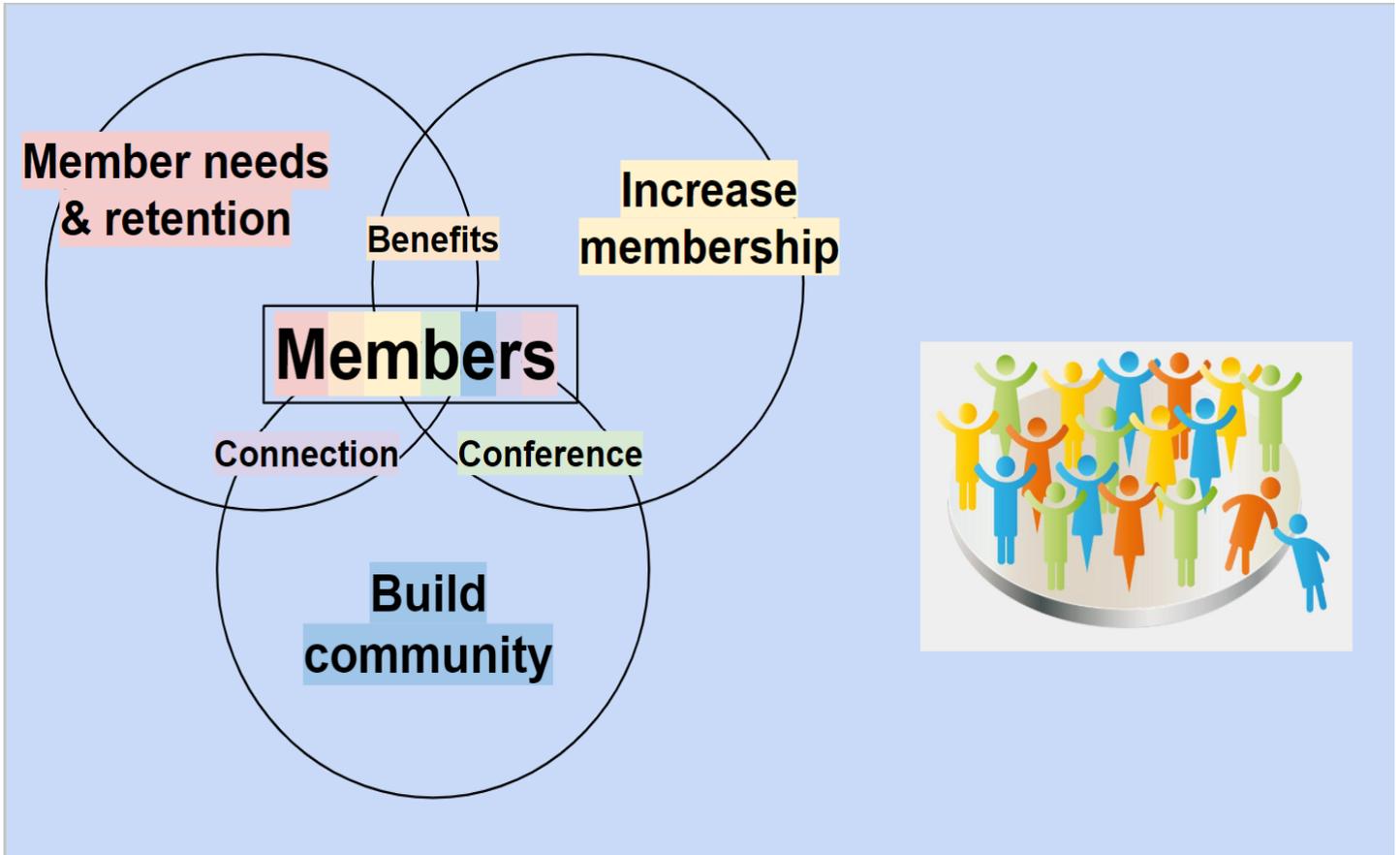
The Leadership Academy consisted of two full days dedicated to exploring the qualities that define effective and respectable leadership. As a cohort, we engaged in thoughtful discussions centered around *The Leadership Challenge* by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. We participated in meaningful conversations, learned from one another's experiences, and gained insights from several influential women representing various sectors within AAFCS. One of the most impactful moments for me personally was meeting Dr. Jacqueline Holland, an associate professor at Morgan State University. She introduced us to the National Coalition for Black Development in Family and Consumer Sciences (NCBDFCS), highlighting its purpose in advocating for and supporting Black professionals and pre-professionals in the field.

