

# Affiliate Spotlight

## FNCE® Joint Affiliate Reception



### How did the idea come together to host a joint event during FNCE®?

The idea to host a joint affiliate reception at FNCE® 2014 in Atlanta came about at the 2014 Affiliate President-Elect training in Chicago. The Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas and Kansas affiliates were all seated at the same table. During a break the then Presidents-Elect started making connections through the people and places they knew. It started to make sense that the affiliates work together. Oklahoma had always hosted a member reception at FNCE®, and the other states liked the idea. The joint reception worked very well in 2014, so the leaders decided to continue it again at FNCE® 2015.

### How far in advance of FNCE® was decision made?

For the joint reception at FNCE® 2014, the decision was made in March of 2014 at the Affiliate President-Elect training. For FNCE® 2015, the decision was made at FNCE® 2014. Everyone had a good time catching up with old friends and networking with new friends at FNCE® 2014, so the 2014 President-Elects

made connections and began brainstorming ideas of how to make it better at FNCE® 2015. It was at the 2015 Affiliate President-Elect training that plans were finalized for FNCE® 2015.

**How did the affiliates handle the planning – how was it decided who would manage responsibilities?**

For FNCE® 2014, OkAND took the lead in planning. It was a joint effort between all affiliates, but OkAND was responsible for the paperwork. Each affiliate contributed funds (either from the organization itself or donations they were able to solicit). Funds were then paid to OkAND, and OkAND paid the final bill at the hotel. In 2015, Missouri took care of the paperwork and communicated with the hotel/catering. Affiliates sent their monetary contributions to OkAND, and OkAND paid the final bill. OkAND was also responsible for handling the sponsorship from the Midwest Dairy Council.

**What activities did the event include?**

For FNCE® 2014, the event was primarily focused on networking. There was not a speaker or specific content. OkAND invited current and past members and their family/friends and welcomed anyone with a connection to Oklahoma that wanted to stop in and enjoy time with old or new friends. Members always look forward to seeing people that have moved away.

**Was there a sponsor for the event?**

For FNCE® 2014, Thrive Frozen Nutrition, Inc. sponsored a portion of the reception. The company asked that their name be mentioned and that information be provided about them at the reception. Some affiliates received sponsorship from other resources: a doctor at a facility in Arkansas contributed funds to the Arkansas affiliate to help them cover their portion of the reception cost; and OkAND received funds from Oklahoma State University and the University of Central Oklahoma to help cover its contribution to the reception. In 2015, the Midwest Dairy Council sponsored a large part of the reception. In exchange, they requested that informational table tents be set out at the reception, and they asked that attendees take selfies while toasting with a glass of milk and then post it to social media in celebration of National Dairy Council's 100 years. The Midwest Dairy representative responsible for the sponsorship is a member of the Arkansas affiliate.

**Was a registered fee charged for attendees?**

None of the affiliates charged a registration fee for anyone to attend the reception.

**How were expenses shared between all 4 affiliates?**

For FNCE® 2014, each affiliate contributed money toward the reception based on the budget they had available. The same process was followed for FNCE® 2015, and each affiliate contributed between \$200 and \$500.

**What feedback have you heard from attendees?**

For FNCE® 2014, feedback from attendees was very positive, and many wanted another joint reception at FNCE® 2015. A Midwest Dairy Council representative attended the FNCE® 2014 reception as a member of the Arkansas affiliate, and she was already interested in being a sponsor for a joint reception at FNCE® 2015. We received wonderful feedback again in 2015 and had a great turnout of more than 100 people. At the last minute, we decided to have a raffle for the chance to win a Nashville goodie bag, which included a cookbook, dish towel, guitar shaped spoons, bag, and spices. Raffle tickets were sold for \$1 each. Attendees really liked this addition to the reception, and we raised more than \$100. The funds were donated to ANDPAC.

**How did hosting a joint event bring value? Bring challenges?**

The value of a joint event is in the networking. Not only were old friendships strengthened, but new friendships were made. Hosting a joint event also made it possible to afford a reception at the headquarters hotel. Because we are all smaller affiliates with limited budgets, the planning for a joint reception is more doable. Members really appreciate the event.

**Are there plans to host another joint FNCE® event?**

With the positive experience and feedback from both FNCE® 2014 and 2015, the groups are already discussing plans to partner with each other and host a joint reception at FNCE® 2016.

For additional information, please contact Oklahoma's Executive Director, [Heather Engelman, MS, RD, LD](#).