



1946-2021



SCHOOL
NUTRITION
ASSOCIATION

*A Brilliant History
of Serving Kids*

SNA: Still Sparkling After 75 Years

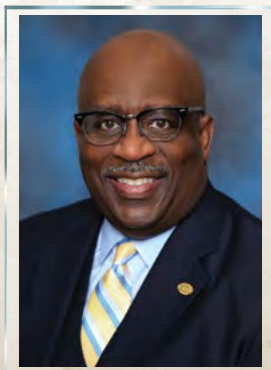
Seventy-five years is rare among organizational milestones. Many for-profits and non-profits alike simply don't survive so many decades of relentless and challenging change—in personnel, management, technology, societal trends, economic downturns, government regulations, natural disasters and so on. That the School Nutrition Association (SNA) has marked its 75th year during a global pandemic is the ultimate example of how this organization—and the profession it represents—triumphs over and over again in the face of trial. Its signature resilience has never been so evident.

We believe that SNA's remarkable longevity is rooted in the unwavering focus of its leaders, members, Headquarters staff, allies and industry partners on its core mission: Feeding children nutritious meals at school to help them grow and be best positioned for lifelong success. For some children, these meals are a critical safety net against hunger. For *all* children, school meals are an important resource in the education day. Generations of school nutrition professionals have never lost sight of this mission as they served—and continue to serve—generations of students with innovation, leadership and dedication.

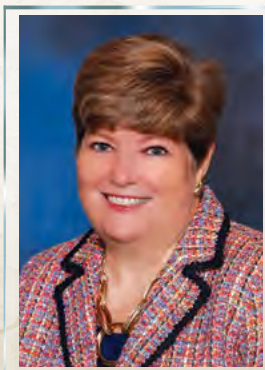
This digital booklet, *A Brilliant History of Serving Kids*, highlights just a sampling of the achievements and challenges experienced by SNA over the last three-quarters of a century. Named to reflect our diamond anniversary, the pages that follow sparkle with cherished memories, surprising facts, familiar faces and signature optimism. We encourage you to take your time in reading it. Download and print copies. Share them with your team with pride in your profession.

For its production, we thank the individual school nutrition professionals who have shared historic photos, publications and oral stories with SNA and with the Child Nutrition Archives of the Institute of Child Nutrition over the years. Our gratitude also extends to industry partners General Mills Convenience and Foodservice, Heartland School Solutions, ITW Food Equipment Group and Cool School Cafe, whose generous support made this publication possible. We appreciate all those who shared thoughts and suggestions for this and the digital companion *Reflections on a Brilliant History*, which compiles the 75th anniversary articles published in *School Nutrition* this past year. We also want to thank SNA's long-serving editor-designer duo, Patricia Fitzgerald and Cher Williams, for applying their singular talents to these memorable documents.

Finally, we thank and salute the Association's many school nutrition pioneers—both those whose leadership and achievements are recorded in the history books and those whose fame rests only in the memories of the children they served at school. We celebrate today's generation of leaders, who continue to raise the bar, demonstrating remarkable strength, creativity and spirit. And we applaud all of you rising stars whose school nutrition journey may be just beginning, but who already prove that SNA's legacy rests in good hands.



Reginald Ross, SNS
2020-21 SNA President



Patricia Montague,
FASAE, CAE
SNA Chief Executive Officer

Looking Back With Pride



Feeding Bodies. Fueling Minds.®

To mark the occasion of SNA's 75th anniversary year, the 2020-21 Board of Directors shared their thoughts on a few of the organization's most notable achievements and contributions to the history of school meals and the school nutrition profession, as well as naming their hopes for what the years ahead will hold for SNA, its members, child nutrition and the students who benefit (*page 31*).

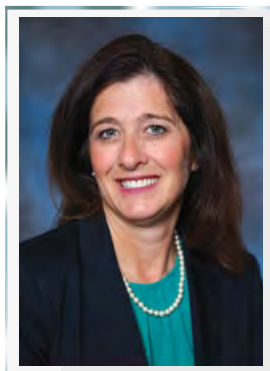
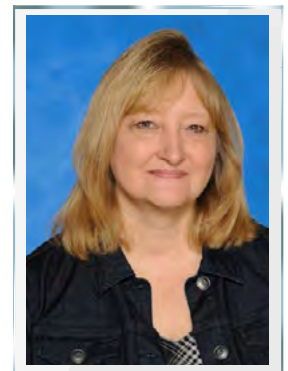
SNA has been *the* champion for those in our society who have needed the nourishment that school cafeterias—and school nutrition professionals—provide in order to be successful in life. Since the very beginning, SNA has advocated—to all who would listen—that school meals are the most nutritious that many students would receive during their formative years, and the Association has been at the forefront of innovation and change in our profession for 75 years.

Reginald Ross, SNS
2020-21 President



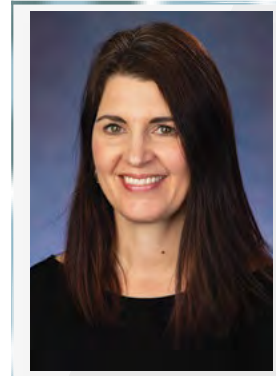
SNA has been a significant player in advocating for and developing school nutrition-related legislation. The Association has long relied on staff, volunteer leaders and consultants who have experience on the front lines of advocacy and school nutrition, and they continually bring this experience and knowledge to the legislative process.

Lynne Shore
Northwest Regional Director



SNA's advocacy efforts represent the most important contribution the Association has made to the school nutrition profession. If it were not for our advocacy, school meal programs might not exist today.

Stephanie Dillard, SNS
Secretary/Treasurer



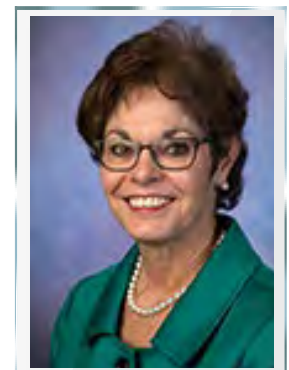
SNA has developed an amazing partnership with USDA, collaborating effectively with those who are responsible for developing the regulations that affect different areas of school meal programs. The Association's rapport with and support from officials at the very top of the federal agency have

helped to give us credibility in speaking up for how our programs work in the real world.

Lynelle Johnson, LRD, SNS
Midwest Regional Director

SNA's advocacy on behalf of school meal programs has been the organization's most important contribution. Most recently, our programs are stronger and better because of the work of SNA Staff Vice President for Government Affairs and Media Relations Cathy Schuchart and others advocating for school meals on Capitol Hill. Our relationship with Congress has gotten stronger and better over my years of involvement, to the point that legislators and congressional staff *call us* for our perspective on various issues related to school nutrition. This is a great position to be in during changing times!

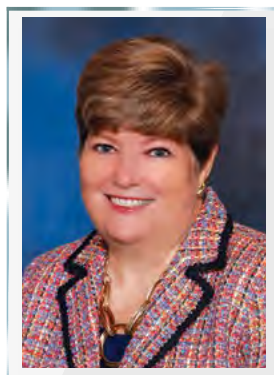
Julia Bauscher, SNS
School Nutrition Foundation Board Chair



SNA's Contributions to the History of School Meals

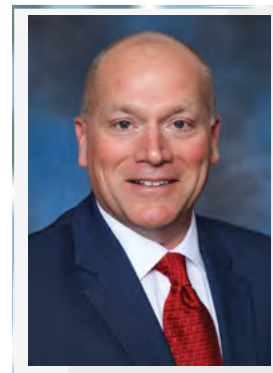
SNA's greatest legacy is the professional development programming it has provided to generations of school nutrition professionals. From the Certificate program that began back in the 1970s to the School Nutrition Specialist (SNS) credential launched in the late 1990s to promoting the value of ensuring that those operating school meal programs meet professional standards of expertise and knowledge to delivering key knowledge via conference education sessions, training, webinars and articles in *School Nutrition*, SNA has been leading the way.

Patricia Montague, FASAE, CAE
Chief Executive Officer



It's very tough to give just one answer. Overall, it would be the advocacy the Association does on behalf of child nutrition—not only in working with Congress, but also in making sure the media understands what it is that child nutrition professionals do each and every day. I also must add the professional development SNA provides to those working in this business. Even during the pandemic, the organization found a way to bring experts from across the country together to network and share ideas and solutions.