Another key takeaway from the Leadership Academy was the introduction of our Leadership Project, which we will develop with guidance from our assigned mentors. I am fortunate to be mentored by Dr. Jane Opiri, an associate professor at the University of Arkansas. When determining the focus of our projects, we were encouraged to select a topic that not only interests us but also contributes to the advancement of Family and Consumer Sciences. I chose to explore the ongoing discourse surrounding the name change from "Home Economics" to "Family and Consumer Sciences." Despite the change occurring years ago, the former name still frequently appears in conversations, including many of my conversations when I am sharing what my discipline is with others. I'm excited to delve into this research and grateful to have a knowledgeable mentor to support me throughout the process.

As for the Annual Conference itself - it was one of the most impactful professional experiences I've had during my educational journey. There is something uniquely empowering about being surrounded by fellow FCS educators at an event fully dedicated to our shared field. The workshops were not only engaging but also highly relevant, sparking new ideas about how I can implement what I've learned into my own classroom and curriculum. In my opinion, the best professional development experiences are those that leave you inspired to take action—and this conference certainly did that for me.

Being a part of AAFCS and attending both the Leadership Academy and the Annual Conference was a truly transformative experience. The organization plays a crucial role in advancing the field of Family and Consumer Sciences, and it was inspiring to connect with so many individuals who are deeply passionate about making a difference. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to learn from such accomplished and supportive professionals, and I look forward to continuing my involvement in AAFCS as I grow both personally and professionally.

## 2025 Affiliate Action Plan & Executive Board



### 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



*The Washington State delegation at the AAFCS Annual Conference in Kansas City.*

*Front row, Jordy Larsen, Bilen Yitbarek, Margaret Viebrock, LynDee Lombardo.*

*Back row: Molly Robbins (Anacortes), Linsey Turski (Snohomish), Donna Graham, Karen Bergh.*

*Missing from picture: Jacky Warnock.*



# INSPIRE CHANGE

## Washington 2025 FCS Conference

### October 26-28

Wenatchee Convention Center | Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel

#### Conference Dates:

October 26-28, 2025

#### Location:

Wenatchee Convention Center, 121 N. Wenatchee Ave, Wenatchee, WA

Each year the Washington Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (WAFCS) and the Washington Family and Consumer Sciences Educators (WA-FACSE) plan a conference to enhance the professional skills and provide personal enrichment for our members. This year's theme is "**INSPIRE CHANGE!**" We want our members to get so much out of the conference, and that they ultimately INSPIRE CHANGE.

#### Conference Hotel:

Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel

201 N. Wenatchee Ave, Wenatchee, WA 98801

Booking Link: <http://coa.st/WaFamily&ConsumerScienceEduc>

Rates: \$179/night

Hotel Booking Deadline: Friday October 10, 2025

#### Conference Registration Details:

Member - AAFCS and/or WA-ACTE & WA-FACSE	\$575
Non-members	\$875
Retired Member - AAFCS and or WA-FACSE	\$350
Retired Non-Member	\$400
Student Member – AAFCS	\$150
Student Non-Member	\$200
LATE Registration Member – after 10/4/25	\$775
LATE Registration Non-Member	\$900

#### Meals Provided With the Conference:

Sunday lunch, Monday breakfast, Monday lunch, Tuesday breakfast

#### ServSafe Foodservice Manger's Training

\$180

(Pre-Conference: Saturday October 25, 2025)

#### [Register Today!](#)

**No refunds will be issued after October 1.** Cancelled registrations prior to October 1 will be issued a \$75 fee. No-shows will be charged the full amount. All requests must be made in writing. Dues are individual, non-transferable, and non-refundable. Meal tickets are non-refundable. Service fees are non-refundable. Any refunds will be issued by check.



# INSPIRE CHANGE

## Washington 2025 FCS Conference

### October 26-28

Wenatchee Convention Center | Coast Wenatchee Center Hotel

*Sallie Tomato Exclusive Class*

**All supplies  
lunch  
provided**

# SOPHIE

Learn how to make the perfect little bag to carry your cell phone. Interior card pockets hold your credit cards. Beginner friendly!



