

Spring Newsletter 2018 - ACTE Family and Consumer Science Education

As with all teachers, the joy of Spring is a reminder that the school year will soon be coming to a conclusion but many CTE teachers will just be starting a summer of workshops, conferences, national competitions and college courses. I have never met a CTE teacher that had “Summer off”, we are always being professionals working to develop our programs to provide the best opportunities for our students to be successful. We are preparing our students to meet the demands of the workforce while they are still in high school or college. This can be an important first step in helping close the skills gap. CTE classes can also prepare students for potentially lucrative and rewarding work, in many cases without the need for a four-year degree. I am one of those teachers who is very passionate about the benefits of our CTE program but as CTE teachers, we have to still sell our program to school boards, community and our students. The strength of our program was again a reminder of how unique FCS - CTE teachers really are! This fall, I had the honor to serve as a cooperating teacher for Miss Shae Bruursema, an FCS student teacher from Montana State University. She was such an inspiration to me. I have asked Miss Bruursema to share some thoughts about her role as a future FCS teacher and her position on the National Leadership Committee.

What were your favorite experiences as a High School Student at Reed Point High School?

I absolutely loved my experience at Reed Point High School! I think part of the reason why I chose to be a teacher was the fact that I thoroughly enjoyed being in school. Some of my favorite experiences include traveling across the country for National FCCLA Conferences, spending countless hours in the gym playing basketball, playing in the state volleyball tournament, homecoming week, and hanging out in my Family & Consumer Sciences classroom whenever I had that chance!

What inspired you to pursue a degree in Family and Consumer Science Education?

I was inspired to pursue a degree in Family & Consumer Sciences Education by the strong women I knew in field. Chick Brogan, Megan Vincent, and many FCCLA advisers from around the state were incredible examples of strong, yet nurturing women and I knew that commonality among them was not a coincidence. I wanted to be a strong woman like them and help students find their own strength, just like they helped me.

You completed your student teaching at Sweet Grass County High School in FCS, what were 2 memorable experiences and 2 challenging experience of being a teacher?

I was so incredibly blessed to have been able to complete my student teaching experience at SGHS. The most memorable moment I would say was when the Financial Literacy Class created songs about getting paid. The class really took to the assignment and not only did they have fun but I also felt like they actually learned the material (a true accomplishment for me)! My favorite memories from this experience however, are all of the wonderful people I had the opportunity of getting to know along the way. The faculty and staff, community members, my field supervisor, Susan Metcalf, and my incredible cooperating teacher, Kimberli McCullough, truly made my experience one to remember and cherish.

What are you doing in your career right now after graduating from MSU in December 2018?

Right now I am trying to figure things out! I am currently working at my alma mater in the office in Herrick Hall as well as staying involved with FCCLA. I am the State Officer Coordinator for the Montana Association and I have just been selected to be member of the National Leadership Training Team.

Why is it a passion of yours to Sell FCS and FCCLA to our youth?

I am extremely passionate about our program and our CTSO connection. I work to get students on board because I know all that can be gained from FCS and being involved in FCCLA. The skills that are learned are invaluable to a successful future no matter the direction a student takes.

We have a shortage of FCS teachers, what advice would you offer for current teachers to better sell our program of FCS?

My advice to sell our program is to be sure to promote its diversity and flexibility. Family and Consumer Sciences has 16 defined areas of content and even more subcategories within those content areas, making it an incredibly diverse and broad subject. There is literally something for everyone. The coolest part about being an FCS educator is choosing how you want your program to look! Ensuring that students understand they can have flexibility in what they teach as well in their schedules (spring break, hello!) is such a big selling point.

As a CTE future teacher, what new ideas can we bring into the classroom to strengthen our curriculum?

I would say that keeping curriculum relevant and current is that best way to strengthen it. Making connections to social media, current trends, and up-to-date culture is engaging and keeps the curriculum fresh and fun. While I am no master teacher, I did find my biggest successes to be the things that I made relevant to the students interests.

What do you value about some of your teaching and assessment methods?

I value my creativity and willingness to challenge the process. While student teaching, I was fortunate to have a cooperating teacher who gave me a great deal of freedom in my teaching. I used this opportunity to try new things, challenge the norm, push my abilities, and let my creativity flow!

A question that is always addressed to CTE teachers, is how does CTE fit into the STEM requirements, how would you answer this?

For anyone who knows the content areas within FCS, I feel this is an obvious question. STEM is incorporated into nearly everything we teach and is also combined with the practical skills of creative and critical thinking, interpersonal communication, and career preparation. Science, technology, engineering, and math are integral parts of culinary arts, nutrition and wellness, food production and services, consumer and family resources, housing and interior design... I could go on for days!

What are your goals for 2019?

My goals for 2019 are simple... start my career! I hope to stay involved with FCCLA at some capacity or another as well as continue coaching and maybe even move into an FCS classroom of my very own!

Any other comments to share about the FCS and FCCLA that I can contribute to the newsletter is welcomed.

I am truly blessed to be part of the CTE and FCS community. It is filled with some of the most genuine and good people out there. I am excited to continue to learn and grow from those around me!

Thank you Shae for sharing your passion for CTE- FCS classes. Our goal is to sell our program, "Say Yes to FCS". Happy Spring wishes!

Submitted by
Kimberli McCullough
MAFCSE 2018 President



Miss Bruursema teaching in the FCS classroom.



Miss Bruursema Teaching Soft Skills to the Financial Literacy Class in the gym.