



Muriel S. Brink

April 28, 1940 – October 9, 2016

Muriel S. Brink, Professor Emerita in the Division of Nutritional Sciences, passed away peacefully at her home in Eagan, Minnesota on October 9, 2016. She was born on April 28, 1940 in Moose Lake Township, Minnesota. She attended local schools and graduated as valedictorian of her high school class in 1958. Muriel attended the University of Minnesota, Duluth graduating *cum laude* in 1962 with a Bachelor of Science degree majoring in home economics education and minoring in chemistry. She continued her education at Michigan State University where she received a Master of Science degree in 1964 with a joint major in food and nutrition and extension personnel development. Upon graduation, Professor Brink then joined the faculty at Michigan State University where she was an Extension Specialist in Food and Nutrition from 1964 to 1969 and was responsible for 4-H food and nutrition program materials and training. Professor Brink also participated in the initial implementation of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Michigan, the beginning of a career-long engagement with this program that uses a paraprofessional model to provide nutrition education to low-income Americans. In 1969, she moved to the University of Illinois where she served as an Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist responsible for the EFNEP and in 1971, Professor Brink moved to the University of Minnesota in St. Paul where she was Associate Professor and Extension Nutritionist with broad responsibilities including EFNEP.

Professor Brink joined the faculty of the Division of Nutritional Sciences at Cornell University in 1979 as Associate Professor and Leader of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). She was appointed Professor in 1984. She served as Division Extension Leader from January 1981 to August 1984 and then again from 1989 to 1997. She led several award-winning EFNEP nutrition education projects including “Building Blocks for Toddlers” (Community and Rural Development Institute Innovator Award) and “Healthy Families” (Epsilon Sigma Phi

Team Award). In addition, she is the author of numerous extension nutrition education materials about serving size, fruits and vegetables, and food preparation and safety. Beginning in 1989, she was a member of the Low Literacy Project Work Group of the National Cancer Institute. She wrote several articles about EFNEP that appeared in the *Journal of Nutrition Education* and the *Encyclopedia of Human Ecology*. In addition to her work in extension, Professor Brink was involved in several research projects including the “Tri-State Appalachia Leadership Initiative on Cancer” and “Medicaid Participants’ Knowledge about Managed Care.”

Professor Brink was actively involved in service to Cornell. From 1989 through 1990, she served on the Cornell University Trustees Committee on Land-Grant and Statutory Affairs and from 1988 – 1990, was a member of the Cornell University Assembly serving on the Executive Committee in 1990. Professor Brink served on numerous College of Human Ecology committees including the Cornell Migrant Program Committee, the Farmer’s Market Coupon Program Advisory Committee, and the Committee of Department Extension Leaders. In the Division of Nutritional Sciences, she served on the Nutrition Intervention and Policy Committee, the Extension Coordinating Committee, and the Appointments and Tenure Committee.

During her academic career Professor Brink was active in the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, both of which recognized her for over 50 years of service. She was also an active member of the Society for Nutrition Education where served as Chair-elect of the Food and Nutrition Extension Educators Division in 1987 and Chair in 1988. At the state level, she was president-elect, president, and past president of the New York State Home Economics Association from 1990-1993 and vice president for program from 1988-1990. Professor Brink was also a member of the New York State Nutrition Council, Epsilon Sigma Phi-Lambda Chapter, and Gamma Sigma Delta. In 1996, Professor Brink was recognized with an Outstanding Alumni Award from the College of Human Ecology at Michigan State University.

Professor Brink retired from Cornell University as Professor Emeritus in 1997. Following her retirement, she published a book focusing on the programmatic and organizational aspects of EFNEP, entitled “Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. A Precedent-Setting Program” (Easy Writer Publications, Cortland, NY, 2000). She returned to Minnesota where she resided until her death. During retirement, she traveled to many places around the world including most recently to Hawaii and Florida.

Written by Christine M. Olson, Jeffery Sobal, Jamie S. Dollahite and Christina M. Stark