

## Backgrounder

# American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) Teacher of the Year (T.O.Y.) Award

### Origin of the T.O.Y.

In 1974, the American Home Economics Association (now American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences) entered into a partnership with *Family Circle* magazine to establish the Home Economics Teacher of the Year Program. In co-sponsoring the award, *Family Circle*, a division of the New York Times Company, recognized that the “home economics teaching profession is a vital force in the classroom and in the community.” Its original purpose was two-fold: 1) to promote excellence in the teaching of home economics at the elementary and secondary levels; and 2) to identify outstanding educational activities that can provide stimulus for other teachers throughout the country. *Family Circle* continued its co-sponsorship of the award for a seven-year period, 1974 – 1980.

Instantly popular with a large cross-section of the AHEA membership, the Home Economics Teacher of the Year Program became known as the “Teacher of the Year” award or T.O.Y. award. The T.O.Y. award was designed as a national competition among winners of the competition at the affiliate level. While changes have been made to the award, the original concept has remained the same for the award’s 34-year history.

### The T.O.Y. Today

Although the curriculum has changed dramatically to meet the needs of cultural and societal changes, the T.O.Y. award is still awarded for outstanding and innovative life skills curriculum. The American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) T.O.Y. award identifies and recognizes exemplary teachers who exhibit a deep commitment to the profession and the Association. All affiliate T.O.Y. awardees have demonstrated outstanding teaching with educational programs that utilize methods, techniques, and activities, that integrate the core curriculum, and that provide the stimulus for and give visibility to family and consumer sciences elementary and secondary education. Each nominated program must focus on one of the following areas of life skills: career awareness/job skill training, consumer education/family finance, creative dimensions/alternative program designs, family life/personal and social development, or nutrition education/diet and health.

The selection process begins with AAFCS affiliates administering a T.O.Y. competition and selecting its affiliate T.O.Y. AAFCS encourages all affiliates to enter their state T.O.Y. into the national competition. At the national level through a rigorous peer-review process, the Top T.O.Y.s are selected from up to 52 affiliate T.O.Y.s. Then the most exceptional T.O.Y. is chosen from the Top T.O.Y.s. The National T.O.Y. is selected based upon the following criteria: integration of FCS with the core curriculum (NCLB) and with other disciplines; exemplary level of professional commitment to FCS; goals and outcomes of the program; sustainability of the program; creativity, innovation, and cutting-edge techniques in the program; ability to sustain funding and overcome obstacles or challenges; positive influence on the lives of students; relevancy and timely impact on the students, school, and community; and increasing the visibility, recognition, and support of the FCS profession within the community. The T.O.Y.s receive recognition during the AAFCS Annual Conference & Expo at the Opening General Session and Teacher of the Year Award Luncheon, sponsored by Goodheart-Willcox Publisher.

**2008 Top T.O.Y.s**

Mary W. Ludwig – National T.O.Y.  
*Westport TAPP (Teenage Parent Program) School, Louisville, Kentucky*

Nancy H. Di Lauro  
*Ocean Township High School, Oakhurst, New Jersey*

S. Kelly Macauley  
*Maple Point Middle School, Langhorne, Pennsylvania*

**1994 – 2008 AAFCS National T.O.Y.s**

2008 – Mary W. Ludwig  
*Louisville, Kentucky*

2007 – Kendra K. Naef, CFCS  
*Kimberly, Wisconsin*

2006 – Sylvia R. Cifelli, CFCS  
*Swansea, Massachusetts*

2005 – Ann Anderson  
*Duncanville, Texas*

2004 – Carol Ann Watkins, CFCS  
*Hinesville, Georgia*

2003 – Elizabeth Jane Steiner, CFCS  
*Waveland, Indiana*

2002 – Barbara S. Cannon  
*Belmont, North Carolina*

2001 – Sharon Presson Cunningham, CFCS  
*Ashburn, Virginia*

2000 – Sally Fairchild, CFCS  
*Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

1999 – Becky A. Newell, CFCS  
*Lafayette, Indiana*

1998 – Eleanor L. Keppler  
*Indianapolis, Indiana*

1997 – Jennifer A. Tabor  
*Sterling, Alaska*

1996 – Roxanne L. Trees  
*Seattle, Washington*

1995 – Jean R. Pryzbylkowski  
*Lancaster, Pennsylvania*

1994 – Julene Kay Swenson  
*Stillwater, Minnesota*