



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ANDERSON NAMED SILVER SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT WINNER AT NATIONAL FAME CEREMONY**

**ORLANDO, Fla.** – Jan. 23, 2017 – District Child Nutrition Director Gay Anderson, SNS, Brandon Valley 49-2, Brandon, S.D. received the Silver Spirit Award at the National Foodservice Achievement Management Excellence (FAME) award ceremony on Jan. 22, 2017. This year's ceremony was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Orlando, Fla., during the School Nutrition Association's (SNA) 2017 School Nutrition Industry Conference (SNIC).

Anderson's district covers 128 square miles in rural South Dakota with an enrollment of 3975 students. Her nutrition program is unique and has faced many challenges including limited human and capital resources. Anderson has utilized a hard work ethic, ingenuity and tenacity to make her district among the best in the Midwest.

Anderson is committed to pursuing health and wellness for the students served in her district. She launched a School Breakfast program to address daily breakfast needs of her student population. One of the challenges she faced was only 19 percent of students qualified for free or reduced priced meals. Despite this, Anderson worked with the local school board on the idea for this program. Participation rates started out very low because students had no access to the program after the bell. Anderson led an effort to pilot the Second Chance breakfast program. Students were then allowed a grab-and-go breakfast after the bell and participation soared. On the heels of this success, Anderson requested the school board to waive the student fee of \$.30 for reduced priced breakfast.

Anderson's most significant contribution to her district has been making it financially sound. She organized a first-of-its-kind buying coalition with other school districts in South Dakota. These district members were able to reduce food costs by 3 percent. She then submerged herself into learning about how to make USDA commodity offerings work in her menu planning system. She advocated for the use of Net-Off-Invoice (NOI) for commodity processing when it became available from the USDA. She met with the South Dakota Secretary of Education to educate and advocate for USDA Foods and NOI. Hers was one of 12 school districts chosen to pilot the NOI program for one year. This resulted in \$42,000 in savings as their value pass through system in the first year. The program's success led to implementation throughout the state the following year.

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The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act required increased servings of fruits and vegetables. This was a challenge for Anderson's small district as there was a lot of fresh produce waste. She worked with her foodservice staff and the teaching staff to educate students on the importance of eating fruits and vegetables. This resulted in reduced waste and increased consumption of fresh produce by the student population.

Anderson is an outstanding leader in school nutrition in the state of South Dakota. She has taken her leadership and ingenuity to the SNA as she was installed as a vice president last summer. Her goal has been to become the president of the SNA while continuing the improved school nutrition across America. This goal will become a reality in July 2018,

For 28 years the FAME Awards have been honoring school nutrition professionals who raise the industry standards by tackling challenges within their school districts and communities. This prestigious program is sponsored by Basic American Foods, Schwan's Food Service, Inc. and Tyson Foods, Inc. For more event details, visit [www.fameawards.net](http://www.fameawards.net) or [www.facebook.com/fameawards](http://www.facebook.com/fameawards).

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