Remembering the Past, Enjoying the Present, Planning for the Future!

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Remembering the Past, Enjoying the Present, Planning for the Future!

Judith C. Rodriguez, PhD, RD, LD/N, FADA

The Nutrition Programs here at the University of North Florida have an interesting past and exciting future. Originally the programs were housed in the Health Science Department, which eventually was renamed to the Department of Public Health. Therefore, the original degree that was granted was a Bachelor’s degree in Health Science, with a specialization in Nutrition. The curriculum was, and continues to be, a rigorous program of study. The program was approved by the accrediting body, CADE and the degree was accepted by the state’s licensing body. We also had an MSH degree. Similar to the BSH, the Master’s in Health Science had a specialization in Nutrition. At that time the accrediting body had a program whereby someone could complete the Master’s degree and a supervised practice experience to qualify to take the R.D. exam. When that option was discontinued we decided to develop and apply for an internship that was combined with the Master’s degree.

As the Department of Public Health grew, so did the nutrition programs. This provided the impetus and support to become the current Department of Nutrition and Dietetics. In addition, the degrees became a Bachelor’s degree in Science and a Master’s degree in Science, with the areas of study as Nutrition and Dietetics. We also grew in numbers of students both in the major, and in the approved General Education HUN 2201 Basic Principles of Nutrition and HUN 1001 Science of Nutrition courses.

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Who are we?

Alicia Bersey: Editor-in-chief

Tammy Baranowski: RD’s in Action and Faculty Spotlight

Devyn Chadwell: SDNA Updates

Jenna Braddock: Community Nutrition in Action

Shawna Jenkins: Research at UNF

Valerie Palamidy: Research at UNF

Michael Tan: FCAND at UNF

Ashley Trey-Roush: Hot Topic

Mare’t Upton: UNF at FNCE

Dennis Yarizadeh: Alumni Updates

Brooke Zaner: Recipe of the Month

Faculty Advisor: Dr. A. Jahan-mihan

Alicia is a senior in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics. She is founder and president of the UNF Nutrition Journal club, an organization that seeks to build student’s knowledge of approaches to research and enrich understanding of developing topics in Nutrition. She works as a laboratory technician with a biotechnology company called Next Science and gained prior foodservice experience on the patient line with Sodexo at the Mayo Clinic. For the past couple of years she has been a contributing author to the First Coast Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ newsletter and is serving as Editor-in-Chief for NutriNews.

Tammy is an alumna of University of North Florida’s Didactic Program in Dietetics and a current dietetic intern in their combined Master of Science/ Dietetic Internship Program. She is the past Vice President for UNF’s Student Nutrition Dietetic Association and has past experience as a research assistant at UNF and as a dietary technician at Mayo Clinic. Tammy is also a licensed massage therapist and enjoys learning about integrated health and wellness methods that combine eastern and western schools of thought. Upon completion of her internship in 2015, Tammy hopes to specialize in prenatal, infant, and child nutrition, as well as teach nutrition courses to incoming dietetic students.
Jenna Braddock, MSH, RDN, CSSD, LD/N is a university instructor, nutrition and media expert, nutrition counselor, food and cooking expert, and speaker. She regularly appears as a nutrition expert for both TV and print media. Jenna is currently a part-time faculty member in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at UNF where she teaches Food fundamentals Lab, Nutrition Education, and Community Nutrition courses. With a passion for the local food movement, she has been supporting local farmers personally and professionally for many years and currently serves as the official nutritionist for Black Hog Farm in Northeast Florida.

Shawna Jenkins is a post-baccalaureate senior at UNF studying Nutrition and Dietetics. She graduated from the Florida State University in 2010 with a B.S. in Biology. She is currently Dr. Alireza Jahan-mihan’s laboratory research manager and focuses on animal studies. She spends her time volunteering at Brooks Rehabilitation hospital in the neuro recovery unit, where she gives nutritional guidance to patients. If she cannot be found at UNF, she is most likely sipping on vast amounts of coffee and posting Instagram pictures of her cat, Lola.

Michael Tan graduated from the University of Florida in 2005 with a B.S. in Food Engineering. After spending over 7 years with Anheuser-Busch and Bacardi, he decided to change careers to nutrition. Currently he is a national Student Representative for the Academy and a Student Liaison for the First Coast Academy. He will soon apply to dietetic internships in February and graduate with a B.S. in Nutrition and Dietetics in May. In the future, he would love the opportunity to work in a clinical setting with patients who have kidney disease and teach nutrition to aspiring dietitians at the university level.
We were fortunate to be named one of the Flagship Programs of the University of North Florida. This distinction enabled us to get additional funds for both needs and growth. Much of the old equipment in the Food and Nutrition Lab was replaced and we also purchased some research equipment. We are now a strong department with the equivalent of nine full time faculty and an average of about 15 part time faculty.

