

# Wyoming SNA Newsletter

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WINTER 2018

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## President's Page

### **What Wyoming School Nutrition Association (WYSNA) means to me and why it is important to be a member of this association:**

As we finish up the first third of the school year, I think it is important to remind you why we have chosen to belong to this association and ways that the association is able to assist us. I am now in my fourth year as Food Service Director of Teton County School District #1. I have been a member of this association since beginning my employment.

When I began this new position, which was a career path that was foreign to me, I found myself registered to attend the Wyoming School Nutrition annual conference in Casper, WY. It was at that conference that I started to truly understand what I had gotten myself into with this position. I realized that this would be a much bigger position than I had ever imagined. I also realized that my program would need to be compliant with all rules and regulations. However, I also came to know many colleagues, now friends, across the state dealing with the exact same obstacles. These colleagues have been able to give me insight and assistance on how to operate my program to the best of my ability, which results in providing the students a better school day. Additionally, though I was being educated on all of the complexities ahead of me, I found that I still very much needed these allies to guide me through this process. I believe this was the best way for me to learn about the program and how to best operate it.

Our association provides us the opportunity to attend classes on a vast variety of topics dealing with School Nutrition, socialize and brainstorm with other school nutrition employees about our programs, and the opportunity to attend a food show with vendors who have specifically designed the show for us. Without WYSNA, I would not be where I am today and our students in Teton County Schools would not be benefiting from its offerings.

WYSNA is affiliated with the National School Nutrition Association, which gives you even more assistance with your program. The National SNA offers monthly webinars on school nutrition, large scale conferences that cater specifically to our program needs, representation and advocacy with national policy makers, and an annual conference around the United States with a large scale food show.

With the Wyoming and National School Nutrition Associations on my side, I know that I am offering nutritious, high quality meals to the students in my community and that makes me feel good about what I do on a daily basis. Not only do we know that we make a difference everyday in the lives of our students, but it is nice to know that we also have the help of the Association.

*Wes Clarke*

WYSNA President  
Food and Nutrition Director  
Teton County School District 1

## What's New at the State Office?

Greetings to all!

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving filled with family, friends, and good food. As I learn the ropes at the Department of Education and learn more about your programs, it is wonderful to hear about how much each of you care about your children. I have heard so many great things from Tamra about your passion and your enthusiasm for your students' nutrition. Your dedication to feed the kids of Wyoming delicious and nutritious food is outstanding. You are not only nourishing bodies and minds but their spirits as well. When I was working in Baltimore schools, I knew how many students looked forward to their school breakfasts, lunches, and snacks, and for many of them those meals would be the only reliable, healthy foods they would get for the day. I know this may be the case for many students across the state of Wyoming, so thank you for all that you do and your hard work in feeding these kids. I'm looking forward to traveling around the state and seeing you all in action!

*Mia Donley*

National School Lunch Program Consultant  
Wyoming Department of Education



**WYOMING**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## Looking to Get Involved?

Wyoming SNA is Seeking Nominees for 2 Board Positions for 2019-2020:

**Vice President**  
**Northeast Regional Representative**

Contact Wes Clarke for more info!

[wclarke@tcsd.org](mailto:wclarke@tcsd.org)



## SNA Regional Director's Message

Dear Wyoming SNA,

As we approach the holidays and the end of the year, I want to provide you a short update on the latest activities happening at SNA.

I recently attended the SNA Board of Director's meeting and Committee Days in Alexandria, VA. Both meetings were a great success! At the board meeting, the Board of Directors approved amendments to the State Affiliation Agreements to provide some additional flexibility and clarity for state affiliates in order to remain a strong, united national association to protect school nutrition programs and support SNA members.

In other exciting news, SNA now has over 59,000 members! This is one of the highest membership numbers in over 20 years. We are so proud of all the work Wyoming SNA continues to do to promote membership in the state.