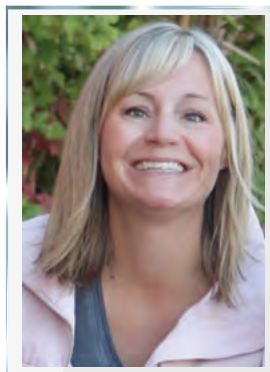
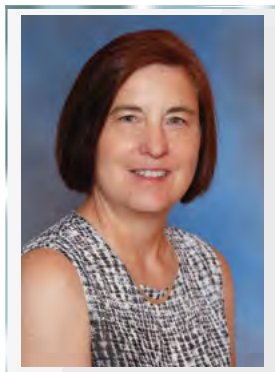
Christopher Derico, SNS
At-Large Director



Training programs are the most important contributions of SNA over the years. SNA has become the foundation for training in school foodservice. The organization

has helped to raise up members who were stay-at-home mothers seeking part-time employment to become high-level professionals working in schools and districts all across the country.

Jill Riggs
Mideast Regional Director



This is my first year serving on SNA's national Board of Directors, and it's been eye-opening to see the strong and powerful voice SNA brings on behalf of our profession. Where would our programs be without that voice?! I am truly

inspired by and in awe of all the work that SNA's volunteer leaders and staff accomplish in their dedication to school meals and school nutrition professionals.

Anne Leavens, SNS
At-Large Director

For more insights on school nutrition yesterday, today and tomorrow, read the companion piece, *Reflections on a Brilliant History*, featuring the thoughts of pioneering trailblazers, current champions and rising stars as published in SNA's *School Nutrition* magazine August 2020 through June/July 2021.

A School Nutrition Timeline

Gov't Supports Ag & Schools During Great Depression

In 1935, Congress approves funding to purchase surplus agriculture and provide to school lunch programs. In 1937, nearly 4,000 schools received these commodities, but by 1941, 79,000 schools were relying on commodities. Also, WPA projects operate school lunch programs in all 50 states, D.C. and Puerto Rico.



1935



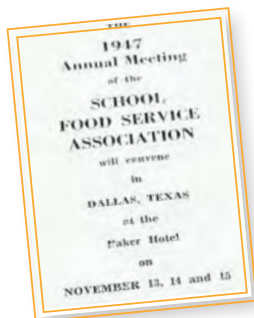
1941

War Years Create Uncertainty

- WPA labor and commodities support drop off during WWII, leaving schools seeking annual congressional funding to keep school lunch programs operational. School administrators grow wary of taking on meal programs, due to unreliable federal support and rising expenses. Supporters begin to advocate for a permanent, national program.

NSLP Established; Association Is Formed

The National School Lunch Act creates a permanent federal program of fiscal and agricultural support for school lunch operations. Members of the Food Service Directors Conference and the National School Cafeteria Association vote to merge and become the School Food Service Association.



1946



1947

Association Holds Inaugural Convention

- Within a year, the School Food Service Association numbers 709 members and 478 show up in Dallas in November for its first conference, themed "Health Education Through Food Service." Thirty-nine companies exhibit, including some still recognized 75 years later: Blodgett, Cleveland Range, Champion, Duke, Hobart and Kraft.

States Join as Affiliates

While the Oklahoma School Food Service Association is the first to officially join as a state affiliate at the Dallas convention, other state-based organizations begin affiliating in 1950, starting with Arkansas, Florida, Oregon, Connecticut and Virginia. By 1962, the rest of the states and the District of Columbia have established affiliated state organizations.



1950



1955

Association Hires Executive and Opens Office

After changing its name to the American School Food Service Association (ASFSA), its Executive Board is incorporated in 1955 and hires John Perryman to direct operations from his base in Denver, which becomes the organization's Headquarters until 1990. (Property for office space is purchased in 1967.) Membership tops 7,400.

Historic Highlights

A Rich History Begins



1946: BRILLIANT BEGINNINGS

The histories of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Nutrition Association (SNA) are inextricably linked, the milestone events of 1946 serving as an exclamation point on decades-long efforts by passionate food and nutrition professionals to establish a supported program to feed children healthy meals at school. In 1944, Winning Pendergast, assistant director of Detroit Public Schools' "lunchroom operation," addressed attendees at the American Dietetic Association's annual convention, urging them to adopt her view of "school nutrition programs" that supported child health, rather than "lunchrooms." She identified money to operate the programs as the top problem for cash-strapped school districts. She supported the continuation of the War Food Administration's federal school lunch program, but looked forward to future legislation that would go beyond agricultural appropriations. Pendergast would go on to become the fifth president of the School Food Service Association, serving in 1950-51, and is one of several pioneers who helped to shape the federal program, the profession and the association.



National School Lunch Act

The concept of serving hot lunches during the school day dates back to 1790 in Germany. Ad hoc, parent-led programs in rural schools began to appear in the United States soon after. One of the first integrated programs was in New York City in 1853. By 1930, there were some 70,000 school cafeterias in operation, and at the end of WWII, it was estimated that more than one-third of all U.S. schools were serving midday meals.

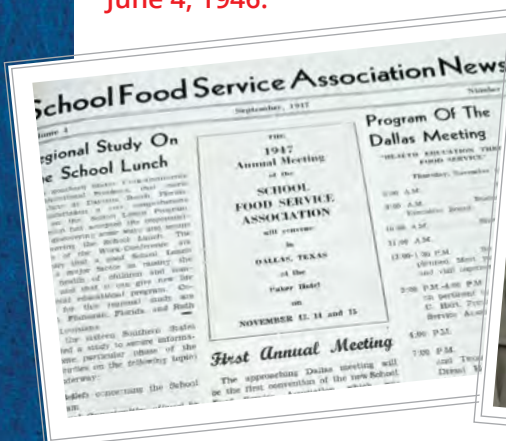
As the Great Depression drove unemployment numbers to new heights, U.S. farmers struggled to sell their harvests and the U.S. Department of Agriculture was directed, by law, to step in to buy their surplus foods and provide them to school lunch programs.



Historic Highlights A Rich History Begins

After WWII, many school districts looked to the government for support of their burgeoning school meal operations, not only with donated commodities, but with financial assistance to offset equipment and labor costs. By 1943, the federal assistance program was expanded.

Richard B. Russell, a Democratic senator from Georgia, led the passage of the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) through Congress. It made permanent federal cash and food support for school lunches “to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation’s children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food.” President Harry S. Truman signed the bill into law on **June 4, 1946.**



School Food Service Association

As school lunch programs grew in size and scope, they attracted professionals in both foodservice and nutrition to manage operations. Two organizations, one concentrated in the Northeast and the other in the Midwest, formed to share solutions to common challenges, partner with allied organizations and lobby for federal support.

The Food Service Directors Conference and the National School Cafeteria Association voted to merge on **October 11, 1946**, becoming the School Food Service Association. Within a few years, “American” was added to the organization’s name (ASFSA). The group adopted a new name in 2004, becoming the School Nutrition Association.

In 1954, ASFSA’s Executive Board approved the hiring of an Executive Secretary and in 1955 hired John Perryman, a convention planner in Denver, where ASFSA would be holding its conference later that year. Denver became the base of operations for the organization until 1990, when it moved to the



Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, to be closer to Congress and USDA and better serve ongoing advocacy priorities.

In 1964, a sister organization, the School Food Service Foundation, was founded for the purpose of establishing “an educational, benevolent and scientific trust for the professional advancement of members currently engaged in nonprofit school food service.” From the beginning, its purpose was to provide scholarships to support educational aspirations.

Happy 75th
Anniversary,

School Nutrition
Association!

Thank you for being
a dedicated partner,
putting K-12 Directors first
and moving the industry
forward—year after year.

Yoplait
ParfaitPro



Chex

Honey Nut
Cheerios

Cheerios

**Cinnamon
Toast
Crunch**

NATURE VALLEY



Annie's



Historic Highlights Beyond School Lunch



NOURISHING CHILDREN YEAR 'ROUND

Could the school nutrition pioneers who fought for the establishment of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in 1946 have predicted the number of additional foodservices their descendants would be managing today? In some communities, it may only be school breakfast and a snack for children in before- and afterschool programs. In other school districts, the nutrition services team feeds eligible children three meals a day, seven days a week, while also operating a catering business, school concessions, take-home family meals and vending machines, and perhaps contracting meal service to charter schools or smaller neighboring districts, Meals on Wheels programs and juvenile corrections facilities! Some school nutrition directors seize these opportunities because they are best positioned with both the expertise and operational efficiencies to fill a community need by providing these services. Others see it as a business necessity to fund future improvements and initiatives or to make up for budget shortfalls when reimbursement rates and/or participation do not keep up with rising operational costs. Whatever the scope or the reason, most school nutrition departments go way beyond school lunch!



Launch Their Day With School Breakfast

The School Breakfast Program (SBP) was established under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, beginning as a pilot project and earning permanent status in 1975. The program is designed to ensure that all children have access to a healthy breakfast at school to promote healthy eating behaviors and readiness for learning.

