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# IFHE-US HISTORY

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## **Introduction**

The International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE)-US began in a structure meeting at Lake Jackson, Florida in January 1996 and the formal creation of IFHE-US was with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS), effective in 1999. This was followed by the formal closing of the AAFCS/IFHE Liaison Committee in June 2000.

Only three months separate the founding of IFHE and the American Home Economics Association (AHEA). IFHE evolved from a three day conference, September 28-October 1, 1908 in Fribourg, Switzerland. The organizational meeting for the American Association of Home Economics (AHEA) was held December 31-January 2, 1909 in Washington, DC.

For more than ninety years, prior to the official establishment of IFHE-US, the formal link to IFHE for members from the United States was through collaboration with AHEA, now the AAFCS. Members have been involved in international work dating back to the Spanish American War. In 1976, in an article entitled "Pioneers in the Field of Home Economics Abroad", Dr. Doris Hansen, Executive Director of AHEA shares this insight:

Probably the first American women to engage in teaching domestic subjects abroad were missionary wives in the early 1800s. As home economics began to emerge as a profession, there was a ready-made demand for 'experts' in mission-sponsored schools and colleges throughout the world. The first United States government sponsorship of home economics overseas following the Spanish-American War, when the Civil Service Commission recruited teachers for service in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and other acquired territories. (p. 257, Hansen)

Over the years, the representation of the United States members of IFHE was like many colors of yarn woven into a piece of tapestry with no visible planned pattern. At the Seattle AHEA meeting, August, 1915, "the (AHEA) Council authorized the secretary of the Association to take out a membership in the name of the American Home Economics Association in Fe'd'eration Internationale et Office international pour le de'veloppmenet de l'Enseignement me'nager, Fribourg, Switzerland." (p. 14, Pundt) In August, 1915 the AHEA international committee was formed encouraging "the use oof sabbaticals in giving assistance to home economics movements in other countries." This committee was approved in 1977 as the AHEA International Section. (p.203, O'Toole)

According to the AHEA book, The International Heritage of Home Economics in the United States, the AHEA-IFHE Liaison Committee was organized in 1960 "in order to maintain appropriate relationships between AHEA and IFHE." Then, the chair was elected by ballot by the AHEA membership and the committee maintained cooperative relationships with the staff of IFHE and AHEA." (p. 203). Two responsibilities of the committee were to manage 30 IFHE memberships held by AHEA and to inform members about Council and Congress happenings. "From 1976-1981, the vice chair of the AHEA

International Section served as chair of the AHEA Liaison Committee,” then the next link to IFHE was through the appointed IFHE Liaison Chairs and committee members. (p.3, Pearson) (See Appendix A--- Liaison Chairs)

Changes to the IFHE Constitution and By-laws approved at the 1996 Council and Congress in Bangkok changed the structure giving emphasis to regional programming and the number of votes per country giving representation to individual members for the first time. These changes to the IFHE Constitution and By-laws required the formation of the US structure committee resulting in the IFHE-US organization being the representative of the US members to IFHE. (See Appendix B for IFHE-US officers)

There is evidence that the United States was invited to participate in the first IFHE meeting because three names are listed as the committee: Caroll D. Wright, Clark College, Worcester, Massachusetts; Lovice Pierce, Acting Commissioner of Education, Washington, DC; and M. D. (Henry) Lefavour, President of Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts. However, there is no evidence that the US participated in the 1908 meeting in Fribourg. (See Appendix C---Archives notes)

The first Congress in which the US participated was held in Ghent, Belgium in 1913. The Ghent report includes a ‘committee special’ for each country. For the U. S.: Miss Isabel Ely Lord, Director of the School of Household Sciences and Arts, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York was listed as the president of the committee. Members of this committee were Mrs. Mary Hinman Abel, Editor of the Journal of Home Economics, Roland Park Branch, Baltimore, Maryland; Dr. Charles F. Langworthy, Chief of Nutrition Investigations, Office of Experiment, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Marion Talbot, Dean of Women, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois; Mrs. A. F. Whittem, Cambridge (sic) Massachusetts; and Dr. LeFavour, president of Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts.

Non-official delegates from the US to the Ghent Congress included Miss Anna M. Cooley, New York City, New York; Miss Louise Stanley, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri; Mrs. Clotilde Ware, Warelands Dairy School, Boston, Massachusetts; Miss Mary S. Snow, Chicago, Illinois; and Dr. A. C. True, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC

The first sizable group from the U. S. to attend Congress was in 1949 with 37 delegates and Marjorie Heseltine as the leader. (Heseltine,p. 581) The US hosted the Congress in Maryland in 1958 with the theme of “Education in home economics relative to social and economics conditions of various countries” and Mildred Horton served as Congress Director. In 1988 the U. S. hosted IFHE in Minneapolis, Minnesota with Nancy Granovsky serving as the chair in her position as IFHE Vice President of the Americas and the theme was “Health for all: The role of home economics.”

