

Announcing the 2026 AAFCS Distinguished Service Award Winners

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The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences ([AAFCS](#)) is pleased to announce the following Family and Consumer Sciences ([FCS](#)) professionals as the recipients of a 2026 AAFCS Award. The AAFCS awards program has a long-standing reputation of honoring influential Family and Consumer Sciences students and professionals. These FCS leaders have and continue to make impacts within their local communities by elevating the profession and empowering individuals, families, and communities with their work.



The AAFCS Distinguished Service Award ([DSA](#)) was established by the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) Foundation in 1979 as a living tribute to members of AHEA (now AAFCS) to recognize superior achievements in family and consumer sciences, outstanding contributions to the family and consumer sciences profession, and sustained association leadership at both state and national levels.

"Our awards program is vital in highlighting the extensive work of these FCS professionals. We invite you to extend congratulations as AAFCS presents and honors these award recipients at the 2026 Annual Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, on June 21st, 2026. To honor the DSA recipients, the AAFCS has established a DSA Honorary Fund to support the Association's programs and services, including research, public awareness efforts, and publications. The community's tax-deductible donations sustain these and other programs that support professionals whose work assists individuals, families, and communities in making informed decisions about their well-being, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life." - Karin Athanas, AAFCS Executive Director.

Visit the AAFCS Distinguished Service Award website to learn more: [Distinguished Service Award](#)

- American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

Deborah J. Handy, PhD, CFCS, Washington, said Yes to FCS more than 40 years ago. She completed a Bachelor's Degree in Home Economics Education from the University of Wisconsin-Stout. She taught grades 7-12 in Wisconsin and advised the local FHA chapter. She completed both Master's and Doctorate degrees at Washington State University (WSU) and has been teaching at WSU for more than 30 years. Dr. Handy enjoys working with her students and being involved in FCS related organizations and activities. She served as the Parliamentarian, Newsletter Editor, Student Unit Adviser, and President for the Washington AAFCS Affiliate. She has been a member of the WA-ACTE FACSE Executive Board for more than 30 years. She was the Executive Director for Washington FCCLA for 18 years. She served as a member at large, recorder, and treasurer on the AAFCS Board of Directors, and chaired the AAFCS Council for Certification.

Debra K. Andres, M.S., CFCS-HDFS, Kansas, is a dedicated Family and Consumer Sciences Agent with Kansas State University Extension, serving the Flint Hills District. With more than three decades of experience in education, extension, and community leadership, she has developed and implemented impactful programs in health, nutrition, family well-being, and financial literacy. Deb has secured over \$1.3 million in grants to support community initiatives, authored numerous publications, and presented nationally and internationally on leadership, family studies, and community health. A past president of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, she has been recognized with multiple awards, including National Top Ten Teacher of the Year and Outstanding Extension Educator. Beyond her professional work, Deb is deeply engaged in her community through church leadership, nonprofit boards, and local coalitions, reflecting her lifelong commitment to helping individuals and families thrive.

Eleanor R. Abel Glover Gladney, PhD, South Carolina, is a distinguished educator and leader whose career reflected an unwavering commitment to student success, workforce development, and educational excellence. A native of South Carolina, Dr. Glover Gladney holds advanced degrees in Home Economics Education, Individual and Family Development Education, Education Administration, and Curriculum and Instruction—credentials that underscore her deep expertise across multiple domains of learning and leadership. Her professional journey spans decades of transformative service, beginning as a home economics teacher and evolving into roles of increasing responsibility and impact. As Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Team Lead, she championed initiatives that bridged academic learning with real-world application, preparing students for lifelong success. Her career is marked by a rare blend of compassion, strategic vision, and dedication to equity. Dr. Glover Gladney's work has empowered educators, strengthened relationships with industry and organization leaders, and advanced FCS, in South Carolina and beyond.

About AAFCS:

The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, founded in 1909, is the only professional association dedicated to Family and Consumer Sciences students and professionals who represent multiple practice settings and content areas. For 114 years, AAFCS has focused its mission on providing leadership and support for professionals whose work assists individuals, families, and communities in making more informed decisions about their well-being, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life. Through research, experiential education, and technology, our members help people develop the essential knowledge and skills to lead better lives, be work and career ready, build strong families, and make meaningful contributions to our communities.

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Family and Consumer Sciences or FCS is the field of study focused on the science and the art of living and working well in our complex world. The field represents many areas, including human development, personal and family finance, housing and interior design, food science, nutrition, and wellness, textiles and apparel, and consumer issues.

Karin Athanas

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

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