While the program has grown every year for more than a decade, there remains a significant gap between NSLP and SBP participation rates. A little more than half of the low-income children who receive school lunch also participate in school breakfast. By failing to be more aggressive and innovative in boosting breakfast participation, districts and states are leaving millions of federal dollars untapped. But alternate breakfast service options, sometimes mandated by state law, have helped many districts to increase participation. These



Historic Highlights Beyond School Lunch

options include in-classroom service, grab 'n' go breakfast from multiple points of sale around campus, "breakfast after the bell" service after homeroom and "second chance breakfast" as a mid-morning break.

Other Federal Programs Fill the Gaps

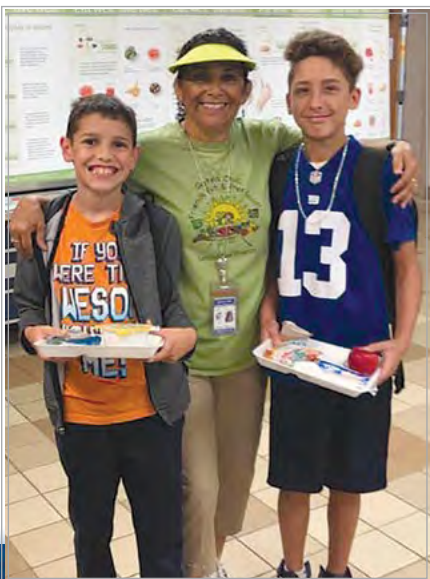
The *Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)* was created in 1968 and authorized in 1975 to serve nutritious meals and snacks to low-income children when school is not in session. Initially, most school districts acted as "vendors" for sponsoring organizations like a camp, church or social services agency. But today, more districts are taking direct SFSP responsibility, and in an effort to boost participation, they are repurposing school buses and other vehicles as mobile food trucks to deliver school meals to children in a greater variety of locations.

The *Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)* began as a children-only pilot project in 1968. It was authorized in 1975 and expanded to include adults in 1987, serving both meals and snacks. The CACFP also provides supper meals to youth in approved afterschool programs.

The *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)* provides free fresh produce to children at eligible elementary schools during the school day. The goal of the FFVP is to introduce children to new and different varieties and to increase overall acceptance and consumption of fresh, unprocessed produce.

In the last 25 years, USDA has taken a more assertive approach in encouraging districts to develop *farm-to-school initiatives*, such as school gardens and procurement of local foods for school meal programs. While it has developed numerous downloadable tools, publications and other resources, the only funding it has available to support such efforts at the community level is an annual competitive grant program.

Over the years, federal support for *nutrition education* offered by school districts has waxed and waned. Today, the primary resource is its Team Nutrition initiative, which, like the farm-to-school program, is comprised primarily of online materials and a limited annual grant program.



A School Nutrition Timeline

First Scholarship Established

The professional development of its members continues as one of ASFSFA's highest priorities. In addition to national, regional and state meetings and workshops, in 1957, the first scholarship for graduate study is established, funded by Victory Metals Manufacturing Company. The scholarship program is expanded for undergraduate study in 1960.

1957



1962

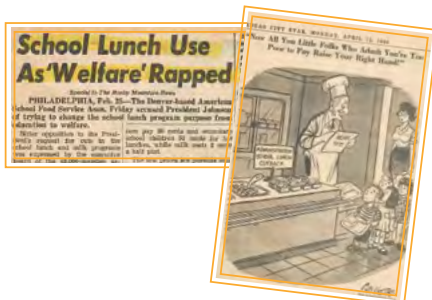
National School Lunch Week Proclaimed by Congress

- After years of individual states sponsoring school lunch week campaigns on different dates, in 1962, a Joint Resolution of Congress establishes an annual NSLW, observed beginning the second Sunday in October. It's an occasion to boost public awareness about the quality and benefits of school meals.

ASFSFA Launches Foundation

The School Food Service Foundation is established as a non-profit sister organization. Over the years, its scope has varied, at various points managing different training courses and professional development initiatives; raising funds for and administering scholarship and grant programs; supporting research projects; and cultivating awareness of the contributions of school nutrition professionals.

1964



1966

1960s Bring Policy Highs and Lows

- The Child Nutrition Act of 1966 recognizes how school meals can mitigate child hunger with a pilot school breakfast program. But hard on its heels are proposed funding cuts. Also, the seeds of tiered reimbursements for free/reduced-price/paid meal categories are sown. ASFSFA pushes back: "We deplore the emphasis made by the Administration in its apparent desire to make the school lunch program a welfare program instead of an educational program available to all children."

Allies Set School Nutrition Priorities

After several collaborations with the American Dietetic Association and Association of School Business Officials, ASFSFA joins with 14 allies to develop "a Blueprint for School Nutrition Programs. A nine-point plan emerges, including priorities that continue decades later: classroom/cafeteria nutrition education, professional development for staff, an embrace of emerging technologies and universal free meals.

1968



1971

Milestones Mark 25th Anniversary



Norman Mitchell becomes the first ASFSFA president to have started his career in a local school cafeteria. He is also the last man elected to lead the organization for another 50 years. As ASFSFA marks its 25th anniversary, universal free school meals remains a top legislative goal. Membership hits a high of 50,000.

May History Remember Them Well

A complete and comprehensive list of individuals who made an impact on the 75-year history of SNA and the school nutrition profession would likely fill its own book—and would *still* unintentionally overlook the contributions of many whose influence lives on in someone's cherished memories, including those of individual students who recollect beloved cafeteria staff alongside favorite teachers and coaches.

The individuals who follow, compiled from suggestions from a number of current SNA leaders, members and staff, celebrates a *representative* sampling of SNA presidents, national lawmakers, consultants, educators, allies, HQ staff and other friends of school nutrition. Visit SchoolNutrition.org to access the complete list of [SNA Past Presidents](#). Also, consider purchasing the two-volume history of the Association, *A Pinch of Love* and *A Measure of Excellence*, from the [SNA Bookstore](#) to learn about the hundreds of committed leaders who have helped to shape school nutrition.

1977-78 ASFSA President Gene White, SNS

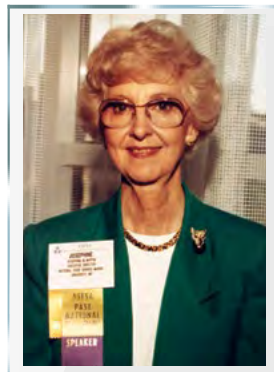
White was nothing short of a legend in her lifelong commitment to children, her many contributions focused on expanding access to child nutrition programs world-wide. In 1995, White relocated to Washington, D.C., for six months to help coordinate grassroots advocacy efforts against proposed block grants. Throughout her eighties and early nineties, she traveled the globe on behalf of the World Food Programme and the Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) and was the inaugural recipient of GCNF's Gene White Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004.



profession long after her "retirement." The Georgia School Nutrition Association established a fellowship in her name to fund a selected member to attend and be recognized at SNA's annual Legislative Action Conference. She was instrumental in the authorization of the National Food Service Management Institute and served as its first Executive Director.

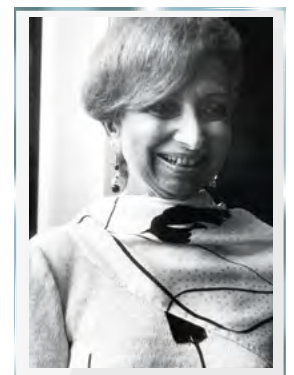
1976-77 ASFSA President Dr. Josephine Martin

Martin is another legendary school nutrition pioneer who helped to secure passage of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and who continued to be a dominant influence in the



1981-82 ASFSA President Gertrude Applebaum

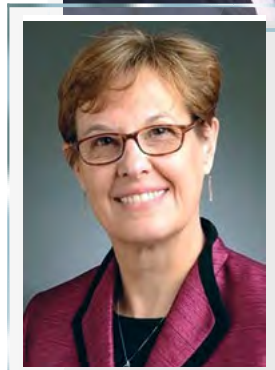
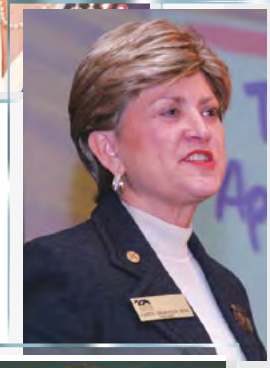
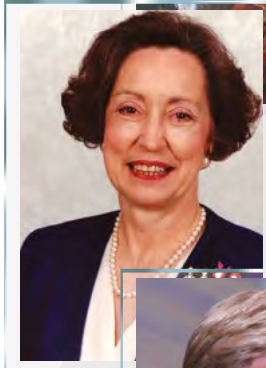
A young attendee at the 1946 conference where the Association came into being, **Applebaum** celebrated her 100th birthday in 2021, as SNA marked its 75th. A foodservice director for nearly 50 years in Corpus Christi, Texas, Applebaum brought an operator's perspective to her tenure as ASFSA president and to her later work as a consultant helping to mentor a generation of younger directors, new to the profession. In 2010, she was the first recipient of the newly established FAME Gertrude Applebaum Lifetime Achievement Award.



