

## AAFCS 2009 Leadership Workshop

By Margaret Van Ginkel and  
Lois Kiester

It was an honor to attend the 2009 AAFCS Leadership Workshop in Indianapolis, Indiana on Oct. 30 through Nov. 1. What a packed weekend of learning and networking! The time flew very quickly and it was great to meet so many of the affiliate's officers and get acquainted with the national staff.

Here are some highlights that we would like to pass on to all of our members:



Left to right): Lois Kiester (IAFCS Executive Director), Marilyn Swierk, (AAFCS President), Carolyn Jackson (AAFCS Executive Director), and Margaret VanGinkel (IAFCS President-elect).

This is the time to be a FCS professional!

I was really impressed by the enthusiasm that the AAFCS staff and officers have about FCS. The student Unit President, Larissa Staley, was so great at getting us all excited and helped us think about how we need to be sensitive to how each generation learns and accepts information. It really helped me think through how we might recruit and obtain new members. All the social marketing tools out there that some of us may not be too familiar with, is what this younger generation thrives on. They also want to be active in organizations and help, but want to know exactly what that job description is, go after the task and then be recognized that it has been completed and finished. How well do we really recognize and reward some of our student members for tasks they have done or include them in the planning of our events? When we look at planning programs and events for IAFCS we need to carefully think through how we have planned and marketed to accommodate the Generation X and Y, and all of our membership.

Carolyn Jackson and Peggy Wild also talked about "Building Relationships". Peggy suggested a book, "20 Wishes" which I am going to try to read over Christmas. We all need to think about how we build relationships and promote our profession when we are in personal and public relationships. We are all good role models, but may have a hard time selling ourselves and our product. We also have to think about "balance" in our lives. Right now in our economy FCS people have the basic tools to help people get their lives back to reality; financial management, health and wellness, and family communications. Yes, we can make a difference in people's lives! Carolyn Jackson posed the question, "Who is on Your Board of Directors"? What a great concept. Think about the relationships you have and put together your Board of Directors to help you through the tough times. Some of you may be hearing from me as I put together my board for my personal and professional life.

Branding AAFCS was another important topic we heard about at the conference. AAFCS is working on a marketing/branding plan that should be available in the Spring. This will help identify what we really want people to know about us and help recruit for membership. We might need to then look at how this applies to IAFCS and implement some new strategies with our recruiting and marketing here in Iowa. I know we talk about the financial aspects of membership, but think of it this way....it only costs .38 cents a day for membership.....what can you buy for .38 cents? Or, \$2.66 a week. Maybe give up one trip to Starbuck's a week to be a member?

Marilyn Swierk cautioned us to be careful about speaking in acronyms only. Not everyone is familiar with FCS, IAFCS, AAFCS, etc. It is especially important when we are speaking to people outside of the profession.

It was also suggested that when we distribute information, such as the HINI – Taking It to the Streets, or free materials from the Soap & Detergent Association, that we attach a sticker that says "This information is brought to you by the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences". This helps give you and the Association some recognition for materials that have been developed for us.

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