

The Full Plate

The Newsletter for Pace University's
Coordinated MS in Nutrition and Dietetics Program



A Note From the Chair

Greetings Students, Alumni, Preceptors and Colleagues-

It's hard to believe another year has passed! The students and faculty have worked so hard this year and have so many accomplishments to be proud of. As always, it is bittersweet as we prepare to send our graduates out into the world. We know that they are more than ready to take this next step and can't wait to see where their paths take them. Congratulations to the Class of 2023!

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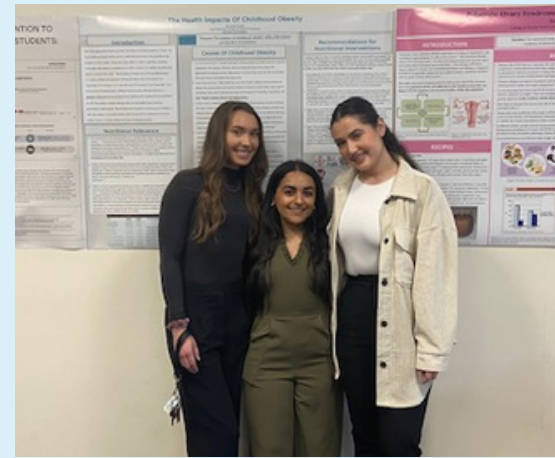
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We would like to give a special shout out to our CHP and Department award winners – Cassandra Moseley (Outstanding Academic Achievement and Professional Potential in Nutrition & Dietetics), Sierra Winner (Outstanding Academic Achievement in Nutrition & Dietetics), Lauren Pappalardo (Outstanding Student of the Year in Nutrition & Dietetics), and Andrea Polvere (Opportunitas in Nutrition & Dietetics).



Congratulations to the students from Cohort 4 on completing their capstone projects!



Students from Cohorts 4 & 5 making pasta in the kitchen at Zwilling J.A. Henckels cooking studio.



Student Happenings

Teaching Kitchen Research Conference

By Skye Six-Osher, Cohort 4

In October 2022, I had the opportunity to travel with Professor Mary Opfer and my classmate Andrea Polvere to the Teaching Kitchen Research Conference, hosted by Harvard University, in Los Angeles, California. The purpose of the conference was to convene teaching kitchen researchers, program staff, and stakeholders to review new data, techniques, and research strategies to widen the scope of effective teaching kitchen programs. The end goal is to promote scientific discovery and improve the health of individuals, families, and communities of all demographics. At the conference, we were able to network with many different professionals including registered dietitians, doctors, chefs, architects, nutrition educators, and investors.

We applied for the conference back in May 2022 by submitting an educational recipe video where we cooked “Sweet Vinegar Aubergines” for the medical condition parosmia, which refers to a distorted sense of smell in response to Covid-19. Pace University also provided us with a grant of \$500, which allowed us to cover all travel and application costs.

Many of the seminars we attended addressed the topics of how teaching kitchens can be incorporated in our society, who should run them, and who is likely to invest in them. I learned that dietitians play a huge role in administering these teaching kitchens because they possess many of the necessary skills needed to do so, such as being able to cook and connect with people who may be food insecure. The seminars highlighted the main obstacles that typically arise with the implementation of these teaching kitchens and discussed different application methods for the future. Dr. David Eisenberg from Harvard Health said something that particularly stood out to me: “Teaching nutrition in the absence of a kitchen is like teaching a doctor how to do surgery without an operating room.”

I am grateful to have had this opportunity to network in the dietetic field while I am still in school, and attend such a prestigious event with my professor and fellow classmate!

To learn more about TKC initiatives, [click here!](#)



Student Happenings

A Taste of the Pace Mobile Market

By Christina Papadopoulos, Cohort 5

Approximately 20-50% of college students in the U.S. are impacted by food insecurity, whether they are enrolled full-time or part-time and living on or off campus (1). Many college students are not able to obtain healthy, affordable foods, likely due to increasing tuition and meal plan prices, lack of transportation or access to a kitchen, or simply not knowing how to prepare nutritious meals. Student athletes, who make up about 30% of the student body at PLV, are challenged even more by this, as their nutrient needs are higher than average,

and can face serious mental and physical dangers without proper nutrition. All of these barriers of food insecurity on college campuses may hinder students from achieving their educational and professional goals, as well as maintaining overall health and wellness.