May History Remember Them Well

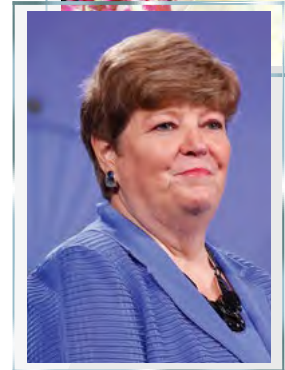
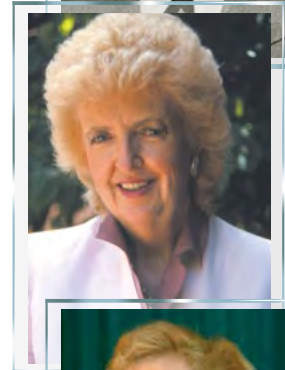
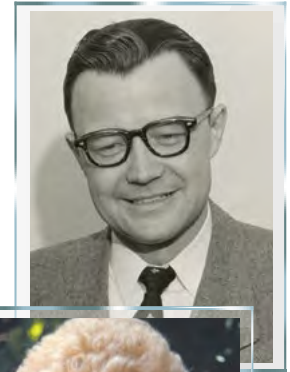
Past Presidents Shirley Watkins, Dorothy Caldwell, Janey Thornton & Katie Wilson

This impressive quartet is remembered for many contributions to school nutrition, but particularly their appointments to official positions at USDA, following leadership roles in the Association. Their achievements helped to elevate the respect for school nutrition professionals by power brokers in the federal government. **Watkins** (1988-89) was the first SNA president, and first Black woman, to be named Undersecretary of Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services (FNCS). **Caldwell** (1993-94) served multiple appointments at USDA, including Deputy Administrator of Special Nutrition Programs, working with both Watkins and later with **Dr. Thornton, SNS** (2006-07), Deputy Undersecretary for FNCS. **Dr. Wilson, SNS** (2008-09) also served as Deputy & Undersecretary, following a stint as Executive Director of the National Food Service Management Institute. Today, she leads the Urban School Food Alliance.



HQ Leaders John Perryman, Patricia Bayer, Barbara Belmont & Patricia Montague

Over its 75 years, the Association has shown remarkable stability in its Headquarters leadership. **Perryman**, the first to be hired in 1955, initially in the role of Executive Secretary, served 21 years. **Bayer**, who had held both staff and consultant positions before her hire as Executive Director in 1987, is most remembered for her facilitation of the organization's move from Denver to the Washington, D.C., suburbs. **Belmont, CAE**, was hired in 1993, bringing expertise in association-specific management and expanding the operation considerably over her 18-year tenure before retiring in 2011. Originally hired in 1994 as Marketing Research Specialist, **Montague, FASAE, CAE**, steadily rose up the ranks before being elevated to her current role as Chief Executive Officer in 2013.



Cathy Schuchart, Marshall Matz & Frank Harris

As SNA's Staff Vice President of Government Affairs and Media Relations, **Schuchart** has taken on the lion's share of the organization's advocacy, without the assistance of an outside lobbying firm. Many of today's leaders credit her with SNA's recent successes in Washington. "This year shed a huge light on the work she does and the role she plays in the success,

May History Remember Them Well

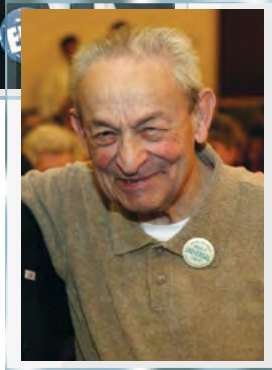
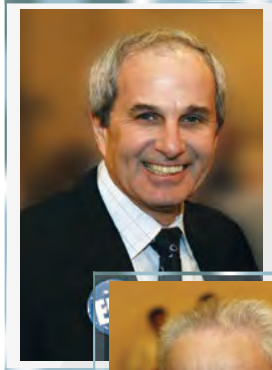
advancement and, dare I say, the survival of our programs," cites one Board member. "Her advocacy efforts should never be lost to history," shares another.

Matz served as the Association's legislative counsel for more than 30 years, helping leaders to both protect and improve the federal child nutrition programs. He was instrumental in persuading the organization to move its base of operations to the nation's capital.

Harris, a school nutrition director in Norwalk, Conn., was well-known to attendees of SNA's Legislative Action Conference for his unwavering public persistence, year after year, challenging lawmakers, government officials, SNA leaders and Matz to make universal free school meals a legislative priority.

ASFSA Presidents Thelma Flanagan & Louise Sublette

Few members of the current generation of school nutrition leaders had the privilege of a firsthand encounter with either Flanagan (1949-50) or Sublette (1972-73), but their impact as trailblazers continues to live on. **Flanagan** was one of the original founders of the new Association and devoted her energies to organizational management, including the establishment of state affiliates and the start of the House of Delegates. Today, the President's Award of Service in honor of Thelma Flanagan



recognizes that legacy by honoring the work of state presidents to accomplish SNA's mission and strategic goals. **Sublette** made "professional advancement" the cornerstone of her year and was a driver of ASFSA's first Certificate program. SNA's Manager of the Year award is given in her honor today.

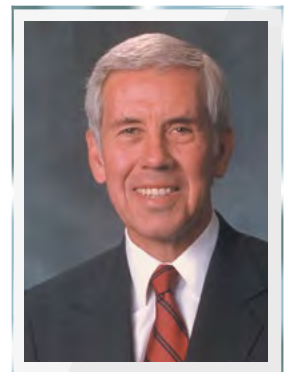
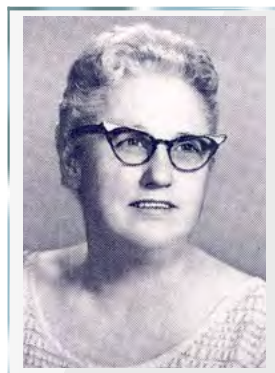
SNA President 2020-21 Reginald Ross, SNS

Ross, the first man to serve as Association president since 1971, will long be remembered for the grace and dignity he brought to his leadership role during what may be considered the most challenging year in the Association's history. "Serving as SNA president while working a full-time 'real job' is demanding in a normal year. Doing so during a pandemic, with your profession facing the greatest disruption witnessed in your organization's 75-year history? That takes real strength," wrote CEO Patricia Montague.



Senator Richard Lugar (R-Ind.)

Over 75 years, there have been many influential lawmakers on both sides of the aisle who have championed child nutrition programs. These range from Richard Russell (D-Ga.), for whom the National School Lunch Act was named, to the recently retired Pat Roberts (R-Kan), along with many others. **Senator Lugar** deserves special mention for crossing party lines during the highly contentious fight against block grants during the 1990s. As remembered in *A Measure of Excellence*, "Senator Richard Lugar held up movement of the entire welfare reform bill by standing firm on his belief that school meal block grants were untenable."



May History Remember Them Well

Dorothy (Dot) Pannell-Martin

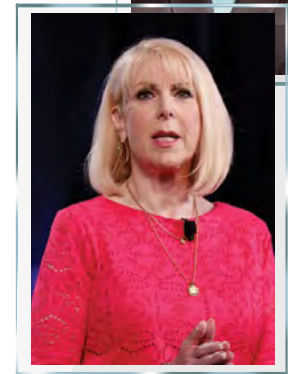
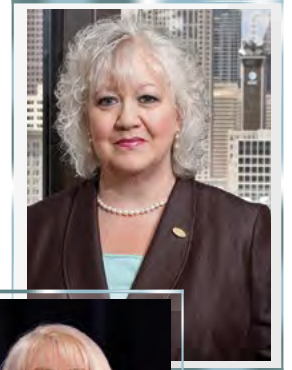
A district director in North Carolina, Maryland and Virginia between 1962 and 1995, **Pannell-Martin** may be best remembered as author of several school nutrition training manuals and textbooks still in use today. These include *School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century*, which has six editions and is referred to by many in the profession as “the Bible.” Pannell-Martin was the 2016 recipient of the FAME Gertrude Applebaum Lifetime Achievement Award.



brand expanded to the “Tips for School Meals That Rock” initiative, focused on connecting operators across the country, sharing best practices, solving common problems and celebrating achievements.