**Pre-Paid  
Workshop  
\$125  
October 25**

**Limited  
Seating**

*Designed for Inspiration ~ LynDee Lombardo*

A fair portion of my numerous crafting books, especially the ones written by quilters, were purchased for their abundant designs and patterns. Full of useful photographs and diagrams, these books have helped me design my own unique creations.

But this summer, with its early swing into hot and then even hotter days well before August, I was sent to the library crafting shelves in June and July where I happened upon three relatively new books - design eye-candy - which provided this book-lover with a wonderful and much-needed chill of discovery.



The first book I located was **Knitting van Gogh: Knit your own masterpiece inspired by the work of Vincent van Gogh**. The title says it all, but the mix of photographs of van Gogh's paintings and the skillfully crafted apparel and décor items created by author and professional knitter, Krista Ann, plus quotes from Vincent's letters to his brother, Theo, combine to make the book a work of art in its own right.

I'm not much of a knitter, but this is a book I wish I had written. The dreamy tints and shades of blue found in van Gogh's paintings blend with the blues and yellows used in the knitted hats, sweaters and wraps. The red of the bed covering in the painting of Vincent's bedroom in Arles is a direct influence for the red knit blanket pattern. Unusual combinations of basic stitches and colors mimic the brushstrokes of van Gogh's landscapes *Wheatfield under Thunderclouds* and *Wheatfield*.

This is a book to be slowly thumbed through, and enjoyed by knitters and non-knitters alike. The innovative combination of art and nature works ideally to provide flashes of inspiration for those who love to work with yarn, thread, or textiles.

*"Success is sometimes the outcome of a whole string of failures."* Vincent van Gogh, Oct 1, 1882

Check it out!

The second book of note is **Wild Textiles: Grown, Foraged, Found** by Alice Fox, copyright 2022. If knitting inspired by van Gogh seemed a bit eccentric, **Wild Textiles** will seem otherworldly until you realize that most of the artistic creations pictured in the book are constructed from fibers and materials harvested from nature and minimally manipulated or hand-processed. Using natural dyes, simple stitching, weaving and basketry techniques, author Fox and a few other highlighted artists, show unusual ways to construct two and three-dimensional items from grown, foraged, and found materials. The ample photographs suggest innovative colors schemes as well as methods of construction.



In the introduction, Fox includes her personal artist's manifesto. Viewed as a mission statement, it contained six goals such as: Be as low-impact as possible; Use local materials; Be experimental; and Keep careful records, drawn, written and photographic, of your creations and ideas. I found these statements meaningful and more than appropriate for use with at least middle school and higher level students in art, design and textile-related classes.

This book is a wonderful record of her work and a compendium of old and new ways in which humans have connected with the places in which they have lived and the natural environment around them.

I particularly enjoyed the section on flax which then segued into one artist's rediscovery of nettles which then evolved into other artists experimenting with a variety of long-stemmed fibers such as daffodils, irises, dandelion stems and raspberry canes for processing into cordage.

Man-made materials such a paper and a few plastics were repurposed, while rocks, shells, and wool fibers were also used. The main guiding principles for selecting materials was locate them locally, seasonally, and unconventionally with a long-term goal of not creating anything permanent.

The mostly biodegradable materials were respected as truly art-worthy materials. As one of the book's featured artists, Richard Mabey, stated, *"Weeds made the first vegetables, the first home medicines, the first dyes."*

There is even a section of the book devoted to working with leaves. Leaf stitching, leaf vessels, and, of course, **leaf quilts**, are included. This proves, once again, that quilting is everywhere. The perfect word to summarize the fiber inspiration provided by this book is "Priceless!"

*Continued on Page 7*

*Designed for Inspiration ~ LynDee Lombardo*

*Continued from Page 6*



The Quilting Experience



A Celebration of Community and Patchwork Patterns

The final offering in our summer trio is Victoria Findlay Wolfe's **The Quilting Experience** published in 2024 by Schiffer Craft Books, which specializes in crafting publications. The 240-page book consists of twelve chapters based on twelve separate themes, such as Identity, Aging, Friendship, and Celebration, with each theme represented by one of twelve different blocks. To use all of the twelve themed blocks there is The Experience Quilt pattern that uses all of the twelve blocks. The final section of the book contains eleven additional projects based on the original twelve blocks.