In the fall, I had the opportunity to volunteer with my classmate Vida at the Pace Mobile Market, which is provided by Feeding Westchester. Here, we were able to put together some recipes for our fellow Pace peers in the hopes of getting them more interested in nutrition. This semester, we had the opportunity to take our mission to the next level by doing a cooking demo at the mobile market! With the help of Professor Emilio Fernández, Associate Professor of Mathematics in Dyson College and current faculty in residence, and Professor Mary Opfer, Assistant Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics in CHP, we were able to set up a table right outside Kessel MPR and cook a few small dishes for people to sample while they waited to pick up their food items from the mobile market.

As the food was being dropped off, we got our hands on some of the fresh greens, apples, ground meat, and vegetables. We prepared and cooked some fajitas and a side of greens with sauteed onions and apples as a little taste test for the food being provided at the market. In the past, a lot of students living on campus have not shown interest in the fresh produce at the market because they do not have access to their own kitchens in the dorms or they simply do not know how to cook it. As a result, the pre-packaged items are picked up very quickly, but provide the students with less nutritious content. Our goal with this cooking demo was to encourage students and all members of the community to utilize more of the fresh, whole foods being offered by showing them different recipes and cooking methods. The mobile market is full of fresh food and nutritious options, and we will continue to work together to promote nutrition education and tackle food insecurity in the Pace community!



1. Hunger on College Campuses Research | Feeding America. (n.d.). www.feedingamerica.org/research/college-hunger-research

Student Happenings

Wellness Fair Tabling

By Vida Velasco-Popov, Cohort 5

As part of the Wellness Initiative at Pace University, multiple departments, including the nutrition department, were invited to take part in tabling at Pace's first Wellness Fair to promote student health and wellness. I worked closely with two other nutrition and dietetics students from Cohorts 4 and 5 to develop engaging activities which would help raise awareness of easy day-to-day food choices for healthy eating.

We provided five different activities: a nutrition spin the wheel game, 'eat this, not that' trivia, how much sugar is in your favorite cereal or drink, an intuitive eating activity, and a cooking demo of a simple four-ingredient kale recipe, which people seemed to enjoy. We demonstrated how using very simple ingredients allows for short cooking time, as well as the incorporation of more vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants into the diet even on a busy schedule. I was surprised to see how many people commented saying how much they enjoyed our samples and requested the recipe!

Though I enjoyed helping with all the activities, I found the sugar demo especially entertaining. We set up a bowl of plain sugar and allowed participants to add multiple teaspoons of sugar for the selected items. We found nutrition facts for a variety of Starbucks drinks, breakfast cereals, and Seven-Up, and had people guess how much sugar they consume daily from their favorite beverages and cereals. This activity made a huge impression and one participant was so shocked that she vowed to never buy another Starbucks Frappuccino again!

This experience helped me learn how relating with others and adapting to one's setting can really make a difference when it comes to doing nutrition outreach work. I am so thankful to have had the opportunity to be a part of the Pace Wellness Fair and I hope it continues in the future years so that all Pace students will continue to benefit from many more campus health initiatives.



Student Happenings

WRDA Clinical Update

By Jackie Rogers, Cohort 4



The Westchester Rockland Dietetic Association (WRDA) is a professional organization made up of nutrition professionals in the Westchester/Rockland area. The organization's mission is to advocate for the dietetic profession serving the public through the promotion of optimal nutrition, health, and well-being. The WRDA hosts numerous webinars and in-person events every year, offering continuing education credits and keeping local dietitians up to date on the latest nutrition- and health-related research and practice recommendations.

I attended the most recent WRDA Clinical Update as a student volunteer, and I found the seminar to be very informative and a great networking experience. This year's Clinical Update focused on nutrition and health for women. The seminar consisted of four speakers, who presented on screening for eating disorders, the relationship between food and the body, breast health, and menopause. The presentations were enlightening and collectively highlighted the importance of health and wellness in women throughout different life stages.

The final presentation on menopause stuck out to me the most. The speaker shared her own story and her frustrations with medical professionals telling her that nothing could be done to help her symptoms. As a result, she turned her attention towards nutrition to improve her physical and mental health. Through telling her personal story, the speaker effectively captured everyone's attention and stressed the influence of proper nutrition on improving individual conditions, illnesses, or body changes.

