

The Dibble Institute Receives AAFCS “21st Century Community Champion” Award



AAFCS President Shelly Nickols-Richardson (left) and AAFCS Past President Bonnie Braun, CFCS (right), present the AAFCS 2009 21st Century Community Champion Award to Kay Reed (middle), executive director, The Dibble Institute.

(Alexandria, Va. – July 13, 2009) — Nominated by the North Carolina Association of Family & Consumer Sciences, The Dibble Institute was honored at the recent American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) 100th Annual Conference & Expo in Knoxville, Tennessee. The organization received the AAFCS 21st Century Community Champion Award for providing effective educational resources to family and consumer sciences educators that help young people learn skills necessary for successful relationships.

Kay Reed, executive director of The Dibble Institute, accepted the award presented by Shelly Nickols-Richardson, AAFCS president, at the Third General Session, sponsored by The Soap and Detergent Association on Saturday morning. The conference theme was *Celebrating the Past, Sustaining the Future*.

Established in 2001, the AAFCS 21st Century Community Champion Award recognizes groups, organizations, and companies that promote the connection between strong families and strong communities by creating viable projects and activities that build communities in which families are valued, supported, and strengthened. The first recipient of the award in 2001 was the Annie E. Casey Foundation in Baltimore, Maryland.

“Our mission at The Dibble Institute is to help teens get smart about their romantic lives,” explained Reed. “We know from our research that teens who participate in our evidence-based program are more knowledgeable about what is and is not healthy in relationships, hold more realistic relationship beliefs, have improved conflict management skills, and express an increased openness to taking relationship education classes in the future. We greatly appreciate that AAFCS leaders have recognized the relevance and pertinence of our work with the 21st Century Community Champion award.”

A leader in the area of youth education and relationships, Ms. Reed is responsible for The Dibble Institute receiving a \$2.5 million five-year grant to provide curriculum and training to FCS teachers throughout the country. In the

first two years of the grant, over 11,000 students in eight states have developed skills to create positive relationships

Established in 1996, The Dibble Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, and nonsectarian 501 (c)(3) organization dedicated to helping young people learn the skills necessary for successful relationships and marriages. The organization serves as a national leader and clearing house in the field of youth marriage education and develops, publishes, and distributes materials that help teens learn how to navigate their romantic lives. Their research-based, best practice, developmentally appropriate programs teach students the skills and knowledge that are central to building and maintaining healthy romances and, eventually, marriages. The curricula are easily used in classroom, church, community, agency, and youth group settings.

Founded in 1909 by Ellen Swallow Richards, the first woman graduate and professor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), AAFCS is the only national not-for-profit organization that provides leadership and support to FCS students and professionals across multiple practice settings. FCS professionals help individuals, families, and communities make informed decisions about their well-being, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life. AAFCS' 6,000+ members are elementary, secondary, and post-secondary educators, researchers, and administrators; Cooperative Extension educators; and other professionals in business and industry, not-for-profit organizations, and government. These professionals provide research and applied knowledge in the areas of personal finance, child development and parenting, consumer education, housing and environment, apparel and textiles, and health and nutrition. With national headquarters based in Alexandria, Va., AAFCS has 52 affiliates located across the United States and Puerto Rico.

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