But don't be fooled into thinking that this is just a pattern book; this is a book celebrating the community of quilting. **The Quilting Experience** includes writings and quotes from famous and not-so-famous of the quilting community as gathered primarily in the work of the Quilt Alliance in their Quilters Save Our Stories project. The goal of SOS is to document quilt history as art history, women's history, and people's history. The resulting stories are held in the Library of Congress.

For Wolfe, quilting is the art of storytelling reflecting the ebb and flow of life. Along with each of the blocks she shared with us, she also shares how she has explored techniques that have come to shape her quilt-making process. Wolfe's hints and tips can help us all improve our quilting skills, while appreciating the art and science of quilting as she and many of us have come to know and love it.



## **NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP** for

Recruiting, Preparing, and Supporting FCS Educators

*Coming soon: Regional Partnerships!*

In the wisdom of crowds, Surowiecki, (2004) reinforces the accepted wisdom that groups of people are better at solving problems and at making good decisions and are more innovative than individuals working alone.

In 2018 The National Partnership to Recruit, Prepare, and Support FCS Educators received a USDA -NIFA grant. Using collective wisdom by seeking and honoring input, sharing power, and gathering and summarizing ideas while focusing on the goal of supporting FCS educators, they succeeded in meeting the needs of isolated and disadvantaged northeast FCS educators, but did not have targeted resources for serving FCS educators in other regions.

As more and more states lose FCS specific advocates in their education departments it becomes extremely important to develop strong leadership to advocate for FCS programs. Through AAFCS, new grant funding has been secured to collaboratively develop regional partnerships and networking models for

- developing leadership within the field
- supporting FCS education
- improving the usefulness and effectiveness of FCS programs

States have been divided into five regions, and each region will replicate successful processes used to identify and engage northeast FCS educators in creating an active regional partnership appropriate to their region.

Stay tuned as Washington state gears up to join this project.

*Surowiecki, J. (2004). The wisdom of crowds: Why the many are smarter than the few and how collective wisdom shaped business economics, societies, and nations. New York: Doubleday.*



## *Membership Benefits: Awards and Grants*

Family and Consumer Sciences professionals play an important role in supporting individuals, families, and communities through education, outreach, and research. Each year, AAFCS recognizes these amazing individuals for their hard work and dedication through our achievement awards. Additionally, AAFCS supports grant supported research and program development.

The following recognitions will be awarded in 2026:

### Save the Date! The applications/nominations for AAFCS Awards are:

**Distinguished Service Award**

- Open: August 01, 2025
- Due: November 03, 2025

**All Other Awards**

- Open: November 03, 2025
- Due: January 12, 2026

**Grants**

- Open: September 01, 2025
- Due: December 15, 2025

#### **Teacher of the Year**

The National Teacher of the Year Award recognizes exemplary teachers who utilize cutting-edge methods, techniques and activities to provide stimulus and visibility to family and consumer sciences in elementary and secondary education.

This award is sponsored by Goodheart-Willcox Publishing Company which provides a monetary award to the recipient.

[Learn More](#)

#### **Undergraduate Scholarships**

AAFCS awards undergraduate scholarships to individuals who have exhibited the potential to make contributions to the family and consumer sciences profession. Individuals who receive an undergraduate scholarship will receive financial support for the study of family and consumer sciences.

[Learn More](#)

#### **Graduate Fellowships**

The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) awards graduate fellowships to individuals who have exhibited the potential to make contributions to the family and consumer sciences profession. Individuals who receive a graduate fellowship will receive financial support for the study of family and consumer sciences.

[Learn More](#)

#### **Leader Award**

The Leader Award identifies and honors family and consumer sciences professionals who have made significant contributions to the field through their involvement with AAFCS.

[Learn More](#)

#### **New Achiever**

The New Achiever Award identifies and honors emerging family and consumer sciences professionals who have exhibited the potential to make significant contributions to the field through their involvement with AAFCS.

[Learn More](#)

*Questions about awards?*

*Contact Donna Graham, WAFCS Communications Director, at [dcgrahamsews@gmail.com](mailto:dcgrahamsews@gmail.com).*

# 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 in 2025  
**Due Date:**  
**12/1/2025**

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