If you haven't had the opportunity, now is the perfect time to nominate a colleague for a SNA award. Nominations for the Employee, Manager and Director of the Year awards are accepted online or to Gina Blackburn by March 1, 2019. All state, regional and national winners will be recognized at the Red-Carpet Awards Ceremony at SNA's 2019 Annual National Conference in St. Louis, Missouri.

I hope you and yours have a wonderful holiday season!

Take care,

*Kaye Wetli, SNS*

SNA Northwest Regional Director  
Supervisor of Food Services  
Riverview School District - Duvall, WA



## News from the Northwest

### **Go Bananas! Go Go Bananas!**

This little number looped through my mind as I passively observed brown banana pulp dripping down our newly refurbished cafeteria wall and waited for the storm to subside. One of our students, a kiddo with severe brain damage who can be sweet, loving, timid and totally ballistic all in the same minute had literally just “gone bananas” with fruit from the share table. His banana throwing exploits lasted only a few seconds, but would take nearly an hour to clean up. This kid is the same kid who kicked me in the knee cap two weeks ago for not serving dessert at breakfast and later that day kissed the back of my hand like a chivalrous knight in shining armor to express his enthusiasm for the broccoli and cheese.

In the two and a half years since Katie and I started our work at C-V Ranch Residential Treatment Facility, we have had many things thrown in our general vicinity, of note, a cheery Halloween Scarecrow, which, incidentally, cleaned up a lot easier than the bananas. It suffices to say that neither of us knew exactly what we were signing up for when we took over the Food Service Department here. Katie was transitioning over from the Four Seasons Resort and I had just completed an internship with a world-renowned chocolatier. We came in with rose colored glasses, completely unprepared.

The population here consists of about twenty-five students, some with emotional and behavioral needs, some on the Autism Spectrum, and some that require diversified learning in academic and vocational endeavors. Many are overcoming personal obstacles associated with disabilities, trauma, neglect, and abuse and are in need of baseline Trauma Informed Care and Therapeutic Treatment. Our staff specializes in assisting students whose needs cannot be met in a traditional school setting through the creation of Individualized Education Plans that focus on Academics, Life Skills, and Vocational Skills Training in a therapeutic setting. To say the least, our students are special. On a good day, they can make your heart glow with their smiles and kind words, and on a bad day, their angry actions can tear you to into the smallest pieces.



Sometimes, it's difficult to keep up enthusiasm when a day is particularly rough. It's tempting to think "they don't appreciate it," or "they don't deserve it if they are going to act like that," or "they won't eat it anyway." None of this is true. The students we work with need our love and compassion, and every single ounce of extra effort we have to give. Those are burn out thoughts that come easily when you are swamped beneath a heavy work load, ever more demanding federal standards, and the pressure of cooking 365 days' worth of meals to please both students and staff members, with only a two-woman kitchen crew. It's easy to get run down by our work or even by our own thoughts, which is exactly why we need to remember how far we have come and how important it is to pick one another up when the going gets rough.

The other day, Katie came in wearing a purple bracelet and described some wild and convoluted notion she had just picked up about a, and I quote, "Complaint Free World." And you know what was worse??? She brought me one too. The goal is to get through the day without complaining. The purple bracelet serves as a reminder. Every time you complain, you switch the bracelet to the other hand. Supposedly, and this is true, that action of switching the bracelet from wrist time and again is more annoying than just keeping your mouth shut and focusing on the good. How can this possibly be a hard thing to do? Try it in your kitchens and then we can talk... ;) Here's the link: <https://www.willbowen.com/complaintfree/> I'm not pushing bracelets, anything will work, including the blue rubber band that holds the asparagus together. It's simple, but it's a step in the right direction.

Cooking for kids isn't for the faint of heart, in fact, it takes a special kind of heart, one that is strong and resilient and very very BIG to do this kind of job, whether for a small residential care facility like ours or for a large district serving thousands of students. The fruits of our labor grow young minds. The care that we take to build a loving, nurturing environment may be the only loving, nurturing environment some students have. Make it the best possible place to be, yes, for the kiddos, but also for you and your coworkers.

