

ENC-Teacher Exchange features AAFCS Teacher of the Year Sharon Baillie

Egg Nutrition Center



Sharon Baillie, a Certified Family and Consumer Sciences teacher of Burgettstown Middle/High School in Burgettstown, Pennsylvania, was named National Teacher of the Year by the **American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences** (AAFCS) on May 3, 2011, National Teacher Day. The award honors exemplary teachers who utilize cutting-edge methods, techniques, and activities to provide the stimulus for, and give visibility to, family and consumer sciences (FCS) elementary and secondary education.

Baillie has been bringing nutrition knowledge and skills to K-12 students since 2007 through her leading-edge **Healthy Living** program. Her program is consistent with the **Dietary Guidelines for Americans** and the USDA Food Plate, and meets the 28 Pennsylvania Department of Education standards for food science and nutrition for K-12. All of the foods and nutrition-related classes are at maximum enrollment at Burgettstown, including two additional sections that have been added in recent years.

"I am truly honored to be recognized as the AAFCS National Teacher of the Year," said Baillie. "This has been a team effort with my students, administration, colleagues, parents and community. The idea for the Healthy Living program came from the students when we were undergoing renovations and curriculum updates five years ago. The program has grown each year as more activities are included."



In Baillie's classes, students participate in a number of hands-on activities and projects that not only help them learn about food and nutrition, but also reinforce science, math and language arts skills. For example, Baillie features a **Great Grow Along** kit with lab rats, and a curriculum to demonstrate the differences in growth between a largely milk-fueled diet compared to a sugar-water substitute. Students collect growth and weight data to compare nutrient-rich foods in one rat's diet versus an alternative. Students were able to see the effects on hair and skin of sugar-water compared to milk in the rats' diets. The students created graphs to record differences in growth and weight as proteins were added to the diet, applying scientific measurement and math skills. In their final reports, students evaluated how diet affects growth and health, which reinforced the students' compare and contrast abilities in language arts.

To incorporate the use of technology and provide fun, on-demand learning resources for elementary school students, Baillie asked her high school students to create "glogs" and podcasts on food and nutrition topics. Students used "Glogster" to create an interactive webpage for each elementary grade level with links to food and nutrition-related games, videos, and information. To see the glogs, visit www.burgettstown.k12.pa.us/72517082681621/site/default.asp. Additionally, high school students wrote, recorded, and posted podcasts on food and nutrition topics for elementary school students:

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www.burgettstown.k12.pa.us/72517082681621/podcasts/browse.asp?A=399&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=5676. They also created brochures for their podcasts and QR codes for smart phone access.

Another important component of Baillie's classes is collaborating with school and community members to host a Healthy Living Fair, sponsored by Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). FCCLA members and Foods students help with the fair by setting up, cleaning up, decorating, and making healthy snacks for all to try. They also escort the elementary classes and assist the teachers with students' participation in the activities. The fair has booths staffed by various community groups, such as the police department, mental health department, teen outreach, and yoga center; and activities such as "Ask a Dietitian" and Curves. The fairs are held in the fall.

A parent of one of Baillie's students expressed her gratitude for the positive impact the classes have had on her family. "From learning about nutrition and a balanced diet," the parent explained, "my daughter managed a healthy weight loss of 30 pounds over six months. She learned to read labels, evaluate fresh and canned vegetables, and lead our family into sharing healthier menus. I have noticed how this makes my daughter feel healthier, and how it shows in her appearance, morale and self-confidence."

Sharon Baillie is a resident of Avella, Pennsylvania and AAFCS member, as well as a member of the Pennsylvania Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (PAFCS) and the National Education Association, among other organizations. She is a faculty advisor for FCCLA and 4-H. In addition to the AAFCS National Teacher of the Year award, Baillie has been recognized as a PAFCS Teacher of the Year, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6553 Voice of Democracy Teacher of the Year, and Girl Scouts Outstanding Volunteer.

About AAFCS

Based in the Washington, D.C., area, AAFCS is the only professional association for family and consumer sciences students and professionals from both multiple practice settings and content areas. For more than 100 years, AAFCS has focused our 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. Our members provide research-based knowledge about the topics of everyday life, including human development, personal and family finance, housing and interior design, food science, nutrition and wellness, textiles and apparel, and consumer issues. They are early childhood, elementary, secondary, university/college, and Extension educators, administrators and managers, human service professionals, researchers, community volunteers, business people, and consultants who create integrated solutions to complex social and economic challenges.

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