

# Press Release

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## **NEAFCS ANNOUNCES THE 2020 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES**

NEAFCS (National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences), the professional association for Extension Family and Consumer Science professionals, recognized three exceptional women inductees for their commitment, dedication and effective leadership and involvement in NEAFCS at the state, regional and/or national level. They were inducted into the Hall of Fame at the 2020 NEAFCS Virtual Annual Session on September 14.

### **THE 2020 DISTINGUISHED INDUCTEES ARE:**

- Mary Blackburn
- Anna-Mae Kobbe
- Josephine Swanson

*"The National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Hall of Fame was established in 2019 to recognize outstanding NEAFCS members who have contributed their time, talent and/or treasure to the NEAFCS."*

### **INDUCTEES' BACKGROUND AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Mary L. Blackburn, Ph.D., MPH**, President, California State Affiliate. Dr. Blackburn has been a member of NEAFCS since 1991 and is active in the association at the state, regional, and national level. She has held elected offices in the California Affiliate for almost 30 years, and its President multiple times. Currently she has held the office of president since 2011, and represents the affiliate at the annual leadership forums during the annual conferences. Often, she was the only face representing California at national and regional business meetings. The California Affiliate is small so she has contributed continuously to multiple national committees and subcommittees for over two decades. Her commitment to the mission and values of NEAFCS is seen in her work to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities, and helping to build leaders for the future. Dr. Blackburn exhibits and promotes excellence in scholarship as evident in her many national NEAFCS awards; epitomizes the Extension's concern with people as she focuses her research and extension on the most vulnerable audiences; and is dedicated to giving back to NEAFCS to benefit the next generation.

**Anna-Mae Kobbe, Ph.D.** Retired from USDA; Past President, NEAFCS-1985. Dr. Kobbe has served as an invaluable role model, mentor, colleague, and friend to many. Her significant leadership accomplishments and contributions to the field of Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS, and the Land-Grant University System make her a natural candidate for this award. Following a 37.5-year career with USDA's Land-Grant University System, Dr. Anna-Mae Kobbe retired from her position of Director of Family and Consumer Sciences and Nutrition at NIFA-USDA in 2006. In this position, she provided national leadership for Family and Consumer Sciences programs while supervising a staff of 15. Prior to her employment with USDA, she served as an Extension Home Economist/Area Family Life Specialist with Missouri Cooperative Extension, followed by her service as a tenured professor with the University of Tennessee Extension as a State Family Life specialist. Dr. Kobbe joined NEAFCS in 1969, the year she was first hired at the University of Missouri, and continues to be a fully engaged member to this day through NEAFCS Life Membership, as well as attendance at national conferences.

In each of the positions outlined above, Dr. Kobbe served as an advocate for NEAFCS, its mission, and the importance of its role in professional development. Upon moving to USDA, she served as official liaison to NEAFCS, and worked diligently throughout her tenure to strengthen ties between NEAFCS and NIFA leadership while advocating for Extension Family & Consumer Sciences as a profession and a program that made a difference in lives across the US every day.

Dr. Kobbe came up through the ranks of NEAFCS, serving in numerous leadership roles. After serving on numerous state committees, she served as President-Elect of the Missouri NEAFCS affiliate in 1974, then President in 1975. Her official leadership with NEAFCS at the national level began in 1976 when she served as Research & Studies Chair. This was followed by service as Regional Director, National First Vice-President, National President-Elect, National President (1984-1985), and Life Member Chair.

In addition to numerous state level recognitions for her leadership and programs, Dr. Kobbe was also awarded NEAFCS's Distinguished Service Award in 1981, Continued Excellence Award in 1994, and Friend of NEAFCS Award in 2009.

**Josephine A. Swanson, Ph.D.** NEAFCS LIFE member, Josephine ("Jo") Swanson was Associate Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and Assistant Dean of Extension and Outreach for the Cornell University College of Human Ecology from October 1998 until her retirement in June 2009. Jo began her career in CCE as an Extension Associate in Nutritional Science in 1971, before becoming both an Extension Associate and Senior Extension Associate in Consumer Economics and Housing from 1974 – 1993 where she developed Extension programs and curricula and providing training for extension professionals across New York. She administered statewide Family Living Programs, securing funding and collaborating with faculty and local extension staff. She was co-PI of the multi-state research project "Rural Families Speak". Jo received her BS degree in Food, Nutrition and Wellness from Dominican

University, her Master's in Foods, Nutrition and Related Sciences from Cornell and her PhD in Adult Education from Cornell. She served as NEAFCS-NYA's liaison to the Director of CCE for many years. Her extraordinary leadership enabled our association and its members to be as fully integrated with campus and other Extension program disciplines as possible. Jo was constantly on the lookout for program development offerings as well as outreach opportunities (including funding sources) for NYA members, on the national, regional and state level, as well as within the Cornell community. Her vigilance, expertise, enthusiasm and optimistic nature were unparalleled.

She received the Carolyn O. Boegly Leadership Award (NYA's highest honor) in 2007, and in expressing her thanks for that distinction, indicated that Carolyn had mentored her early in her career. Jo was a tireless advocate for FCS for our organization and the profession. She inspired us all, from the new hires to the veterans.

## **ABOUT NEAFCS**

The National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) educates and recognizes Extension professionals who impact the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. NEAFCS is the professional organization for Extension Family and Consumer Sciences that builds leaders for the future, recognizes and promotes excellence and scholarship in Extension Family and Consumer Sciences programming, provides innovative professional growth and development opportunities, serves as a nation-wide resource for education, information, networking and partnerships, promotes Extension Family and Consumer Sciences and the mission and goals of the Land Grant University Extension System.

NEAFCS includes more than 2,900 members. To learn more, please visit [www.neafcs.org](http://www.neafcs.org).