INDIANA SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 4-6, 2026

Presented by

PIAZZA SINCE 1970 PRODUCE & SPECIALTY FOODS



INDIANA SNA School Nutrition Association

GENERAL INFORMATION

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Mobile Site Sponsored by:

RAFFLE

ISNA will be hosting a raffle again this year for some great prizes! Proceeds from this year's raffle will go towards ISNA scholarships.

See Shannon Walls or a member of the industry committee for more information.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS (CEUs)

CEUs are available for attending this year's conference. ISNA will provide an online form to receive CEUs after the conference. If you have any questions, please reach out to **admin@indianasna.org**.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Indiana School Nutrition Association Members, Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to the Indiana School Nutrition Association's Annual Conference, taking place in beautiful South Bend, Indiana!

It is an honor to welcome you as we gather around this year's inspiring theme: "**Leading Together: Nourishing Communities, Empowering Futures**."

School nutrition is more than the meals we serve. Every day, we have the opportunity to contribute to the foundation of success for the futures of our students. The work ***WE Do Matters***—not only in the cafeteria, but in the classrooms and communities we serve.

Our theme reminds us that the greatest impact happens when **W**e **L**ead **T**ogether. Each of you brings unique experiences, talents, and perspectives to our profession. When we share our knowledge, support one another, and work together, we elevate school nutrition across Indiana.

This conference is an opportunity to learn, connect, and grow. I encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity—to attend educational sessions, exchange ideas with colleagues, visit our exhibitors, celebrate our accomplishments, and build relationships that will continue long after we depart South Bend.

Most importantly, I hope you leave this conference feeling ***inspired and energized***. The future of school nutrition is bright because of the dedicated professionals who show up every day with compassion, creativity, and a commitment to serving Indiana's students.

It is both a privilege and an honor to serve as your President of the Indiana School Nutrition Association. The opportunity to serve alongside so many dedicated professionals who share a passion for Indiana's students is one I do not take for granted.

Thank You for being the voice of Indiana's students.

Together, We Nourish Communities. Together, We Empower Futures. Together, We Lead.

With Appreciation,

Mary Ellen Gilliam

Mary Ellen Gilliam, MBA, SNS
2026-2027 President
Indiana School Nutrition Association
#MadeWithSchoolMeals

2026-2027
BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mary Ellen Gilliam, MBA, SNS
President



Betty Huddleston
Immediate Past President



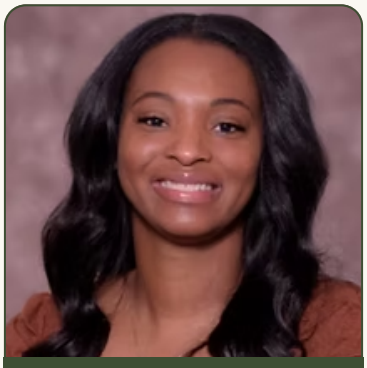
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2026-2027
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2026-2027
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2026 AWARD WINNERS



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

Courtney FitzSimons
Food Service Director
West Lafayette Community School Corporation

ASSIST. DIRECTOR/SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR

Mia Vinson
Assistant School Nutrition Director
Merrillville Community Schools





MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Jennifer Hart
Cafeteria Manager
Warsaw Community High School

OFFICE ASSISTANT OF THE YEAR

Penny Henkenius
Director's Assistant
North Adams Community Schools





SUPER STAR SERVICE AWARD

Heather Hartman
Manager
North Adams Community Schools

MEET THE KEYNOTE

JOE PETTIT



Joe Pettit is not just a speaker - he's a catalyst for transformation. With a remarkable leadership career spanning over two decades, Joe has become a distinguished figure in leadership development and emotional intelligence. He's the author of the acclaimed book, "Seeds to Success," which has touched the lives of thousands with its powerful insights.

Joe's journey to becoming a sought-after keynote speaker and the founder of New Leaf Leadership was paved with purpose. With more than 20 years of hands-on leadership experience, including over seven years as a school nutrition administrator, he understands leadership in its raw, practical form. At the helm of a team of 100, Joe crafted a leadership development program from the ground up. His innovative approach led to remarkable results, including increased revenue, reduced turnover, and the nurturing of a robust leadership pipeline.

What sets Joe apart is his commitment to real-world application over mere theory. His sessions are not passive lectures, they're dynamic and activity-based experiences that resonate with his audience. Joe's audiences walk away with tangible takeaways that can be immediately implemented in their professional and personal lives.