This event taught me that RDs must always seek out new scientific research and evidence-based information in order to continue improving their skills and patient care. Additionally, networking events like this allow professionals to share experiences, research, and knowledge, bringing us together to work towards common goals. Overall, the WRDA provides a safe and encouraging space for nutrition professionals – even future RDs like myself – to flourish by ensuring we stay updated in a multitude of approaches to nutrition therapies. I am so grateful that I have been able to connect with many health professionals in the nutrition and dietetics field through this collaboration between the WRDA and Pace University!

Student Happenings

Interprofessional Lab Session with Nursing

By Alyssa Wengrofsky, Cohort 5

This semester, Cohort 5 had the opportunity to meet with some incredible members of the nursing program at CHP to learn about measuring blood pressure and blood glucose with finger sticks. At first, I was questioning why we as dietetic students would need to learn how to take these measurements, since we are not training to be nurses or physicians. However, as the lesson progressed, we learned that these skills are now included in the Registered Dietitian-Nutritionist (RDN) scope of practice and are required competencies for entry level practitioners. RDNs play a crucial role in helping patients with hypertension and diabetes. Understanding how to take these measurements and interpret the results is essential, especially in outpatient and private practice settings.

After listening to a brief presentation and watching some helpful videos, we were able to practice with each other in the simulation lab. We worked in groups to practice proper placement of the BP cuff, using the stethoscope, and checking a radial pulse. The nursing faculty observed while we practiced and offered feedback, which helped reinforce our learning and ensured our measurements were accurate. Even when we made mistakes, they were very patient and even invited our class to come back to the lab and practice during the week along with the nursing students.

Next, we were taught how to check blood glucose with a glucometer. We practiced with realistic thumb caps and fake blood that gave us real glucose readings. The nursing faculty taught us how to administer a fingerstick, use the test strips, and interpret the results. We are learning in many of our classes that we will encounter so many patients with diabetes and heart disease, so I am glad that we got some exposure to taking these vital measurements and also had some fun practicing on each other!

Learning from professional nurses and getting hands-on practice made this experience so much more valuable, compared to just watching a video or listening to a powerpoint presentation. I'm grateful to our professors who put in the time and effort to organize this collaboration with nursing in order to help enhance our clinical skills before we begin our rotations in the fall!



Notes From the Field

The Paramount - Clinical Rotation

By Gabby Hobika, Cohort 4



THE PARAMOUNT AT SOMERS REHABILITATION & NURSING CENTER

When I began this master's program in nutrition and dietetics at Pace University, I truthfully never imagined that I would find any aspect of clinical nutrition enjoyable or fulfilling. However, after completing my clinical rotation at The Paramount at Somers Rehabilitation and Nursing Center this past semester, I quickly realized that clinical nutrition is not what I thought it was. Every day, I learned something new and got to see new nutritional problems and interventions that I never considered before. During my time at The Paramount, I was able to improve my communication and assessment skills, enhance my note writing skills, and expand my nutrition intervention knowledge and develop targeted nutrition interventions, which are all key factors of being a successful dietitian.

One of my favorite parts of working at The Paramount was getting to know and learn from the staff there. They were extremely genuine, respectful, knowledgeable, and great teachers. I learned so much when I was fully immersed in the clinical world, and working with actual patients with real health problems. Each day, I had the opportunity to meet all the new residents who were admitted and would complete a nutrition assessment with them, asking all sorts of questions regarding appetite, chewing/swallowing difficulties, weight history, etc. In past classes, we had countless assignments covering these exact topics, which helped prepare us for the rotations. Being able to put this knowledge into practice in real time truly helped put all the pieces together.

Now that I have reached the end of my clinical rotation, I feel so much more confident in my abilities and really feel ready to be a RD. Through my experiences at The Paramount, I also learned that being a RD is about more than just performing assessments and seeing patients; it is also about humanity and respect. Being able to establish a rapport with the residents, provide them with foods they enjoy, and even just taking the time to sit and have a conversation to brighten their day was the most rewarding part of this experience. I am so thankful to have had the opportunity to intern at The Paramount this semester, and I'll take everything I learned with me as I move on to the next chapter in my dietetic journey!

Alumni Highlights



Shanon Whittingham
Cohort 1, Class of 2020

1. What have you been doing since you graduated?

Since graduating, I have been working as a holistic health dietitian in private practice, seeing clients one-on-one and leading group nutrition workshops. I also recently started working for a preventative, holistic healthcare organization!

