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High School Clubs Combine As

Future Homemakers of America

"Towards New Horizons" is the motto of this newly organized program, says Barbara Bates

MOTHERS no longer will need to coax "Susie" to help with the cooking and general routine of housework. Future home economists in the United States can now obtain additional practical application of homemaking while in high school. The key letters to explain the change are FHA.

FHA, Future Homemakers of America, is a national organization composed of pupils studying home economics in junior and senior high schools of the United States. Any girl thus enrolled has the opportunity to become a member although affiliation with the national organization is in many states optional.

FHA was founded in 1945 as a result of a study of local home economics clubs conducted by the American Home Economics Association. They concluded that high school clubs could be strengthened by uniting efforts of all isolated home economics club members toward the improvement of home and family life. Invitations to attend a national meeting to consider the development of this type of an organization were sent by the AHEA to all states. Home economics education workers from 29 states accepted this invitation. They met in Chicago in March, 1944, and initiated plans for developing the organization. On the basis of the recommendations of this group tentative plans for a national high school home economics organization were developed.

Sponsoring the reorganization of FHA were the American Home Economics Association and the Home Economics Service in the U. S. Office of Education. Cooperating and supporting them were the National Education Association through the department of home economics and the American Vocational Association through its home economics section.

High school home economics teachers usually act as advisors for the clubs. They believe that through FHA the young home economist learns more by taking a more responsible part in the application of what she is learning in class. The club offers social opportunities in working with a group and meeting people that cannot be developed in the classrooms. Because in the classrooms the teacher takes the responsibility for projects, the students therefore tend to feel responsible to her. It is in the clubs that the members can be responsible to their fellow associates and the teacher is an advisor only.

The role of the advisor is "to teach club members *how* to make decisions, not *what* they should be. Every member is encouraged to help formulate policies. Time is taken to consider the ideas of each member before decisions are made," stated Edna Mundt, who is a former FHA club advisor, now Home Economics Education staff member at Iowa State College.

As an integral part of the curriculum of home economics in the schools of America, FHA offers opportunity for the further development of pupil initiative in planning and carrying out activities related to homemaking and the purpose of the club.

Projects of local, national and international scope are undertaken by the clubs. Contributions to the World Christmas Festival, assuming full responsibility in the community for collecting and packing the clothing for overseas clothing drives and making articles for the Red Cross head the list of "international activities." National projects included the assembling of Christmas boxes for state hospitals and orphanages, preparing place cards for special holidays for various army and navy hospitals. Activities around the immediate community embodied such things as making the school yard attractive, encouraging worthwhile recreation by sponsoring an all-school party, hemming towels for the school lunch room, preparing attractive Christmas decorations and other home decoration ideas for community groups, sponsoring nutrition weeks, giving demonstrations, etc.



Myrtle Hilton, president of FHA at Tiptonville, Tenn., and representing the Southern sub-region, presents this viewpoint on the influence these clubs will have on girls majoring in home economics in college. "We believe that we are influencing girls to major in home economics and to become professional home economists and members in the American Home Economics Association."

FHA is giving students a preview of vocations in home economics and a better background on which to base their decisions as to the vocational field they wish to follow. For the average girl the question of deciding on a particular vocation is a hard one. In the field of home economics are innumerable opportunities for obtaining good employment. Actual experience in the specific vocation or vocations one is interested in, naturally, will help to make a more satisfactory decision. On graduating from high school the student can approach college or the working world with more confidence toward what she wants to follow and as to her capabilities in that field.