One testament to the power of Joe's work is a director who credited his emotional intelligence program with nearly eliminating employee referrals. Team members armed with Joe's tools effectively managed conflicts and found solutions, resulting in increased productivity and a harmonious workplace.

Joe Pettit's mission is clear: to empower leaders with the skills, knowledge, and emotional intelligence needed to thrive in today's complex world. With a track record of impacting over 10,000 leaders in the past four years, Joe is a driving force for positive change. To learn more about Joe and his work, visit him at www.joepettitinspires.com or www.newleafleadership.com.

Joe’s non-profit, New Leaf Farm, is a leadership retreat and community hub that teaches and equips people to reach their full potential in life and at work. Here leaders have the opportunity to connect with their team, learn, write, and grow. They find themselves re-energized as they experience the firsthand therapeutic benefits of gardening.

MAPS + MEETING ROOM



CONTINUE THE EVENING WITH

DENIM & BOOTS: THE AFTER PARTY

9:00 - 11:00 PM | GREAT HALL

ENTERTAINMENT NIGHT

JOIN IN THE FUN WITH A MECHANICAL BULL, LIVE DJ, LINE DANCING, YARD GAMES AND MORE!



ENTERTAINMENT NIGHT SPONSORED BY:

PIAZZA PRODUCE & SPECIALTY FOODS
SCN
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HRI
KLJC
Peterson Farms
Polar King
Rich's
Smart Mouth
Smart Systems
Super Bakery
Treetop
Vanco
Van Eerden Foodservice

2027 ISNA AWARDS

NOW TAKING NOMINATIONS!

ISNA and SNA celebrate members who work every day to ensure that well-nourished students across the country are prepared for success.

Awards are available in the following categories:

- Employee of the Year
- Manager of the Year
- Director of the Year
- Super Star Service Award
- Assistant Director/Supervisor of the Year
- Office Assistant of the Year

Nominations are due March 2027!

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE!

ISNA IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF ARKANSAS BAPTIST COLLEGE, INC.

As President of the Indiana School Nutrition Association, I am honored to select the recipient of our annual 50/50 fundraiser, the National Alumni Association of Arkansas Baptist College, Inc. **This year, I proudly honor my beloved grandmother, Bettye Joyce Brooks, a distinguished alumna of Arkansas Baptist College.** This recognition is deeply personal and celebrates her enduring legacy of faith, education, and above all, service. Arkansas Baptist College prepares individuals for a life of service grounded in academic scholarship and social responsibility. These values inspire individuals to become compassionate leaders who positively impact others. Honoring her is a tribute to the lasting impact one life can have across generations. I invite you to join me in celebrating her legacy through our annual 50/50 fundraiser. Any gift, regardless of the amount, is sincerely appreciated and will help make this tribute even more meaningful.

Mary Ellen Gilliam



WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 4

8 AM - 11:30 AM

Pre-Conference: Tour of Notre Dame Campus & Nutrition Services

Off-site: Meet in the Century Center Lobby - Upper Level

9 AM - 11:30 AM

USDA Foods: Background, Utilization & Strategy | ISNA/IDOE Certification Course

Suite 1-2

11:30 AM - 4 PM

Registration

1 PM - 2:30 PM

OPENING SESSION

Seeds to Success: How to Produce Better Results in Work & Life

Discovery Ballroom

Based on Joe's book, this opening keynote shares how one elementary school cafeteria manager made a lasting impact during a difficult season of his life. Participants will be challenged to remember their purpose, recognize their impact, and plant the seeds that can help rewrite the future for the people they serve.

Presented By: Joe Pettit

2:30 PM - 2:45 PM

Break

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM

1A: Production Record Perspectives: One Process, Many Roles, Shared Success

Suite 1-3

A production record means something different to everyone. For some managers, it's a planning guide or a to-do list for the day. For others, it's an afterthought—something to fill in once the rush is over. For directors, it's a key source of operational and financial data. For reviewers, it's documentation of compliance. Each perspective is valid—but without shared understanding, those differences can create frustration, inconsistency, and missed opportunities for improvement. This session explores how each role views and uses production records and how aligning those perspectives can transform recordkeeping from a "have-to-do" task into a system that strengthens communication, planning, and accountability. By rethinking production records as a tool we get to use, participants will see how they can support forecasting, menu accuracy, and continuous improvement. Through relatable examples and practical strategies, you'll learn how to bridge communication gaps, reduce duplication, and create production record processes that truly serve every level of your program—turning compliance into clarity, and paperwork into progress.