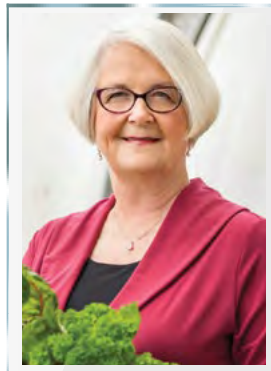
SNA Presidents Nancy Rice, SNS, & Lynn Harvey, EdD, RDN, SNS

Perhaps the epitome of “steel magnolias,” this pair of past presidents hailing from Georgia and North Carolina, respectively, has had tremendous influence on future generations of school nutrition professionals. **Rice** (2010-11) is cited by many current leaders for her encouragement as a presenter/instructor of SNA’s Future Leaders Program. “She has passion and professionalism tied up with Southern charm,” writes one fan. **Harvey** (2017-18) inspires with her unfailing gracious humility and her generous recognition of others’ talents and gifts, along with her poised leadership and strategic vision.



Dayle Hayes, MS, RD

A longtime author, educator and presenter specializing in school meal programs, nutrition education and wellness, Hayes’ influence skyrocketed after her early embrace of social media channels to promote school meals to a broad audience. As “cheerleader in chief,” her “School Meals That Rock”



Front-line School Cafeteria Teams

“When I think about nutrition pioneers, I honestly think about all the school-level cooks that have worked very hard through the years to make sure students have that school breakfast and lunch each and every day.”

—Christopher Derico, SNS,
2021–22 SNA Vice President



Historic Highlights Advocacy & Professional Development

TWIN PILLARS

For 75 years, small groups of Association leaders have regularly gathered together to identify strategic priorities based on a review of core competencies and an assessment of current environmental factors, future forecasts and a varied list of needs and wants. Despite a much-changed world since 1946, the organization has remained remarkably single-minded, not only in its mission and vision to nourish children, but in the best means to achieve that goal: advocacy and professional development.

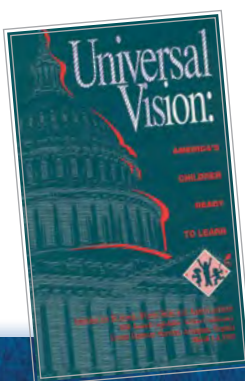
Advocacy: The Good & The Ugly

The longstanding dual goals of the Association's advocacy efforts have been to protect and improve the federal child nutrition programs, and the need for both was quickly evident. The 1950s were considered a time to work out the kinks. School lunch funds were initially divided among the states on the basis of school-age census figures. Higher participation was actually a negative, as the more students who were served, the fewer cents were available per meal. In 1962, thanks to ASFSA's efforts, a new participation-based reimbursement formula was established. In fact, each session of Congress from 1964 until the end of the decade dealt in some way with child nutrition needs, leading to the start of school breakfast, child care and summer foodservice programs (*see pages 9-10*).

But it was also a time when the war on poverty and the war in Vietnam fought each other for budgetary supremacy. Just as the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 was passed, the dollars to support it were cut. ASFSA was also concerned by the signals it saw from the Johnson Administration to turn school meals from a nutrition-based program for *all* children to a welfare support—a perception struggle SNA continues to grapple with today in its ongoing quest for universal free school meals.

Throughout the next 50 years, gains and reversals see-sawed. As an example, a successful 1975 “fly-in” to lobby Congress for an override of President Ford’s veto of school lunch legislation was followed a few years later by devastating Reagan Administration budget cuts that drove thousands of schools—and millions of children—out of the NSLP. Similarly, positive USDA support of school meal programs has often been undercut by complicated, inflexible rulemaking that the Association must mitigate through congressional intervention.

At many points in the organization’s history, its legislative and regulatory priorities for school nutrition have benefitted



Historic Highlights Advocacy & Professional Development



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from bipartisan support in Congress and/or a friendly Administration. (Arguably, the best example of this was in 1995, when Sen. Richard Lugar stood in opposition to most of his party on the issue of school meal block grants.) But in today's bitterly divided political atmosphere, where one party seems united in undermining the positions of the other purely out of spite, it seems likely that for the foreseeable future, SNA must focus on tailoring its case to the party in charge. Fortunately, SNA's advocacy strength has long relied on a savvy martialing of its grassroots forces, whether in yesterday's fly-in model or today's web-driven SNA Action Network.

Professional Pride

There is no more complicated area of foodservice than the K-12 school segment. It's also an area of foodservice under the greatest of scrutiny, both as a federal meal program and for its target audience: school children. While under-paid and oft-dismissed, school nutrition professionals—at every level—are (by and large) well-trained experts in foodservice, food safety, customer service, financial management and fiscal integrity. This reputation was established at the beginning.

While many early programs relied on the assistance of volunteers (mostly mothers) to produce meals, the programs themselves were operated by savvy professionals, many of whom belonged to the managers and directors organizations that eventually merged in 1946. Management of agricultural commodities and the accountability of federal funding, plus the sheer scope of food prep and service operations—especially in the post-WWII Baby Boom school years of the '60s and '70s—required an impressive array of skillsets.

It's no wonder, then, that training and education have been such long-standing programmatic priorities of the Association. What's impressive is that leaders have never been content to focus on skills training limited to specific job areas. While the fundamentals are emphasized, the organization has always had an eye on raising its site-level members to their greatest potential, giving them a career ladder to climb within the K-12 segment. For example, this is evident in the early models for certification that have evolved to the current SNA Certificate and Credentialing programs. "Master plans of education" over the years regularly have focused on building the profession, creating a means to nurture talent and new generations to rise from within. Even as the means for delivering education evolves—from yesterday's in-person regional workshop to today's webinar to tomorrow's Zoom meeting—and expands, SNA leaders and staff remain committed to ensuring that education programs meet all members where they are in their individual competencies, as well as their professional ambitions.





We are honored to serve those who serve our school communities and remain committed to providing innovative solutions today, so you can be ready for tomorrow.

**Congratulations SNA on 75 years of making us
all *stronger together*.**

Heartland

HeartlandSchoolSolutions.com

A School Nutrition Timeline

Professional Development, Advocacy See Firsts

The Association's first Certification plan is launched as a pilot in three states. An accompanying Continuing Education program is developed to support Certification and identify meaningful training materials, while also establishing an educational career ladder that encourages earning a GED and then enrolling in a college program to earn an Associate of Arts degree. This is also the year of the first Legislative Action Conference in Washington, D.C.

1973



1975

Programs Expand to Include Child Care and Summer

- After successful pilots, the School Breakfast Program is made permanent and a Child Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) are also authorized. Breakfast grows slowly over the years, helped by expansion of service beyond the cafeteria into classrooms and other locations. Initial SFSP emphasis is on collaborations with non-school sponsors, but over time, school districts take on more direct roles in administering these programs in their communities.

Funding Cuts Decimate School Lunch Program

After a \$400 million cut to federal child nutrition programs in 1980, Congress and the Reagan Administration chop another \$1.3 billion. Income eligibility guidelines are lowered, cash reimbursements and commodities allowances are decreased. Nutrition education and training funds are eliminated. Collectively, child nutrition cuts reach nearly \$3 billion, forcing some 2,500 schools out of the National School Lunch Program, affecting millions of children.

1981



1985

Operators Become Entrepreneurs

- Funding cuts combine with falling enrollments to prompt school foodservice operators to get creative in finding new income sources, such as catering, concessions and other contracts, while reducing expenses. 1983-84 President Betty Bender writes, "Expanding food service can mean increased revenue and job stability" in an article about her Dayton, Ohio's operation, "Move to Entrepreneurship."

Association Moves to Nation's Capital

Although resistant to the idea for several years, ASFSA leaders decide to relocate the organization's Headquarters office to Washington, D.C., to facilitate more frequent and more effective legislative and regulatory advocacy for school meal programs. A small number of Denver-based staff make the move. Over the next 30 years, the Association leases office space in four different locations in the Virginia and Maryland suburbs.

1990



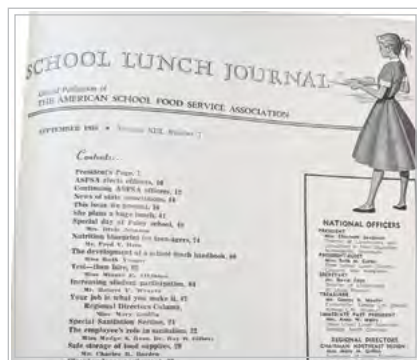
1991

National School Breakfast Week Builds Awareness

In March 1991, President George H.W. Bush issues the first National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) Proclamation. Since then, NSBW is observed the first full week in March, dovetailing with National Nutrition Month, promoted by the then-American Dietetic Association. As with NSLW, annual campaign themes developed by the Association help cafeteria teams to develop fun activities to engage students, the community and the media.



