



Josephine Martin, Penny McConnell and Connie Mueller

SNS DPG Member Receives ADA Medallion Award

Morristown, Tennessee

Among the 2011 Medallion Award Recipients to be recognized at the annual meeting of the American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference in San Diego, California is Penny Elizabeth McConnell, MS, RD, SNS. She was nominated by the SNS DPG for her distinguished career as a leader in child nutrition at the local, state, national, and international level.

A graduate of the University of Manitoba, Canada, Ms. McConnell completed her internship in northern Virginia. She holds a Masters degree in education from Virginia Tech. Currently Ms. McConnell is serving as the Director of Food and Nutrition Services for the Fairfax County Public Schools in Springfield, Virginia. Not only is her operation involved in school feeding, she is responsible for providing meals to Day Care Centers, Meals on Wheels, Alzheimer, and Adult Congregate meal programs in the community. Her dedication to the nutritional well-being of school-age children is evidenced by her demonstrated creative and entrepreneurial qualities in leading the nation's eleventh largest school district to being named the School Nutrition Association's 2010 District of the Year and receiving the Keys to Excellence exemplary status.

For over four decades, Ms. McConnell has provided steadfast service and visionary leadership to the American Dietetic Association and its affiliates. She served a three-year term on the Commission on Dietetic Registration, including Chair, and served in the House of Delegates for two terms. Instrumental in forming the Northern Virginia district Dietetic Association, she held numerous elected offices prior to assuming various state offices including Virginia Dietetic Association President.

Unique to Ms. McConnell's professional work is her exceptional service to the profession beyond our Association, most notably her involvement in global nutrition and service on the Global Child Nutrition Foundation Board of Directors.

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She has provided constant leadership to help developing countries establish nutrition-based school feeding programs. In this capacity she chairs an international task force charged with the responsibility of developing curriculum for training community members in Benguela Province, Angola to operate school feeding programs. She has co-chaired five Global Child Nutrition Forums, three of which were international.

Ms. McConnell's has provided leadership skills and unwavering volunteer service to other groups and organizations directly focused on school nutrition programs. As a School Nutrition Association spokesperson, she has served the association and the Foundation as President, and has been involved with Public Policy and Legislation.

Among the many honors she has received is The Wiimpfheimer-Guggenheim for International Exchange in Nutrition Dietetics and Management, a competitive essay award presented by the ADA Foundation. She has received the ADA Excellence in Management Practice Award, USDA Best Practices Award, Silver Plate Food Service Operator of the Year, and Food Management Magazine for Best Concept. She has been recognized as the Virginia Distinguished Dietitian Award.

An author and speaker, Ms. McConnell has shared her knowledge and expertise of school nutrition to many professional groups. She has authored forty-seven publications and forty-one presentations to allied and professional groups, including several given internationally. She is recognized as an outstanding role model for future leaders and a tireless advocate for the profession of dietetics.