Presented By: Lindsey Hill & Sarah Kenworthy

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM

1B: Making Local Procurement Work

Suite 4-6

You have participated in Apple Crunch, Food Day, or Farm to Summer, now what? These initiatives are great opportunities to get your feet wet with Farm to School so let's talk about how we can take it a step further and incorporate more local food and food education. Whether it be through DOD Fresh, FFVP, or typical lunch or breakfast operations, you can get local in to your menu. With tight budgets and limited staff, see how schools across the state are prioritizing local foods in their cafeterias.

Presented By: Sophie Lindley & Becky Landes

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM

1C: The Perfect Cut

Suite 8-11

Strategies for preparing 1/2-cup fruit and vegetable portions: knife skills, employee safety, consistent pieces, and time management.

Presented By: Stephanie Tragesser & Angela Thomas

WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 4 (CONT.)

2:45 PM - 3:45 PM

1D: Where Compassion Meets Leadership

Recital Hall

Leadership is about far more than managing people—it is about serving them. Every interaction we have as leaders has the opportunity to either build trust or break it. In this engaging and interactive session, participants will discover how compassion is not a weakness but one of the strongest leadership tools we possess.

We will explore what servant leadership looks like in everyday situations. Instead of asking, "Why isn't this getting done?" compassionate leaders ask, "What can I do to help?" Instead of assuming employees are intentionally making work more difficult, they choose curiosity over judgment and seek to understand before reacting.

Together, we will discuss common workplace scenarios, including:

- *Creating a culture where employees feel safe saying, "I'm not at 100% today. I could use some help."*
- *Recognizing the difference between accountability and blame.*
- *Supporting employees who are struggling instead of writing them off.*
- *Working alongside team members to identify barriers to success.*
- *Building trust so employees are comfortable asking questions without fear of embarrassment or criticism.*

Compassionate leadership does not lower expectations—it raises them by giving people the support they need to meet those expectations. When employees know their leaders genuinely care about them, they become more engaged, more confident, and more willing to grow.

Participants will leave with practical strategies they can immediately implement to foster stronger relationships, improve team morale, increase accountability through encouragement, and create a workplace where people feel seen, valued, and empowered to succeed.

Because when compassion meets leadership, people do not just come to work—they want to be there.

Presented By: Mikki Dayhuff

3:45 PM - 4 PM

Break

4 PM - 5 PM

2A: Generational Leadership 30-45-60 The Combination to Success

Suite 1-3

Today's school nutrition workforce spans multiple generations, each bringing unique strengths, experiences, and perspectives to the table. This engaging presentation explores how professionals in their 30s, 40s, and 60s can work together to create stronger teams, improve communication, and build future leaders. Participants will discover practical strategies for bridging generational differences, leveraging individual talents, and fostering a culture of collaboration that drives operational excellence and exceptional service for students. Whether you are an emerging leader or a seasoned professional, you will leave with actionable tools to unite generations and maximize your team's success.

Presented By: Vickie Coffey, Valarie Miller & Amanda Worrick

WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 4 (CONT.)

4 PM - 5 PM

2B: Equipment Purchases

Suite 4-6

Planning to purchase equipment or complete a renovation project for your school nutrition program? This session provides an overview of the requirements for equipment approvals, including how to determine whether a purchase is allowable under program regulations and the procurement requirements that must be followed. Participants will also learn about the approval process for renovation projects and key considerations for ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements. This session will provide practical guidance to help sponsors confidently navigate equipment purchases and facility improvement projects while maintaining program compliance.

Presented By: Andrea Hollin & Wilson Turner

4 PM - 5 PM

2C: Forecasting - How it Affects Your Bottom Line

Suite 8-11

A panel of Manufacturers, Distributors, and Foodservice Directors discuss the effects of not forecasting timely or at all. What do substitutions do for your nutritional needs, and how the wrong forecast will create a ripple effect in inventory. How every short, shipped product hurts your bottom-line! Make this part of your menu planning.

Presented By: Nicole Nicoloff

4 PM - 5 PM

2D: The Participation Flywheel: How One Great Menu Item Pays for the Next

Recital Hall

Every student who chooses your line is worth real money to your program — so what happens when you treat participation like a business, not a budget line? In this session, Butch Bellah shows how school nutrition programs can build a self-funding "participation flywheel": launch one craveable menu item, capture the participation lift, and reinvest that revenue into the next improvement — from menu upgrades to higher wages that attract and keep great staff. You'll leave with a practical playbook for growing participation, funding better food and better pay without begging for budget, and keeping the wheel spinning year after year.

