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### **Dr. Jennifer Wilkins Receives 2023 SNEB Helen Denning Ullrich Award**

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (August 30, 2023) The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) honored Jennifer L. Wilkins, PhD, RDN with the Helen Denning Ullrich Award for Lifetime Excellence in Nutrition Education. In acknowledgment of Wilkins' accomplishments in teaching, advocacy and curriculum development within the field of nutrition, she received this award at the 2023 SNEB Annual Conference during the awards session on July 22, 2023, in Washington, D.C.

Established to honor Helen Denning Ullrich, this award recognizes a SNEB member for outstanding achievement in nutrition education. Helen was one of a group of pioneering leaders dedicated to making sound nutrition education a tool for effective change. She was the first Editor of the *Journal of Nutrition Education*.

“Throughout her 35-year career Dr. Jennifer Wilkins has applied to her work the breadth of considerations now familiar to practitioners from the socio-ecological model and policy, systems and environmental (PSE) approaches to health,” SNEB member Isobel Contento, PhD, said. “Dr. Wilkins is known for her work on farm to school, local and seasonal foods program development. She has been a strong advocate for these initiatives, recognizing the impact that they can have on improving the public health, community vitality and food system sustainability.”

Dr. Wilkins' career path began as a clinical dietitian at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, WA. After receiving her PhD at Washington State University in Nutrition and Consumer Economics, she began her academic career at Cornell University in the Division of Nutritional Sciences as a Senior Extension Associate and Senior Lecturer. Her extension program development focused on the implications of local and community-based food systems for consumer food choice, public health and sustainability. She developed the first and only regional food guide in the United States. The original 1995 Northeast Regional Food Guide was revised in 2014 as MyPlate Northeast to better reflect the federal food guide. In 2014 Dr. Wilkins left Cornell to become the first Daina E. Falk Professor of Practice in the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies at Syracuse University where she taught several courses, including Nutrition Education, Community Nutrition, Participatory Program Planning, Food Policy, and the Theory and Practice of Locavorism.

SNEB member Joanne Burke, PhD, RD, LD, shared, “[Wilkins’] vision, scholarship and dedication have impacted her colleagues, friends and students, as well as national policies and practices. She has been authentically engaged in, and profoundly contributed to, the nutrition profession for over 40 years via Extension, University work, community engagement and the countless students she has mentored that are now in the field.”

Wilkins' record of service to SNEB is substantial. She has held several leadership roles since joining the organization in 1981 and has made significant contributions to the association, most recently planning the 2019 Annual Conference in Orlando, FL, which included a post-conference agricultural tour of Cuba and leading the organization as president in 2020.

Contento explained, "Throughout her professional career and her decades of leadership within SNEB, her work has aligned with and supported the mission of the Society. She played a pivotal role in developing current mission vision and values."

During her award acceptance, Wilkins expressed how the 2023 SNEB International Conference theme *Empowering Food Citizens* resonated with her.

"I am so honored to be standing here to accept this award and to join past recipients who I have long admired and respected," Wilkins said during her acceptance remarks. In reference to the 2023 SNEB Annual Conference theme, she reflected, "I've written on what it means to be a food citizen and have suggested that food nutrition educators are particularly well-suited to help move people from being mere consumers of food to actually being fully participating food citizens, engaged in both improving their health and transforming the food system."

Wilkins currently serves as Professor of Practice Emerita and Affiliated Faculty with the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies with Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics at Syracuse University and holds a Courtesy Professor of Practice position in the Division of Nutritional Sciences at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY.

#### ABOUT THE SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION AND BEHAVIOR

The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) represents the unique professional interests of nutrition educators worldwide. The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior advances food and nutrition education research, practice, and policy that promote equity and support public and planetary health and has a vision of people worldwide empowered by food and nutrition education to change behavior, food systems, and policy.