Historic Highlights Making Connections



THE TIES THAT BIND

Opportunities for school nutrition professionals to share best practices and work together to develop solutions to common challenges define the most tangible benefits of SNA membership. For 75 years, the Association has relied primarily on two means to deliver those peer-to-peer connections: Communications and Meetings.

A Communications Evolution

Before the advent of the Internet Age, all member communications were printed and mailed. *School Food Service News*, published immediately upon the Association's founding, was a critical lifeline to connect school meal providers with helpful information about their young profession. The publication quickly expanded into a monthly magazine, one filled with increasingly more substantive articles, offering proven strategies and fresh ideas. In the 1990s, supported by a modest budget to pay for professional writers and artwork, the magazine grew more sophisticated in both content and design, a necessity to compete with for-profit business publications vying for advertising dollars and as a means to elevate the professionalism of SNA members. A regular award-winner, *School Nutrition* magazine continues to rank as a top member benefit.

A second periodical, *Research Review*, was launched as a source of peer-reviewed studies in areas related to school foodservice and nutrition. Without the support of advertising, as print subscribers dwindled, the publication was eventually taken online and continues today as *The Journal of Child Nutrition & Management*. Over the years, the Association has also published a variety of special publications, including its two-volume history, a collection of heart-stirring stories of memorable encounters with students, a compendium about school meals and more.

The 21st century has seen rapid acceleration on the reliance of digital publications. Many niche newsletters were the first to transition to electronic delivery, including *Tuesday Morning*, the longtime weekly policy update. The Association's website, SchoolNutrition.org, has become the go-to source for all details about SNA's programs and initiatives and the portal to numerous learning opportunities. More recently, social media is an exciting new communications forum, not only to deliver information but to allow school nutrition professionals to network more effectively across the miles.

Here We Gather

Although SNA and its state affiliates made fantastic use of digital technologies to stay connected and informed throughout the 2020-21 coronavirus pandemic, nothing compares to the energy of the



Historic Highlights Making Connections

in-person conferences that have been the hallmark of the organization since 1947. The signature event is the Annual National Conference (ANC), which routinely attracts thousands of registered attendees each summer. While certain activities and traditions have shifted with the times, ANC can always be counted on to deliver three essential services: education sessions, peer-to-peer networking opportunities and the largest K-12 foodservice Exhibit Hall in the country.

The value of coming together to share ideas and innovations, to lament common frustrations and to celebrate a shared pride and passion are chief attractions of Association membership. In addition to ANC, SNA convenes a more intimate annual gathering of district directors and industry members (today's School Nutrition Industry Conference), a meeting for incoming leaders of state affiliates (National Leadership Conference) and a lobbying-focused meeting (Legislative Action Conference). Some niche meetings, such as a conference for directors of major city districts, were relatively short-lived, as operators increasingly struggled to justify the time and costs of multiple trips each year. The success of virtual meetings developed during the pandemic may prove an appropriate *supplement* to in-person conferences, focused on select topics or targeted audience segments.

Partners in Every Sense

Vendors serving the K-12 school foodservice segment have been invaluable partners since the beginning, when 39 companies exhibited at the first convention in Dallas and a few years later when the Association invited advertising in its newsletter. Financial support has been essential, as membership dues have been consistently far below that of comparable associations since the organization's inception. In addition to advertising and the incredible ANC Exhibit Hall, vendors make it possible for the Association to deliver training programs, various resources, events, public awareness campaigns and other services.

But industry supports the school nutrition profession in countless other ways, including serving as volunteers on committees, offering training, brainstorming solutions to problems, creating recipes, developing downloadable marketing tools, fundraising, hosting roundtable discussions, conducting research, supporting advocacy goals and much more. Most vendors genuinely share their customers' mission to feed children.



School Nutrition Virtual Time Capsule

What items best represent 75 years of school nutrition—and SNA—history? Current leaders were asked to share their ideas on what might make for a compelling time capsule to be “opened” by their successors when the profession reaches its 100th anniversary.

Examples of the American School Food Service Association (ASFSFA) and School Nutrition Association (SNA) logos. “The name change was such a significant change in our organization. It was a little divisive, but I’m glad we did it!”

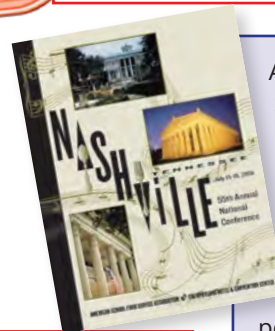


Selected copies of *School Nutrition* magazine—and its predecessors—especially from 1946, 1971, 2000 and 2021. “SNA members in 2046 would get a great understanding of who we are as an Association, where we have been and how *our* past has shaped *their* present.”



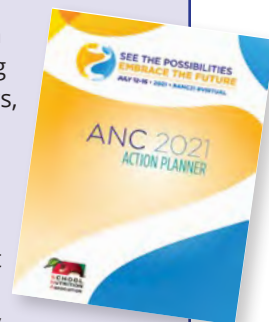
A brightly-colored, plastic, compartment-style school lunch tray. “This is the universal symbol of school lunch and its different menu components.”

A copy of the issue of *Time* magazine with the cover that featured cafeteria team members from Dallas Independent School District as frontline heroes during the COVID-19 crisis. “I think all of us shed a tear or two reading those inspiring stories and feeling pride and appreciation for the long-overdue recognition of the work our staff do day in and day out on behalf of children.”



A sampling of several years of SNA's *Annual National Conference Program Guide*. “They are great souvenirs of the types of education topics that were important, the celebrity general session speakers and entertainment and the vendors that have supported our profession for decades.”

“I love looking back at pictures from conferences, showing leaders over the years, changes in fashion and snapshots that capture the issues that were prevalent at the time.” “As print becomes a dinosaur, future members may be interested to see the beautiful printed programs we had for our conferences.”

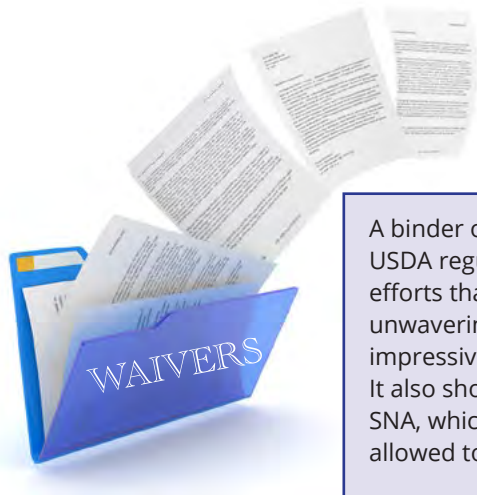


Pictures of children enjoying school lunch and school breakfast over the years.



A copy of the *USDA Food Buying Guide*. “It is timeless and so useful.”

School Nutrition Virtual Time Capsule



All of the different meal patterns that have been applied to school meals over the decades. "It's fascinating how much they've already evolved, and it will be interesting to see how the 2046 meal pattern compares!"

A binder or folder that includes all of the COVID-19 response USDA regulatory waivers, SNA letters and a timeline of the efforts that went into making these "asks" a reality. "The unwavering commitment and due diligence by SNA was impressive and a saving grace for families and our programs. It also showed the peak of collaboration between USDA and SNA, which should be highlighted, celebrated and never allowed to be forgotten."

Examples of school menus that reflect changing trends in the items served. "These should be gathered from different parts of the country."

A School Lunch Hero Day (SLHD) poster and other themed products from the SNA Shop. "It should include the SLHD facemask as a reminder of the struggles we faced as heroes of school nutrition."



A collage of photos that showcases different healthy school breakfasts and lunches being served today.



A recording of Matthew McConaughey's heartfelt address to SNA attendees of the 2021 Virtual Legislative Action Conference. "What a wonderful exchange he had with our awesome President Reggie Ross, speaking on the reciprocity of gratitude and the importance of trying to make that a daily practice."

Photos of current kitchen equipment to compare with the equipment options of the future.



The School Nutrition Specialist (SNS) pin, which represents a significant step in how SNA advanced the professionalism, expertise and image of school nutrition leaders.

A copy of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, as "it has been so germane to SNA's broad scope of work, not only for the last decade but on into the next."



School Nutrition Virtual Time Capsule



The *Time* magazine cover, a copy of the USDA waiver announcement, an apron and a facemask. "These all represent things that kept us going and helped our members weather the storm of the pandemic."

A crystal SNA apple. "It's a symbol of our enduring relevance to children's health and well-being."

A video that shows how school meals have changed over the decades.