Presented By: Butch Bellah

5 PM

Dinner On Your Own

CONFERENCE SNACK BREAKS SPONSORED BY:

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 5

7:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Registration

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM
Breakfast & Legislative Updates
Discovery Ballroom

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM
Annual Meeting and Membership Updates
Discovery Ballroom

9:30 AM - 9:45 AM
Break

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM
3A: Productivity Powerhouse: Practical Strategies to Transform Chaos into Clarity
Suite 1-3

School nutrition leaders juggle countless responsibilities—menus, budgets, compliance, equipment, staffing, and communication. Without clear systems, even the most dedicated teams can find themselves reacting to daily chaos instead of leading with intention. This session explores practical systems and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that help bring clarity, consistency, and efficiency to daily operations. Drawing from real-world experience as former K–12 school nutrition professionals, presenters will share strategies for turning everyday tasks into organized workflows that save time, strengthen teams, and support long-term program success.

Participants will explore real examples of SOPs in action, learn how to build sustainable systems, and leave with practical tools and strategies they can implement to streamline operations and lead with confidence.

Presented By: Lindsey Hill & Audrey Banich

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM
3B: The Secret Ingredient: Soft Skills That Build Strong School Nutrition Teams
Suite 4-6

Participants will leave with a deeper understanding that while technical skills ensure meals are prepared safely and efficiently, soft skills are the "secret ingredient" that inspires teams, strengthens workplace culture, and creates a positive experience for employees, students, and the school community.

Presented By: Erin Coleman

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM
3C: Practical AI for Any Leader
Suite 8-11

*AI is everywhere - but very few practical solutions that any district size school nutrition leader can *actually* utilize and benefit from. This practical session moves beyond the buzz to real-world applications used by a fellow Indiana Food Service Director. Learn how AI can help you navigate difficult conversations, strengthen HR-related communication, and better support your frontline staff through clear, consistent messaging. Whether you're a beginner or experienced with technology, you'll leave with actionable strategies to use AI as a trusted partner in your day-to-day leadership—so you can communicate with more confidence and focus more on your team.*

Presented By: Christine Clarahan

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 5 (CONT.)

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM

3D: Generational Leadership 30-45-60 The Combination to Success

Recital Hall

Today's school nutrition workforce spans multiple generations, each bringing unique strengths, experiences, and perspectives to the table. This engaging presentation explores how professionals in their 30s, 40s, and 60s can work together to create stronger teams, improve communication, and build future leaders. Participants will discover practical strategies for bridging generational differences, leveraging individual talents, and fostering a culture of collaboration that drives operational excellence and exceptional service for students. Whether you are an emerging leader or a seasoned professional, you will leave with actionable tools to unite generations and maximize your team's success.

Presented By: Vickie Coffey, Valarie Miller & Amanda Worrick

10:45 AM - 11:00 AM

Break

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

4A: Reducing Stress While Increasing Scratch Cooking

Suite 1-3

Many school nutrition professionals want to cook more from scratch but wonder how to fit it into an already busy day. Greg Christian will demonstrate how production efficiency, thoughtful planning, and team-based workflows can reduce kitchen stress while increasing scratch cooking with fresh ingredients. Discover practical strategies that make scratch cooking both achievable and enjoyable.

Presented By: Greg Christian

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

4B: School Safety for Nutrition Workers

Suite 4-6

School nutrition workers play a vital role in maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for students and staff. This session will provide practical strategies for recognizing potential safety concerns, responding effectively to emergencies, and supporting overall school security. Topics will include situational awareness, managing challenging behaviors, effective communication during emergencies, and understanding your role in the school's safety plan. Participants will leave with actionable tools to help ensure that nutrition areas remain safe, supportive, and student-focused.

Presented By: Chad Crews

11 AM - 12 PM

Exhibit Hall - Directors Only

Exhibit Hall - Upper Level

12 PM - 2 PM

Exhibit Hall - Open to All Registrants

Exhibit Hall - Upper Level

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 5 (CONT.)