2. Tell us about your current role. What does a typical day look like for you?

In my current role, a typical day includes meeting with clients for sessions, primarily virtually, creating personalized nutrition plans for clients based on their unique needs and health goals, staying up-to-date on the latest nutrition science and health trends, engaging in continuing education experiences (i.e courses, conferences, etc.) and managing my administrative tasks, such as scheduling appointments and billing clients. Every day is a bit different!

3. What are some of your favorite things about your job? What are some challenges?

Some of my favorite things about my job include helping people achieve their health goals and seeing the positive impact it has on their lives, the freedom and flexibility of running my own private practice, and the continuous learning and growth opportunities in the field of nutrition and holistic health. Some challenges of my job include balancing the demands of managing a business with seeing clients and staying up-to-date on the latest research, and dealing with clients who may not be fully committed to making necessary changes in their diet and lifestyle.

4. What advice do you have for students as they prepare for the RD exam and begin their careers, especially if they are experiencing self-doubt?

My advice for students preparing for the RD exam and beginning their careers, especially if they are experiencing self-doubt, would be to remember that it's normal to feel uncertain or overwhelmed at times, but to trust in your education and training, seek out mentors and colleagues who can provide guidance and support, stay curious and continue to learn and grow in your field, and practice self-care and prioritize your own health and well-being.

5. Where do you see yourself in five years?

In five years, I hope to continue to be involved in the nutrition and holistic health community through speaking engagements and collaborations with other health professionals. I am happy and grateful to say, I am truly in my dream career and wouldn't change a thing!

Alumni Highlights

1. Tell us about your current role since graduating. What does a typical day look like for you?

I work as an inpatient RD at WMC, primarily covering the neurology ICU, neuroscience step down units, and neurology floor/medsurg. I have been working here for about 1.5 years. Every morning, I first go through my patient list and see what patients I have due for consults, nursing triggers, length of stays and follow ups. Then, I do chart reviews on each patient I plan to see that day. At 8:30am, I attend daily morning neuro critical care rounds which are 3-4hrs typically. The team consists of Attending, NPs, Residents, RNs, pharmacist and myself. We go through each neurology/neurosurgery patient, and discuss their current issues and daily plans/interventions. I also speak with the SLP team daily on any neurology patients to get updates on their swallowing/diet consistency recommendations. If I have to see patients that are not in the ICU, I will then see them for an assessment after rounds are completed. Typically after lunch, I will spend the remainder of my day charting and writing notes on the patients I saw earlier in the day.



Samantha Herman
Cohort 2, Class of 2021

2. What are some of your favorite things about your job? What are some challenges?

I love that I am constantly moving and not sitting at a desk all day. I also love the variety of patients that I see. A large portion of my patient coverage includes nutrition support, specifically enteral feeds. I have always loved nutrition support and critical care. I have had a few patients that have been hospitalized for 2+ months; they eventually get transferred off my coverage. Hearing that they are finally stable to get discharged and/or have clinical and nutrition improvements is extremely memorable.

3. How did your experience at Pace impact your career path?

Pace truly opened up many doors for me. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to complete my clinical rotation at such an amazing hospital. Because of this opportunity, I was able to ultimately accept a job here, working with a patient population that I was extremely interested in.

4. What advice do you have for students as they prepare for the RD exam and begin their careers, especially if they are experiencing self-doubt?

Transitioning from being in school for 6 years to working 40 hours a week can be a challenge. Remembering why you are so passionate about becoming an RD will help continue to motivate you towards getting to the finish line. In terms of preparing for the RD exam, it can be exhausting. Sticking to a few study materials, and finding the study strategies that work for you is most important. Make sure you block time out to relax as well! Time for studying is more effective when you are fully engaged compared to spending all day staring at study materials non-stop.

5. Where do you see yourself in five years?

I am honestly not sure where I see myself in 5 years; possibly working at an acute rehab hospital, or maybe even in outpatient counseling. Although nutrition support is my primary interest, one thing I love about being an RD is the variety of job opportunities out there and not needing to be set on one career path.

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Health & wellness website

Official Nutrition Club of @PaceUniversity

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★ Mindful Choices 💡

★ Better Self 🙌

★ #RD2be 📄

youtu.be/cvATeZ8yuzc



Recipes



Lifespan Re...



Lifespan Lab



Nutrition Quiz



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🎬 REELS

🏷️ TAGGED