Go Bananas! Go Go Bananas, but in a good way...

Happy Holidays,

*Traci McClintic*

WYSNA Northwest Regional Representative

Food Service Director

C-V Ranch Residential Treatment Facility

Region V B.O.C.E.S.





## Northeast Narrations

In our area there doesn't seem to be much happening and I figure it is due to everyone being in a "commodity procurement coma" which happens to be beyond the well known "turkey coma". That said, I didn't have any responses of great thing going on but I know they are, we are just busy making it happen.

So one thing that mostly impacts residential treatment facilities such as the Wyoming Girls School, Yes House, Normative Services and so on.... is the liability surrounding the allergies our students and residents report. We teeter back in forth with the issue of always trying to make sure if a student reports having an allergy, we have to assume it is true until it can be proven otherwise the minute they arrive. In our situation, the state is unlikely to pay for extensive allergy testing and the parents may or may not be a source of information. Then the line between an intolerance and an allergy isn't difficult to discern but when the students have "designer allergies" such as lactose intolerance or needs a gluten-free diet combined with a true allergy such as coconut. The struggle is all about choosing your battles with residents in treatment facilities. They may not care if drinking chocolate milk or eating the cheese on pizza makes them uncomfortable and eat it anyway. But if the culinary experts having prepared substitutions for them it may not be just to cover the intolerance, but also the coconut allergy so their choice to not eat the substitution could have health threatening consequences. In a public school system I wonder where the line is drawn on this issue, in that situation, the school isn't the Legal Guardian so I assume the liability shifts. Ultimately we care about the student, always at the forefront wanting them safe and happy but learning the life lesson that if they have health issues they need to learn how to address it and care about their own health. I just wanted to share a struggle that residential facilities deal with and I feel certain the staff in a public school cafeteria setting face similar issues with a bit of a twist on the best method to address it.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays,  
*Brenda Caiola*

WYSNA Northeast Regional  
Representative  
Food Service Director  
Wyoming Girls School





## Southwest Stories

### Southwest Region supports National School Lunch Week

Sweetwater 2 celebrated National School Lunch Week by inviting parents to come in and have lunch with their children. We served 113 adults and 13 pre-kinder kiddos. The event was a huge success. The parents loved our Mandarin Chicken Rice Bowl. Many parents were already asking for the date of our Thanksgiving meal. For both Thanksgiving and Christmas, we send home special invites to parents, encouraging someone from their family to come have lunch with their child. Last year at Thanksgiving, we served 459 adults and 46 pre-kindergartners. At Christmas, we served 316 adults and 37 pre-kindergartners. We also do a smaller event for National School Breakfast Week. The implementation for these events takes a lot of buy-in from our principals and teachers. It completely messes with the school day schedule but parents absolutely love it. We are so thankful to have such a wonderful district that supports these events.

*Linda Martin*

WYSNA Southwest Regional Representative  
Director of Nutrition Services  
Sweetwater County School District #2

## Legislative Bulletin

The buzz with currently legislation sounds promising to relieve some of the restrictions we now have however, until it is a done deal, I hate to get anyone's hopes up. Keep an eye on your email. As soon as things are final, I will make sure you get the memo. For now, I can say that we will have a delegation going to this year's Legislative Conference in DC this February. More news coming really soon. (I hope).

*Linda Martin*

WYSNA Legislative Chair  
Director of Nutrition Services  
Sweetwater County School District #2





## Southeast Scoop

As the weather gets colder and our thoughts begin to turn from work to the holidays and all the excitement that surrounds it, I find myself reminiscing of the many changes in my personal life as well as my professional life. When I started working in the school kitchen my oldest son was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and my youngest son was a kindergartener. I was only working 3 days a week 4 hours a day unless I was needed to sub in a little more. This was the perfect job for a mother, as I was able to get my boys off to school, I was home before they got home, and had the same holiday and summer schedule as well. A few years later as my boys became more independent I took on the head cook job which I enjoyed and still had a great schedule for a mother. As all things change with time my boys are adults with careers and lives of their own. I am now a grandmother (loving it), and the district's food service director.