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

5A: Nobody Told Me That! The Stuff Nobody Puts in the Child Nutrition Director Handbook

Suite 1-3

Behind every successful Child Nutrition Director is a long list of things no one ever mentioned in training. Sure, we learn meal patterns, procurement, financial management, and Administrative Reviews. But no one tells you how to handle teacher entitlement, present to your Board of Education, work through facility issues, learn the ins and outs of district operations, or respond when something completely unexpected lands on your desk.

Through real stories, practical tips, and a few lessons learned the hard way, we'll talk about the side of Child Nutrition leadership that isn't found in any handbook. Whether you're brand new to the role or have years of experience, you'll leave with ideas you can use, confidence to tackle the unexpected, and maybe a reminder that we've all had those moments where we thought, "Nobody told me that!"

Presented By: Nicole Moorhead

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

5B: State Agency Panel + Q&A

Suite 4-6

State agency representatives will provide important program updates and reminders, and then open up the session for audience questions.

Presented By: Allie Caito-Sipe, Melissa Corum, Tina Herzog, Sharon Pattee & Jonathan Wineinger

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

5C: Progress Over Perfection: Strategies for Recognizing and Staving Off Burnout

Suite 8-11

Feeling stretched too thin? Learn how to spot the warning signs of burnout in yourself and others, uncover its root causes, and discover practical tools to restore balance, build resilience, and thrive without striving for perfection.

Presented By: Payton Edwards

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

5D: Snackable Social Media: A Practical Playbook for School Nutrition Teams

Recital Hall

School nutrition teams have good stories happening every day. The challenge is turning those moments into social media content that feels manageable and worth the time it takes to create. Social media is also a powerful channel that school nutrition programs can use to connect with students and parents, educate their communities, and shape how school meals are understood and valued. When used well, it can help increase participation rates and create advocates for your program both in the lunchroom and beyond. In this hands-on session, attendees will learn a practical framework for creating stronger, more "snackable" social media content that connects with their audiences. Participants will walk through what makes a post work and build a simple, repeatable content plan using four flexible pillars: people, product, process, and passion. Designed specifically for school nutrition professionals, this session focuses on confidence, creativity, and immediate application. Attendees will leave with a clear approach and practical tools they can use right away.

Presented By: Valerie Morrow

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 5 (CONT.)

3:15 PM - 3:30 PM
Break

3:30 PM - 4:15 PM
Zumba - Ditch the Workout & Join the Party!
Suite 16

Ditch the workout and join the party! Dance along to Latin & World rhythms by mixing low-intensity and high-intensity moves for an interval-style, calorie-burning dance fitness party. This class is designed to bring people together to sweat it on, leaving you feeling energized and pumped.

Presented By: Christine Stinson

5 PM - 6 PM
Prized Partners Reception
PRESENTING, DIAMOND, & PLATINUM PARTNERS, AND FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS ONLY
Great Hall

6 PM - 6:30 PM
President's Reception - Open to All
Great Hall

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
President's Dinner
Presented by Piazza:
Denim & Boots
Discovery Ballroom

Until 11 PM
Denim & Boots:
The After Party
Great Hall



YOU'RE INVITED TO THE
2026 ISNA
PRESIDENT'S DINNER
DENIM & BOOTS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2026
6 - 8:30 PM | DISCOVERY BALLROOM

CONTINUE THE EVENING WITH
DENIM & BOOTS: THE AFTER PARTY
9:00 - 11:00 PM | GREAT HALL

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 6

7:30 AM - 9 AM
Registration

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM
Breakfast & Committee Meetup
Discovery Ballroom

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM
6A: Microlearning: Training That Sticks. How 15 Minutes Can Turn Training Into Action
Suite 1-3

Why does the same procedure look different in every kitchen? This session explores how 15 minutes of the same focused team training in all kitchens can get everyone on the same page. Participants will learn when microlearning is the right approach and how it can improve onboarding, retention, portion control, forecasting, food waste, quality and participation. Attendees will leave with a simple framework for creating focused lessons that standardize practices, improve performance and strengthen financial results.

Presented By: Kathleen Kane & Charles Wolford

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM
6B: Go*Get*Grants
Suite 4-6

Grant writing can be intimidating, but it doesn't have to be. At the heart of the grant writing process is a deep belief in the cause. This session isn't just about filling out forms or meeting deadlines; it's about making sure that your story is told in the most compelling way possible, that the proposal is well-written, and that the passion for the mission shines through in every section!

