SNA Membership Update

Our National School Nutrition Association is 56,881 members strong, which is the highest it has been in a decade! SNA has grown by 800 members since October 2014. New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Arkansas, and California have all increased by at least 10% since May 2015.

Our Montana SNA is currently 207 members. Of these members, over 28% are certified and two are credentialed! However, our association has taken a slight decrease (9 members) since May of this year. A dip in membership typically happens during the summer and winter months and usually improves in the fall and spring.

Membership in SNA provides professional development, networking opportunities, and industry-specific resources to help support your career and your school nutrition program. The training and information you receive as an SNA member makes you a highly-qualified school nutritional professional.

Through membership, you also have access to many resources and new ideas from across the nation that you can implement immediately into your program. The benefits of being an SNA member are endless. Please remind your co-workers that by becoming a member, they invest in themselves!

Ellen Mills

MTSNA Legislative Update

As your legislative chairman I have been staying in contact with our congressmen asking for their support on our reauthorization of the child nutrition act and asking that they help support our request of staying with the target one of the sodium level and restore the whole grain requirement to fifty one percent whole grain rich.

These requests are all part of our position papers that we left with the congressmen when we were in Washington DC in March for the Legislative Action Conference (LAC). I have asked them to please review the information from SNA and give us their support.

USDA is staying firm that we should stay the course on sodium reduction but are now forced to find a way to stop the tide of over a million children leaving the National School Lunch Program due to the new regulations.

The House has passed the Bipartisan Budget Act which temporarily suspends implementation of Target 2 sodium standards and maintains the current 50% whole grain requirement. Please take the time to go to the SNA website and contact your congressman. Ask them to support you on these important issues. The site is very easy to navigate and will make it very easy for you to contact your congressman.

I hope your year is going well and you will have a wonderful holiday season. God bless you all. I hope 2016 is very good to all of you.

Carol Simanton
Governor Bullock and his wife Lisa Bullock have been major proponents of school breakfast programs in Montana. No Kid Hungry is the state initiative to increase access to breakfast programs by adding new programs and expanding current programs to non-traditional models such as breakfast in the classrooms and breakfast after the bell. The results show in the data from OPI (Office of Public Instruction) school nutrition programs.

As the results show, we have greatly improved access to our programs in Montana.

In Great Falls Public Schools we now have ten schools with breakfast in the classroom. Four of these ten schools started this school year and in meeting with the teachers we have received nothing but positive feedback. Even those who were skeptical in the beginning are now saying they are seeing the difference in their classes.

With a lack of student hunger there is an increase in their ability to learn. Teachers and food service employees have begun to build relationships as they get to know each other through the new process of serving students. Communication and working together is the key to the success of anything we do and breakfast in the classroom has not been any different. We have seen participation double for breakfast and we have even served more breakfasts than lunches some days. Not even I thought we would see that kind of success!

National School Breakfast Week can be just another week or it can be “The Week” to help get the word out about your school breakfast programs! Your students, parents and community love to hear what you’re doing. On many days, it may not seem like it while you are in the grind, but take a minute to do something special to get recognized.

Invite guests to join your school for breakfast and decorate your cafeteria. You may not have the time to decorate so ask a classroom to take this on as a classroom project!

Hold a contest or serve their favorite menu items. Whatever you decide, remember that you are the ones that can help bring recognition to your program.

For ideas and resources visit your association’s website at: https://schoolnutrition.org/NSBW2016/

Get ready to: Wake up to School Breakfast!

Jennifer Spellman

A Call for Nominations: Vice President and Secretary

The MTSNA board is calling for nominations for two open positions that are up for election. These positions are Vice President and Secretary.

Vice President will be for the 2016-2017 term with a three year commitment to advance to President-elect and President. As Vice President you will be the head of planning the preconference classes and working hand in hand with the rest of the board on the MTSNA Summer Conference.

Vice President needs to be a member of MTSNA and be certified or working toward certification as well as having had at least two years experience as a board member.

The position of Secretary is a two year term that would be from 2016 to 2018. The secretary need to be a MTSNA member and be certified or working towards certification. The main responsibilities of the secretary are to attend board meetings that are held three times a year and take accurate notes. Meetings are in September, January and at the Summer Conference in June.

Please have your nominations to me no later than February 15, 2016. The ballots will be in the spring registration form. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Carol Simanton
l2chir@mtstate.com

Awards, Awards, Awards

Maria Schwarzbach
Director of the Year Award: The Director of the Year award recognizes school nutrition directors for the contributions they have made throughout their school nutrition career. Nominations Due: March 1 Awarded: MTSNA Conference

Employee of the Year: Do you know a school nutrition employee who is hardly, creative, dedicated and professional growth and the children they serve? The Employee of the Year award recognizes school nutrition employees for the contributions they have made throughout their school nutrition career. Nominations Due: March 1 Awarded: MTSNA Conference

Manager of the Year Award: Manager of the year recognizes school nutrition managers for the contributions they have made throughout their school nutrition career. Nominations Due: March 1 Awarded: MTSNA Conference

Silver Spoon Award: Has your manager/director (certified member of MTSNA) improved the nutrition program in your school? Recognize them for their hard work by writing a letter of nomination for the Silver Spoon Award. Nominations Due: May 1 Awarded: MTSNA Conference

The Julie Leister WOW Award: Wonderful Outstanding Worker Award Letter of Nomination Nominations Due: May 1 Awarded: MTSNA Conference

The Julie Leister WOW Award recognizes any school food service worker in Montana with a lot of heart! If you work with someone who you think means the description below please nominate them for an award they truly deserve. Many food service employees work very hard and deserve to be recognized!