Sealed copies of *School Nutrition* magazine over the years. "These are great sources of information about the struggles and triumphs that happen in school nutrition all the time." Plus, "Print magazines may not exist in the future!"

Photos of families picking up meals served curbside or from school buses during the pandemic.



Copies of SNA's *Position Papers* that have advocated for universal school meals. "Hopefully, we will have them by 2046!"

A compilation of the innovative ways that schools fed children during the strange and stressful year of the pandemic.

Pictures of cafeteria team members. "I want to be able to see who is still working and remember all the amazing things they accomplish each day." "It's always fun to look at how the style of dress and the kitchen/cafeteria environment changes over the years."



Examples from different decades of USDA Foods (aka commodities) Availability Lists. "It's fascinating how these have evolved from butter to prune puree to sunflower seed spread to seasoned chicken fajita strips."

School Nutrition Virtual Time Capsule

A spoodle—it signifies portions of healthy school foods!



The April 2020 special edition of *School Nutrition* magazine, focused on COVID-19. "It was a comprehensive look at the challenges, opportunities, advocacy, solutions and resilience that we showed as a profession from the very earliest days of the crisis." "All editions of the magazine are great, but later generations should read this one to see how we, as an Association and profession, tackled this global issue, continuing to achieve our mission of feeding children, with a spirit of service, gratitude and a smile."



A scrapbook of 2020-21 that will always remind us how much we grew in this last year alone.

The very first Tweet from @schoolnlunch!



Pictures of kitchens and cafeterias. "Fingers crossed that everything will be updated and a little newer by 2046!"

Photos of school nutrition employees interacting with students on the serving line over the years. "They demonstrate that generations of school nutrition professionals have been serving our nation's children."



A sample of a free/reduced-price school meal application.

A piece of chocolate—just to keep us sweet!



A collage of images that demonstrate how technology has changed point-of-sale systems from meal punch cards to PIN numbers to biometric finger scanners.



CONGRATULATIONS!



Advancing
the quality of
school meal
programs
across the
country.

Thanks for all you do!

We consider it an honor to
support those who serve and
nourish our future leaders as
they learn and grow!



A School Nutrition Timeline

Training Institute Permanently Authorized

ASFSA requests Congress make permanent and fund the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) at the University of Mississippi. Initially established in 1989, NFSMI is charged with developing applied research and training in child nutrition programs. Its first executive director is 1976-77 ASFSA President Dr. Josephine Martin.



ASFSA Marks 50th Anniversary

A year-long celebration of "A Half Century of Serving Children" includes production of a video, a commemorative calendar, magazine articles and Annual National Conference "Memory Lane" memorabilia on display. Then-President Penny McConnell notes, "These activities made members cognizant of the struggles made by our pioneer leaders to ensure our recognition today as the voice for child nutrition."



School Nutrition Credential Launched

Following the Registered Dietitian model established by the then-American Dietetic Association, ASFSA unveils its own credentialing program to provide professional recognition of expertise. To earn the designation, candidates must meet academic requirements, show education or work experience in key knowledge areas and pass an exam. The name of the credential is changed to School Nutrition Specialist (SNS) in 2004.



1994



Congress Is "School Lunched"

- Moves to eliminate federal child nutrition programs in favor of block grants to states began in the 1970s, but the most serious threat comes as part of a sweeping welfare reform proposal by Congress in 1994. ASFSA launches a grassroots advocacy campaign in opposition, gaining valuable media and public support. The proposal is defeated and House Speaker Newt Gingrich admits to being "school lunched."

1996



Watkins Earns Prestigious Appointment

- Shirley Watkins, the Association's first Black President (1998-99), is named Undersecretary of Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She is the first Association leader and school nutrition professional to hold such a prestigious and influential national role in the federal government and is given a unique opportunity to advance ASFSA's mission and vision.

1998



Association Makes a "Healthy Change"

Although initially controversial, a proposal to change the name of the organization to the School Nutrition Association (SNA) is overwhelmingly approved by the House of Delegates. The new name reflects a positive and healthy image of school meals and the professionals who serve them to millions of children across the U.S.

2004

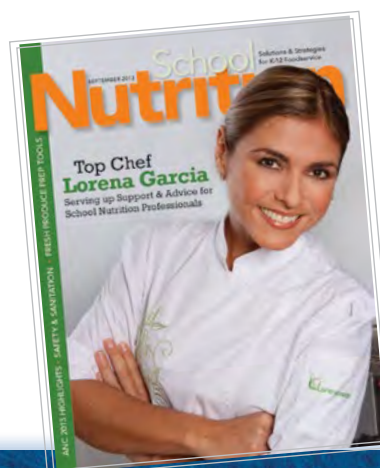
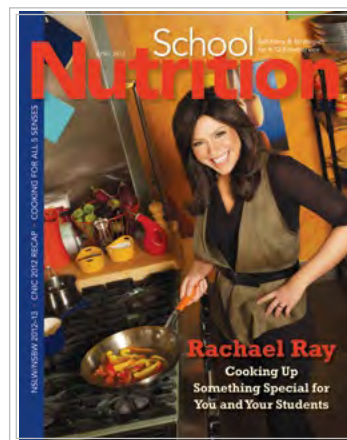
Historic Highlights Promoting A Positive Image

WINNING HEARTS & MINDS

The public image battle has dogged school meals for 75 years—and SNA and its members will likely continue to fight against the persistence of negative stereotypes well past the organization's centennial. But it's arguably becoming more of a fair fight, as school nutrition operations begin to have access to more sophisticated marketing tools and more media and outreach outlets for telling the "real" story of school meals.

Public relations efforts stretch all the way back to the beginning. Early efforts with limited budget and reach were followed by three more substantial projects: Operation AAPLES (in the 1980s), funded cooperatively by ASFSA, state associations and industry partners; Invest in US, a 1995-96 multi-million-dollar endowment campaign conducted by the School Nutrition Foundation; and an Association-funded PR campaign in 2016. All three provided for professional support from outside firms, along with the development of various tools and resources, including videos, public service announcements for print and television, flyers, "shareable" social media content, a parent-focused website and more.

SNA also has made great strides with its outreach to national media, especially in the last two decades. Reporters from *The New York Times*, National Public Radio, the Associated Press and other major media companies regularly reach out to SNA for comment on a proposed story. While negative stories (often involving a non-SNA member) are still likely to make headlines, the Association now gets an opportunity to provide context or defense. Such stories can set public image progress back several steps, however, as can cheap shots made in entertainment, advertising and viral social media posts. This is why public awareness still remains such an important priority for the profession at the national level and in individual communities.



Historic Highlights Promoting A Positive Image



Go Local

While sustained change on the national level may remain somewhat elusive, individual districts often have more significant public image success in local markets, especially when journalists and producers are in search of positive stories to tell, such as during back-to-school season. School district nutrition teams also leverage media interest in National School Lunch Week (October), National School Breakfast Week (March) and School Lunch Hero Day (May), using campaign themes and materials from SNA that are often developed with the support of vendor partners and are designed to provide turnkey PR resources and ideas to members responsible for their local marketing efforts.

But an increasing number of districts are stepping up their marketing game beyond these national observances. District directors have grown increasingly savvy about the value of marketing positive stories in their communities, and some even find the budget to hire an inhouse marketing specialist to promote innovative initiatives like farm-to-school programs, tasting fairs, community health events, nutrition and culinary education projects and more. The advent of social media—and related tools and apps—has made it even easier for local cafeteria teams to engage with students, parents and other stakeholders through photos, videos, polls and contests.

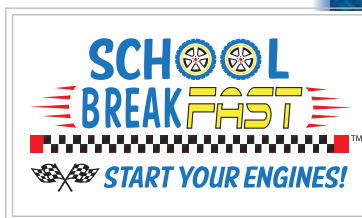


Celebrity Spotlight

School meals and the professionals who serve them have also benefitted from the continual rise in "reality" competition television that relies on an endless supply of "ordinary" citizens willing to compete for 15 minutes of fame. SNA members from all across the country have given themselves, their profession and school meals a well-deserved positive spotlight during appearances on various food competitions, including "Chopped," "The Great Food Truck Race," "Top Chef" and "Food Network Star," as well as some more surprising contests, such as "American Ninja Warrior."

Periodically, SNA also has been able to work collaboratively with national figures that bring the spotlight with them. This includes *School Nutrition* magazine interviews and/or conference presentations with TV personality Rachel Ray, plus celebrity chefs Jet Tila, Lorena Garcia and Cat Cora, along with decades of star-powered paid speakers and entertainers, many of whom were so impressed with what they learned about school nutrition professionals and school meals that they carried the message on their own outside of the SNA event.