*Go*Get*Grants will give you the foundation to write a purposeful grant.*

Presented By: Vickie Coffey

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM
6C: From the Cafeteria to the Statehouse: Your Voice Matters
Suite 8-11

School nutrition professionals do far more than serve meals, they are trusted experts, advocates for children, and powerful voices in shaping public policy. Join us to learn how grassroots advocacy is making a difference across Indiana and how you can help advance the movement for Healthy School Meals for All Hoosiers.

This session will provide an inside look at recent legislative efforts, lessons learned from the 2026 session, and the growing coalition working to ensure every Indiana student has access to nutritious school meals. Participants will also receive a preview of ISNA's inaugural Day at the Statehouse and discover practical ways to build relationships with legislators, confidently share their stories, and advocate for policies that support students and school nutrition programs.

Whether you are new to advocacy or an expert, you'll leave inspired, informed, and ready to help shape the future of school nutrition in Indiana.

Presented By: Amanda Worrick

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 6 (CONT.)

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM

6D: Full Fat Facts: The Case for Milk Fat Flexibility in School Meals

Recital Hall

A carton of milk only nourishes a student if they drink it. Consumer research shows that whole and 2% are the milks most Indiana families buy, and now schools can offer them too. This session explains what the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act means for your meal programs and reveals the research that makes the case for milk fat flexibility. Learn why saturated fat alone is a poor measure of a food's value, what the "dairy matrix" means, and how studies in children link dairy at all fat levels with healthy weight outcomes. You'll leave with talking points for skeptics, a realistic look at the wins and challenges for your district along with a review of kid-tested breakfast and lunch recipes from the Smart Swaps collection.

Presented By: Sheri Shipp

9:30 AM - 9:45 AM

Break

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM

7A: Seven Customer Service Strategies to Take School Nutrition Teams from Good to Great

Suite 1-3

This practical breakout gives school nutrition professionals seven strategies to elevate the experience they create for students, families, coworkers, and the community. Participants will leave with clear, usable ideas for turning everyday service into a stronger reflection of their team's pride and purpose.

Presented By: Joe Pettit

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM

7B: Growing Projects That Work: Project Management on Hydroponics, STEM & Nutrition Education

Suite 4-6

Project Management That Delivers - Hear real-world strategies from Indiana Food Service Directors in this fast-paced, interactive session. Walk away with tools and inspiration to integrate hydroponics, STEM, and Special Education collaboration with confidence.

Presented By: Joshua Mahlik & Daniel Williams

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM

7C: Bad Debt

Suite 8-11

Unpaid meal debt can create financial challenges for school nutrition programs while also impacting students and families. This presentation provides an overview of bad debt, including defining bad debt vs. delinquent debt. Participants will review the requirements for developing and implementing a local meal charge policy, learn strategies to prevent lunch shaming, and explore best practices for reducing and managing unpaid meal debt. Presented by a state agency specialist, this session will offer practical guidance and resources to help school nutrition professionals maintain compliance, support students with dignity, and strengthen their meal charge procedures.

Presented By: Andrea Hollin

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 6 (CONT.)

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM

7D: Proteins: Optimizing School Menus

Recital Hall

Are you looking for innovative ways to reduce sodium and added sugars with proteins? Managing school menu budgets can be overwhelming, especially with staff labor and food-trend considerations. In this interactive session, a seasoned school meal planner, Tarrah Westercamp, will discuss the best strategies to maximize your budget, create a menu that works well with students, and meet guidelines while maintaining staff morale. The session will provide a foundational look at the importance of protein in the diet, as well as national food trends that school nutrition professionals need to stay ahead of.

Presented By: Tarrah Westercamp

10:45 AM - 11 AM

Break

11 AM - 12:30 PM

CLOSING SESSION

United: How Our Differences Give Us Power

Discovery Ballroom

This interactive closing keynote helps participants better understand their own work behaviors and the strengths of the people around them. Through practical reflection and engagement, the session builds self-awareness, communication, empathy, and stronger teamwork.

Presented By: Joe Pettit





THANK YOU PARTNERS

PRESENTING

DIAMOND

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Huhtamaki
J. M. Smucker's
Jones Dairy Farm
JTM Food Group
Kikkoman
Michael Foods, Inc.
Ocean Spray Cranverries
OMNIA Partners
PCP/Del Monte Food Service
Pilgrim's
Resource Innovations
Rizwitsch Sales
Rogers K12 Consulting
Savannah Classics
Schert Foodservice Equipment
Sun Maid
SunButter
Taylor Farms
Trident Seafoods
Trimark
Unox
Yang's 5th Taste