Nominate someone who is dependable, fun, creative, honest, makes others day, loves students, is willing to try new ideas, works hard, steps up to the plate and puts a smile on everyone’s face! The winner is selected and announced at the MTSNA Summer Conference. The winner is awarded a handmade and engraved knife made locally by GIMW Knife Company. Nominate someone today and best of luck to all nominees!

Linda Schwarzbach schwarzbach-linda@gmail.com

2016 MTSNA Conference

Even though we haven’t made it through winter yet, I wanted to let you know we will be having both a Silent Auction and a Live Auction at the MTSNA Conference in Great Falls next summer.

We appreciate all the members and schools that come up with wonderful ideas for baskets or just anything we can auction off for our Scholarship Fund. Please, keep them coming!

Remember the money goes back to our members. Time flies and before you know it will be time for MTSNA Conference again.

Thanks for all your help!

Linda Schwarzbach schwarzbach-linda@gmail.com
Thank you for all that you do!

Progress for Chapter Development

Great news for MTSNA members interested in meeting with other school food service directors, managers and employees in your area. The MTSNA Board decided to help you with expenses for your first meeting. Woohoo!

There are so many positive benefits to connecting with those who do similar work near by. Meet professional standard requirements for yourself and/or your staff by hosting or attending these meetings. You can be the person to get something started in your region! And it can be a lot of fun!

If you have an idea, I could help you plan materials you might need, snacks, or however you choose to use the money. Please contact me for more information.

Linda Schwarzbach
schwarzbachlinda@gmail.com

For the Community: A Forsyth Story

Each year since the 911 terror attack in New York and Pennsylvania, Forsyth Schools has presented a lunch for all of our local emergency service employees. This includes police, EMS, county and volunteer fire departments as well as the sheriff’s office staff. It was started as a remembrance of the lives lost in the attack but is now referred to as the Patriots Day Meal. We send out a letter requesting the presence of the emergency service employees and it is not mandatory. Included in the letter is the lunch menu and dessert that will be served.

We have also sold kitchen items at a craft show and used that money to purchase the gifts for the kids. Since this is for the children, the parents are not given gifts so we put together a family basket filled with hot chocolate, popcorn, candy and a multitude of other goodies for everyone to enjoy. One year we put a nice fluffy robe in the bottom of the family basket for the mother of the family we were buying for. Now of course we don’t always stick to the agreed amount, sometimes we go over just a tad. Here in Forsyth, we simply feel everyone deserves a gift at Christmas.

Wendy Shreeve

Did you participate in Montana Crunch Time?

Montana Crunch Time 2015 was a huge success! According to registrations over 30,000 youth and adults planned to participate. We have received photos and stories from all over the state and need your help! If you participated in Montana Crunch Time, please take this quick survey (less than 5 minutes) to share about your crunch event.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1tSByCakVys-OIK-bkA5lMPhyq1NBfJyNvyQGNYJ/viewform?
uspsend_form-start-invite

Email your crunch bytes (photos, videos, story) as well as any articles or news coverage of your event to Aubree Roth, Farm to School Coordinator, Montana Team Nutrition Program at aubree.roth@montana.edu.

Updating MTSNA By-Laws

At our fall board meeting there was a committee set up to look at our bylaws and see what will be needed to update them. The committee is made up of Tara Ray, Maria Schwarzwock, Carol Simanton and Ellen Mills. We will meet in January and discuss what needs to be done. I contacted SNA to ask for information to make sure we mirror the national guidelines. The SNA Resolution and Bylaws committee is creating a template for states to follow and these will be handed out at the leadership meeting this spring. This will be a great help to us and make our work less complicated in the future.

Carol Simanton

MTSNA Member Scholarship

MTSNA is proud to announce a change in our scholarship. We are now offering two $500.00 scholarships to our members. Apply by March 1. The scholarship will be awarded by March 15 so it can be used for the MTSNA Summer Conference in June.

Any member can apply for the scholarship regardless of the number of hours the individual works. The applicant needs to fill out the application, making sure they meet all the criteria and send the application to Carol Simanton. The address is on the registration form. Recipients will have their registration paid and the remainder of the $500.00 will be given to them when they register on the first day of conference.

This scholarship was designed to help individuals that need assistance in coming to our annual Summer Conference so they can reach their continuing education credit goals. Continuing education is even more important with the implementation of professional standards by USDA. MTSNA wants to allow everyone with the desire to attend conference the opportunity to do so.

We are truly excited about our conference in June in Great Falls and are hope all of you will be marking your calendars for this event.

I hope all of you are truly blessed through this holiday season and are able to be with your families during this special time of year. The New Year promises to hold many new and exciting things for us so let’s get started by applying for this scholarship to help you along the way. Happy New Year!

Carol Simanton

Montana’s Team Up for Success Representatives in Kansas City, MO

Buck: Jayne Edwards, Montana City; Brenda Hess, Canyon Creek (Billings); Kathy Bigford, Lewistown; Chandler, Nokomis; Kathy Martin, Corvallis; Lynn Cook, Fort Benton.

Front: Camilla McFarren, State of Montana (Helena); Eric Turner, Montforton (Bozeman); Jennifer Spellman, Great Falls; Cindy Jarvie, Florence; Maria Schwarzwock, Plentywood; Tara Ray, State of Montana (Bozeman)

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1tSByCakVys-OIK-bkA5lMPhyq1NBfJyNvyQGNYJ/viewform?uspsend_form-start-invite

Email your crunch bytes (photos, videos, story) as well as any articles or news coverage of your event to Aubree Roth, Farm to School Coordinator, Montana Team Nutrition Program at aubree.roth@montana.edu.