

CSREES



Jeanne Priester
National Program Leader, Home Economics and Nutrition

Home: Arlington, VA **Inducted:** 2005

Major 4-H Efforts: Alabama extension state specialist in the early 1960's. Lead a federal pilot project to reach young homemakers in low-income rural areas in five pilot counties that became the EFNEP program in 1964. Hired as federal National Program Leader whose duties included EFNEP replication nationwide. Involved with the creation of the 1972 Mulligan Stew 4-H nutrition TV series and design team member for Team Nutrition in 1995.

Significant Honors: The annual Priester Health Conference and Priester health award remain ongoing tributes to her and her work. Jeanne is a 53-year member of AAFCS, and received their DSA Award in 1993.

In the early 1960's, Jeanne was an Alabama extension specialist at Auburn Univ. She was selected to lead a federal pilot project in Alabama designed to reach young homemakers in low-income rural areas in five pilot counties. This was the birth of EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program) in 1964. Priester was hired as a federal extension National Program Leader. One of her duties was to help states to replicate the EFNEP model. EFNEP reached 380,000 4-H and community youth in 2003. Jeanne was involved with the creation of the 1972 Mulligan Stew 4-H nutrition TV series funded by EFNEP that reached millions of youth.

Priester helped design Team Nutrition with USDA Food and Nutrition Service in 1995 to support child nutrition through nutrition education for children and caregivers and community support for healthy eating and physical activity. As liaison to Extension Homemakers, she was an advocate of partnerships between Homemakers and 4-H. She also served on the Journal of Extension board. The annual Priester Health Conference and Priester Health award remain ongoing tributes to her and her work. Jeanne is a 53-year member of AAFCS and received the DSA Award in 1993. She lives in the DC area and is an active volunteer at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Newseum, Library of Congress, Reagan Washington National Airport, and in her church.



Jeanne Priester speaks at the 35th anniversary of EFNEP in Washington DC, 2004



Jeanne with other early Alabama EFNEP founders.



Leah Cox Ritchie

Deputy Administrator for 4-H Youth Development Education, USDA

Home: Okemos, MI **Inducted:** 2005

Major 4-H Efforts & Honors:

Leah Cox Ritchie has served 4-H as a county 4-H youth agent, state 4-H program leader, and as deputy administrator for 4-H Youth Development Education at USDA from 1989-1992. She has served on a number of national boards and executive committees. Her contributions to the youth and human development fields have been honored with the USDA Administrator's Award of Excellence, the Who's Who in American Education Award, selection as a National Kellogg Fellow, the National 4-H Distinguished Service Award, the USDA Superior Service Awards and 2002 Michigan 4-H Centennial Alumni Emerald Clover Society, among many others.

Leah Cox Ritchie was a Michigan 4-H member who served 4-H at many levels. Her career includes serving as a county 4-H youth agent in Tennessee and Florida and Michigan state 4-H program leader. She became deputy administrator for 4-H Youth Development Education at the United States Department of Agriculture in 1989. During her tenure, she presided over the first national 4-H strategic planning conference that involved youth, volunteers and 4-H professionals from across the country. She returned to Michigan State in 1992 to assume the position of assistant vice provost and associate director of Extension.

Before retiring from Michigan State University Extension as associate director emeritus for Children, Youth and Family Programs, she led the merger of family and consumer sciences and 4-H youth development to ensure that MSU Extension was meeting the needs of communities across the lifecycle.

"4-H taught me to think in new ways and to see beyond the present to future possibilities."