This does seem to be the perfect job, but also not without changes. The enrollment in the district was much larger as was the lunch participation when I first started. We had no school lunch at our Wheatland high school. New schools have been built to replace old ones. The nutrition requirements were very relaxed. Most meals were made from scratch, and dessert was on the menu most every day. Don't forget you had to take everything, and there was seconds on everything even the dessert. Fresh fruit and vegetables were not everyday offerings. There were no calorie requirements, no sodium requirements, and I can't remember anything whole grain. Just the protein, vegetable, grain, fruit and milk and condiments were all you might want. Who then would have thought about school breakfast? I am sure as you read this you can see many of the changes that have occurred and maybe just maybe why they may have been needed.

We have adjusted to our ever changing world of school nutrition and individual school needs, hopefully enjoying most and growing and learning from all. I sell this job each and every time I get a new employee. We do have struggles and tribulations but do they outweigh the positives of the job? I personally don't think so. Lunch Lady, Food Dude, Meal Man, School Cafeteria Worker, whatever the title may be it should be one to be proud of. I can say for myself I am and have always been proud to be a lunch lady.

*Marie Allison*

WYSNA Southeast Regional Representative

Food Service Director

Platte County School District #1



## Southeast District Happenings

Platte #2 Guernsey had a King Arthur Flour presentation. The flour presentation was for 4th-6th grade, approximately 50 students. Over 30 of these students brought back baked goods to donate to the local food bank. Guernsey is also looking forward to their High Tunnel and all it will bring to their school.

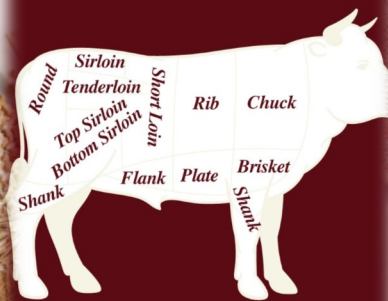
Dawndrea has gotten her level 2 certificate from SNA and is now working on the next 2 levels.

Platte #1 has been fortunate to once again receive the generous donation of beef from our local beef produces and community. Chugwater School lunch received donations of cherry tomatoes from Mr. Lay's high school class this fall. They are also doing a waste study in the lunch room. We are looking forward to seeing these results.

I have not heard much from other districts other than commodities, commodities, commodities. Our next change and challenge, Roxann I think we are up for it, as long as you have the patience. Thanks for your guidance.

*Marie Allison*

WYSNA Southeast Regional Representative  
Food Service Director  
Platte County School District #1





## Fremont 1 has Fun for Halloween

October is a busy time of year for Gannett Peak Elementary in Lander, WY.

Not only does it mark the end to the first quarter of the school year, but there's parent teacher conferences and we can't forget about HALLOWEEN!!

Our elementary staff not only feeds 300 kids a hot meal everyday, they also find time to decorate the cafeteria, make cupcakes by the thousands and hand craft 300+ lunch sacks, all after hours!

Malinda, Letti & Anneke are quite the team. Each year they bake cupcakes for the student council to sell during parent teacher conferences. The funds raised are donated to different organizations within our community. This year since Halloween fell on our early out day the principal asked if we could do sack lunches for all the students to get them out and about trick or treating earlier and of course these ladies had to go above and beyond and decorated each lunch sack! These ladies always have a bright and cheery and inviting cafeteria!!

*Denise Kinney*

WYSNA Vice President

Food Service Director

Fremont County School District #1





## Giving Tuesday at Laramie 1

For the third year in a row, to celebrate Giving Tuesday, the staff at LCSD1 Nutrition Services filled Friday Food Bags. An astounding 936 bags for the Friday Food Bag Foundation were packed with care. The Friday Food Bag Foundation works with educators and social workers from both LCSD #1 and LCSD #2 to deliver around 800 bags of nutritious, non-perishable food each Friday while school is in session to children who otherwise might not eat well, or at all, during the weekends. It is truly amazing to watch the partnership between our staff who work with these students every day and community members who saw a need in our town to provide students with meals on the weekends. Our staff members have such big hearts and we all just want to feed the kids!