## **IFHE-US HISTORY**

The new IFHE constitution, effective July 1996, provided for a national country coordinating body in each country and IFHE-US was organized for this purpose. The

IFHE-US Steering Committee was authorized by the IFHE Vice President for the Region of the Americas who appointed the chair to develop this organization. The Structure Committee served as the interim Board of Directors until the first formal election of officers. The Committee served in an advisory capacity throughout the transition period that was completed by June 1999. (p. 21, Christie)

From the beginning, the purpose of the IFHE-US has been to serve as the coordinating pivot for all US individual and organizational members of IFHE including AAFCS and others and to promote the mission and work of IFHE. The purpose remains the same today. This includes: 1) working internationally with IFHE staff at agencies, and IFHE projects; 2) working domestically with all United States member organizations and U. S. individual member of IFHE to facilitate and increase opportunities for global involvement, whether conducted internationally or locally through IFHE-US. (p. 21, Christie)

The first meeting of the IFHE-US Board of Directors was held at the AAFCS Annual Meeting in Seattle, Washington, June 1999. The IFHE-US Board of Directors usually meets by conference call during the year and again during the AAFCS Annual Meetings.

#### **Achievements, Accomplishments, and Collaborations of IFHE-US from 1999-2006** IFHE-US:

- Planned and participated in workshops for IFHE-US and AAFCS members at the UN Commission on the Status of Women
- Collected, organized, and cooperated with International Home Economics Service (IHES) with a “Disaster Relief Project” shipping supplies to eight home economics departments destroyed by hurricane on the island of Grenada.
- Collaborated with the Georgia affiliate on the “Antigua Disaster Relief Project” working through IFHE Liaison Chair and IHES
- Planned and implemented, in cooperation with the Region of the Americas, a conference on the “Eradication of Poverty and Follow-up to UN Year of the Family,” held at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. This effort led to a three year AAFCS Action Group focusing on the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF).
- Collaborated with IHES on training programs worldwide
- IFHE-US Development funds provided first grant to St. Lucia
- Sponsored a quilt project for IFHE-US development fund inviting other countries to contribute quilt blocks
- Continues to support “The Project Identify and Recognize” project to honor home economists who have served or are serving in the military with events being held at the Women’s Memorial in Arlington Cemetery, Washington, DC. Veterans Museum Center in San Diego, California; and St. Sarkis Armenian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina.
- Recognized IFHE-US members receiving AAFCS awards such as Teacher of the Year (TOY), Wiley Berger Award, and Distinguished Service Award (DSA)

- Presents education sessions on current international topics at AAFCS Annual meetings, affiliate Annual meetings, and IFHE-US meetings

In the book, The International Heritage of Home Economics in the United States, Chapter 8, Dr. Lela O'Toole and Dr. Margaret Fitch describe the development of IFHE and the specific contributions US members made to the Executive Committee as officers, and representing IFHE within the United Nations, UNESCO, UNICEF, VIC, FAO, and other international meetings. In addition, other significant contributions made by US home economists were summarized with these words:

- Becoming organization members and individual members
- Participating in executive committee, council, congresses, and regional meetings function as officers
- Serving as representatives at the United Nations and other international meetings
- Serving on IFHE committees
- Providing publications and information
- Assisting with workshops and other meetings held for home economists in other countries
- Providing gift memberships to individuals in other countries
- Contributing to finances
- Serving as advisers and consultants in developing countries, and
- Encouraging increased communication with home economists in other countries (p.196, O'Toole) (See Appendix D US-representatives)

Members of IFHE-US, AAFCS International Division, and Affiliates have a long, strong record of service which began before AHEA/AAFCS was an organization and continued to move through nine decades with support and participation in a variety of international activities.