But school nutrition professionals must never get complacent when it comes to marketing and public awareness. Their reputation rests on the most recent impressions made on the audience.



A School Nutrition Timeline

Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) Established

International partnerships begun in the '60s grow into an annual forum hosted by ASFSA in 1997, which leads to the launch of GCNF, addressing global childhood hunger through school meals. Although championed by Past President Gene White, SNA Executive Director Barbara Belmont and other ardent supporters, SNA leaders eventually opt to focus fully on domestic priorities. In 2013, the organizations end their formal affiliation.



School Lunch Heroes Get Special Day

SNA joins with Jarrett J. Krosoczka, author of a popular graphic novel series for children about the adventures of a James Bond-like hero "lunch lady," to create School Lunch Hero Day. The annual event, celebrated on the first Friday of May, in honor of Krosoczka's own memorable cafeteria hero, encourages school communities to celebrate the staff who nurture and nourish students.



SNF Awarded \$2M Training Grant

USDA awards the School Nutrition Foundation a \$2 million grant to develop and deliver a training program for school nutrition professionals. The LEAD (Learn, Educate, Advance, Develop) to Succeed initiative will focus on personnel management and communication/marketing/customer service. SNF will work with several partners on different LEAD components.



2006



School Meals Gain National Support

- The sweeping Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act is passed by Congress and signed by President Obama. Featuring updated nutrition standards, professional standards for operators, a universal free meals-style option (Community Eligibility) and other provisions, it has enormous impact plus vigorous support from First Lady Michelle Obama. She and President Clinton speak at SNA's LAC in 2010 and 2011.

2013



Schools Positioned as "Nutrition Hubs"

- SNA and No Kid Hungry promote the concept of schools serving as community "nutrition hubs." It's a business-savvy strategy addressing childhood hunger, while raising revenues to ensure school meal operations remain financially self-sufficient. By running *all* eligible federal child nutrition programs, districts can provide children with access to wraparound nutrition, while improving operational efficiencies, boosting education goals and providing jobs and higher wages.

2019



School Nutrition Rises to Meet Pandemic Challenges

As schools close abruptly due to spread of COVID-19 infections, school meal professionals create emergency feeding plans overnight to distribute meals to students at curbside pickup points or via school bus routes. SNA's advocacy team mobilizes to secure needed federal waivers for these operational changes and lobbies for federal relief funds, as districts struggle to manage rising food and labor costs, declining participation and zero a la carte revenue. Cafeteria personnel are recognized as frontline, essential heroes throughout the crisis.

Looking Ahead With Hope

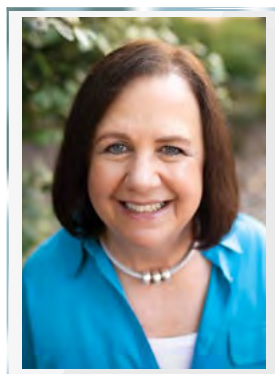


Feeding Bodies. Fueling Minds.®

To mark the occasion of SNA's 75th anniversary year, the 2020-21 Board of Directors named their hopes for what the years ahead will hold for SNA, its members, child nutrition and the students who benefit, as well as sharing their thoughts on a few of the organization's most notable achievements and contributions to the history of school meals and the school nutrition profession (*page 3*).

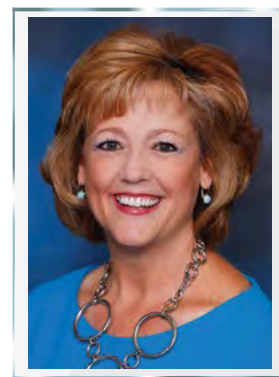
I can't wait to see how technology will continue to advance school meal programs on into the future. Think back just 25 years, never mind 75, on all the ways that technology has transformed so many different areas of school meal operations. It's very exciting to imagine "what could be" when it comes to the future.

*Beth Wallace, MBA, SNS
2020-21 President-Elect*



I believe SNA will continue to lead and shape the future of innovation in school meal programs. We'll see this all throughout school nutrition operations, from what kids eat to where and how meals are served to prepare students for successful daily learning. SNA is sure to lead the way!

*Lori Adkins, SNS
2020-21 Vice President*

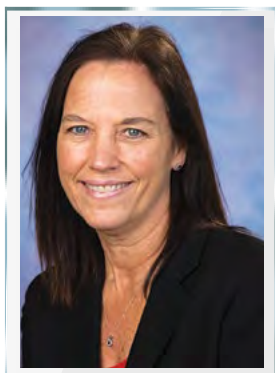


Over this last year of the pandemic, our profession gained respect from families and school administrators. We're no longer considered "just" the people who serve breakfast and lunch; we are *essential*! This has injected a new sense of pride, especially to school nutrition professionals working on the front lines.

I hope this revolution continues to gain momentum—and that SNA grows along with it. I look forward to a day when popular culture stops portraying us as sloppy, grumpy workers who serve bad food. This day may never come, but I know we will always strive to

prove how far this stereotype is from the truth. Our dream coming true—to say, with pride, "I am a school nutrition professional and a member of SNA"—is what excites me the most about the future.

*Cindy Jones
Southwest Regional Director*

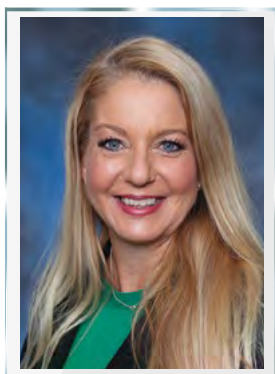


Our Association is making strides to be more diverse and inclusive in *all* aspects of the organization. I am excited to see how this will continue and what it will mean to advancing our efforts to be progressive in school nutrition. Having a more intentional voice that can speak to *all* our members, in a relatable language, will carry a

message that is not only heard, but actionable among a greater percentage of those members. True growth will occur when people clearly understand SNA's mission and vision.

*Warren DeShields
Northeast Regional Director*

A Bright Future Ahead for SNA and School Meals



I'm so excited to see the different ideas and innovations that the younger generations of SNA members will bring to the table to take school meals to the next level.

Shannon Gleave, RDN, SNS
At-Large Director

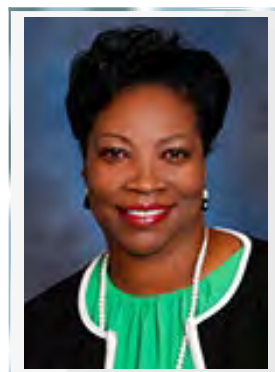
I am looking forward to seeing *how* our programs grow into the future. The COVID-19 pandemic opened the doors to schools offering more types of meal services—including suppers and weekend meals. I can't wait to see how this will influence our programs in the next few years.

Shannon Nowak
Employee/Manager Representative



I'm excited about the leaders who grew their skills within the Association and now are evolving *beyond* the organization. They are going to make incredible contributions in their individual communities.

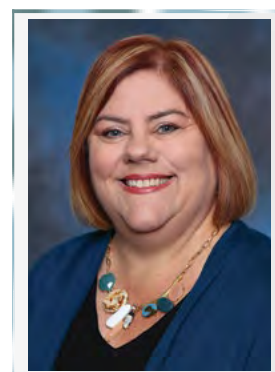
Vanessa Hayes, SNS
Southeast Regional Director



This past year has thrown us all into uncharted territories. It's been very difficult in so many ways, but there *are* silver linings and new opportunities that emerged from SY2020-21. It was so exciting to see the shift to a more digital environment, and the speed in which SNA adapted to that need. Sure, we all love in-person meetings and face-to-face networking, but the Zoom world brought many new engagement opportunities that have never before been explored. I'm excited for this format to remain as an added opportunity for members to learn, grow and meet both peers and mentors.

In addition, the COVID-19 crisis propelled our industry into a positive spotlight we've never fully enjoyed before. Suddenly, school nutrition professionals were among the faces of superheroes helping our nation through a very difficult time. *We've* always acknowledged our teams as heroes, but it was heartwarming to see the world finally recognize their daily contributions. This also helped to solidify the importance of our Association and recognition that SNA is *the* "voice" of school nutrition. We should all be excited about the many opportunities this new spotlight provides for our future. SNA has risen to a new level, and it will continue to evolve, build, grow, lead, advocate and engage.

Patti Bilbrey
West Regional Director



For more insights on school nutrition yesterday, today and tomorrow, read the companion piece, *Reflections on a Brilliant History*, featuring the thoughts of pioneering trailblazers, current champions and rising stars as published in SNA's *School Nutrition* magazine August 2020 through June/July 2021.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to the School Nutrition Association on 75 years of supporting child nutrition professionals in their mission to feed kids and their communities! Thank you for the many ways you facilitate collaboration and networking among the industry.



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