*Annie Weisz*

WYSNA Secretary

Friday Food Bag Foundation Board Member

Nutrition Services Assistant Administrator

Laramie County School District #1





## 2018 Conference Review

Hello WY SNA!

As it is the season of gratitude and giving, I'd like to express my sincere appreciation to be a part of this incredible association and team of the most caring people in the world.

I'd also like to share a wonderful story of giving...

One of our favorite raffles every year at conference is the 50/50 raffle. Traditionally 50% of "the pot" goes to the winner of the drawing and 50% goes to the association. Last June we, the board, elected to give 50%, \$229 to students in need and out of several entries Sublette Co. was chosen, the remaining \$229 was won by Angela Erramouspe from Sweetwater County School District #1 .... In the spirit of giving Angela elected to "pay it forward" and donated her winnings to children in need at her district. Thank you, Angela, for making such a big impact on the students of your community!

Last June's conference was one for the books!

- 》 We had 149 attendees, which is almost 75% of our state's membership! Out of those 28 were first timers!
- 》 Our new venue, The Ramkota of Casper, warmly welcomed us with cozy rooms, good food, wonderful class space and fabulous customer service!
- 》 Josh Blue, world renowned comedian, entertained us at our first ever night show. I know I heard some good belly laughs that night!
- 》 The vendors showed us many great new things and helped us make a positive impact on the Casper community by donating their leftover packaged foods to the boys and girls club!
- 》 With teachers travelling from The Institute of Child Nutrition, and all-around WY and CO, We learned so much from the wide array of classes they offered!
- 》 With two key notes by Logan Weber and Kelly Swanson I know each of us left exceptionally inspired to be the best we can be!

Last year's conference was remarkable, and I know this year's will be even more so! I cannot wait to brag to my SNA friends across the US about all the awesome things WY SNA is doing!

Can you believe the new year is right around the corner? From my family to you and yours I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a most wonderful New Year!

*Gina Blackburn*

"LunchLady Extraordinaire"

2017-2018 WY SNA President

Nutrition Services Supervisor

Laramie County School District #1



## Save the Date!

### Future Conference Dates:

#### **Wyoming SNA Annual Conference**

June 18-20, 2019

Casper, WY

#### **For more information:**

<http://wyomingsna.org/index.php?page=AnnualStateConference&sid=1506632502369>

#### **SNA Annual National Conference (ANC)**

July 14-16, 2019

St. Louis, MO

#### **School Nutrition Industry Conference**

January 13-15, 2019

Austin, TX

#### **Legislative Action Conference**

February 24-26 2019

Washington, D.C.

#### **National Leadership Conference**

May 9-11, 2019

Sarasota, FL

### Future Events:

#### **National School Breakfast Week**

March 4-8, 2019

#### **School Lunch Hero Day**

May 3, 2019

#### **National School Lunch Week**

October 14-18, 2019

#### **For more information:**

<http://schoolnutrition.org/futuremeetings/>



## 2018-2019 Board Members

<b>Name and Position</b>	<b>School District</b>
Wes Clarke President	Teton CSD #1
Gina Blackburn Past President	Laramie CSD #1
Denise Kinney President-Elect	Fremont CSD #1
Megan Scholebo-Smith Vice President	Laramie CSD #1
Shannon Thompson-Emslie Treasurer	Laramie CSD #1
Annie Weisz Secretary	Laramie CSD #1
Mike Pyska Vendor Show Chair	Natrona CSD #1
Leah Kenison Membership Chair	Sweetwater CSD #2
Linda Martin Legislative Chair & SW Regional Rep.	Sweetwater CSD #2
Brenda Caiola NE Regional Rep.	Wyoming Girls School
Traci McClintic NW Regional Rep.	Region V BOCES
Marie Allison SE Regional Rep.	Platte CSD #1



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