One of the greatest challenges in response to world wide societal trends and crisis situations is learning to select and adapt home economics subject matter and to choose the appropriate process of communication for the population being served under their current living conditions. Perhaps the end result is a profession which values problem solving and believes professionals need to be flexible, adaptable, and creative. Pundt quotes an American home economist with these words: "A home economist worth her salt has always learned, unlearned, and relearned as changing conditions required." (p. 370)

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## **Appendices**

### **A. AHEA/AAFCS Liaison Chairs or Vice Chair International Section responsible for those duties**

- 1976-1979 Marian Davis, Florida (Vice Chair, International Section)
- 1979-1981 Catherine Mumaw, Oregon (Vice Chair, International Section)
- 1981-1982 Joann Hallaway, Colorado
- 1982-1983 Jennie Kitching, Texas, Nancy Granovsky, Texas, co-chairs
- 1983-1984 Jennie Kitching, Texas
- 1984-1986 Joann Hallaway, Colorado
- 1986-1988 Elaine Jorgenson, Oklahoma
- 1988-1990 Rita Wood, New Jersey
- 1990-1992 Nancy Granovsky, Texas
- 1992-1994 Christine Kate, Ohio
- 1994-1998 Juanita Mendenhall, South Carolina
- 1998-2000 Joanne Pearson, Virginia  
(Liaison Committee ended at June 2000 AAFCS Annual Meetings in Chicago.)

### **B. IFHE-US Board of Directors, 1999-2004**

President	Juanita Mendenhall
Director, Finance	Nancy Billings
Director, Program	Mary Andrews
Director, Communication	E. Joyce Richards
Recorder	Sharon Christie
Director, Liaison to the UN	Ruth Norman
Director, IFHE-US Development Fund	Nancy Leidenfrost
Chair, Nominating Committee	Alberta Hill
Chair, Membership	Sharon Christie
History, Archives, and Documentation	Sharon Christie
	Genevieve A. Schroeder

Second Board of Directors, 2004-2008

President	Mary Andrews
Director, Finance	Nancy Billings
Director, Professional Development Programs	Joanne Pearson
Director, Communication	Nancy St. John
Recorder	Mary (Kitty) Decker
Director, Liaison to the UN	Ruth Norman
Director, IFHE-US Development Fund	Sharon McManus
Director, Nominating Committee	Alberta Hill
Director, AAFCS International Division	2004-2005 Mary Warnock 2005-2006 Carol Makela
Liaison to the History Project	Janett Gibbs

Changes to the Board 2006-2008

Director, Professional Development & Programs	Tahira K. Hira
Director, Communication	Jan Scholl

C. Archives notes

After reviewing with the archivists at Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts, and Clark College, Worcester, Massachusetts and finding no reports from the US in IFHE archives for 1907, contact was made with a reference librarian at The Ohio State University. The librarian suggested looking in the U. S. Congressional Library for the Annual Report of the Acting Commissioner of Education Lovice Pierce. The librarian accessed this report on micro film and scanned it to e-mail, (p.191-192), Python, 1909. According to the report "Principal Reports to Consult for the Study of Home Economics in Each Country" include Germany, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Holland (Netherlands), Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. This evidence confirms that the U. S. did not participate in the first Congress in 1908.



D. US representatives as IFHE officers, on the Executive Committee, to the United Nations and other international organizations

Catherine T. Dennis, N. C	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1955-1960
Mildred Horton, TX	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1961-1965
Lela O'Toole, OK	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1966-1974
	Vice President, Americas, IFHE	1970-1974
Margaret E. Fitch, OK	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1974-1984
	Vice President, Americas, IFHE	1974-1980
	President, IFHE	1980-1984
	Past President, IFHE	1984-1985
	President of Honor, IFHE	1985-
Nancy Granovsky, TX	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1980-1984
	Vice President, Americas, IFHE	1986-1990
	President, IFHE	1996-2000
	Past President, IFHE	2000-2001
	President of Honor, IFHE	2001-
Catherine Mumaw, OR	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1984-1988
Nancy B. Leidenfrost, MD	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1988-1992
Sally K. Williams, IA	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1992-1996
Alberta Hill, WA	Vice President, Americas, IFHE	1994-1998
Juanita Mendenhall, SC	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	1996-2004
	Vice President, Americas, IFHE	1998-2002
Sherry Betts, AZ	Vice President, Americas, IFHE	2002-2006
Joanne Pearson	Member, Executive Committee, IFHE	2006-2008
Helen LeBaron Hilton, IA	Member, UNESCO Commission	1966
Julia F. Anderson, IA	Member, UNESCO Commission	1982-1985
Ruth Norman, WA	IFHE Representative to UN ECOSOC, (Economic and Social Affairs), and IFHE representative to UNICEF, NY	1978-1999
Mary McDonald, NY	Alternate Representative for Ruth Norman	
Rosina Cotruzzola, NY	Alternate Representative for Ruth Norman	
Mary Miller, NY	IFHE representative to ECOSOC and UNICEF, NY	1999-present
Mary Covington, NY	Alternate Representative for Mary Miller	
Eileen Gallagher Labiner, NY	Alternate Representative for Mary Miller	