We have over 390 undergraduate students and 30 interns plus candidates in the individualized supervised practice program (ISPP). We have an accelerated on-line master’s program and have submitted a proposal for a doctoral degree, which would be the second doctorate in clinical nutrition in the country. We have an annual study abroad program to Italy and will soon add Brazil.

Our future is bright. We hope to expand the general education offerings, provide more community based transformational learning opportunities for students and increase the study abroad offerings. We will increase the number of students in the accelerated on-line master’s degree program, increase faculty grant acquisition, faculty and student research and professional presentations and publications, and begin the doctoral degree.

If you are one of our alumni, you can be proud of your alma mater. I encourage you to support our Nutrition Foundation, which helps support many of these initiatives, including student scholarships. Come visit us. This will always be your home, and we will be happy to see you.
This past fall the FCA launched their newly designed website. Thank you to the FCA Information Systems Chair, Gina Ulery, MS, RD, LD/N for all the hard work putting the new website together! Please check it out.

New to the FCA is the “Friend of the FCA” membership category. Historically, a membership to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) was required to become a member of the FCA. However, with the new “Friend of the FCA” membership category, you no longer need to be a member of the AND. This will allow you to join the CEU events and socials at the member rate. Please see the website for details.

A few of the fall events hosted by the FCA included the kick-off social at Cantina Laredo, the Earth Fare grocery store tour, the UNF graduate student seminars, and the Pizza with a Purpose Holiday social and fundraiser. Look for more events coming this winter and spring.

The FCA has also been working diligently on creating a mentor program connecting local Registered Dietitians with our UNF nutrition students. This program will be a great opportunity for students to learn, network, and grow. At the same time it should be a rewarding experience for our Registered Dietitians as they help shape future nutrition professionals. If you are interested in becoming a mentor please reach out to me (N00127686@unf.edu) and we will compile a list of RD’s.

For this spring, the FCA is planning a CEU event which will include Medical Errors and also a Legislative update. Another spring fundraiser is also in the works. Details will be communicated as soon as they are available.

For those of you who are not currently members of the FCA please consider joining. The application fees are $20 (student), $30 (active AND member), and $100 (Friend of the FCA).

Did you know?

Modern hunter-gatherers in the Australian outback choose from about 800 varieties of plant foods. Modern Americans mainly get sustenance from three: corn, soy and wheat.

Dr. David Heber. Presentation given at UCLA entitled “Phytonutrients: Nature’s Bonus from Plant Foods”
With the trip to FNCE, various volunteer opportunities, networking activities, and fundraising efforts, the Student Nutrition and Dietetic Association has definitely made its mark on 2014's fall semester. At the beginning of the semester, SNDA introduced a mentor/mentee program for nutrition students. This program paired juniors and seniors in the nutrition program so that juniors could seek advice and support from the seniors who were in their positions just last year. There were 34 seniors and 39 juniors who signed up to be paired (some seniors received two mentees). If you are interested in signing up for the program, please contact Mike Tan at n00127686@unf.edu.

In order to raise money for SNDA students to attend FNCE (the Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo) in Atlanta, Georgia, the officers put together a raffle for a Samsung Galaxy S3 tablet. Tickets sold for $1 a ticket ($0.50 on Market Day). Congratulations to Claudia Ramos, who was announced as the winner of this raffle! SNDA also raised money for FNCE by making jewelry, keychains, bookmarks, and magnets to sell on Market Days. Altogether, SNDA raised about $500 (including donations) for the trip.

The SNDA facilitated volunteer opportunities with the American Diabetic Association, The Bridge at Northeast Florida, and Food Day at Hemming Park, so students were busy gaining volunteer experience throughout the entire semester. Many students also volunteered with FNCE this past October. In fact, UNF received the School Spirit Award for the most students in attendance at the conference. Along with the award, the UNF Nutrition and Dietetics Department will receive the full collection of recorded sessions from the conference to have available for all students and faculty. SNDA was also honored with a $500 grant awarded by the UNF Alumni Association; this grant will help to reimburse the students who attended FNCE 2014.

SNDA also announced a new project for the spring; the first official UNF SNDA Cookbook! Each nutrition student is invited to submit his or her own healthy recipe, and the final product will be available for purchase by April 2015. This cookbook will reflect the skills and personalities of UNF’s nutrition students and will also serve as a type of yearbook for the students to cherish (recipe pages with include the author’s name, year in school, and picture). More information about this project and the submission link can be found on the Blackboard site under the SNDA tab.
Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Kathryn Melko (previously Dr. Piechowski) is a professor of nutrition and dietetics at University of North Florida (UNF). She currently teaches Metabolism and Nutrition I and II in the combined Master of Science and Dietetic Internship program. Dr. Melko is also a clinical dietitian at St. Vincent’s HealthCare Southside. She is married to her husband, Dr. Joshua Melko, who is also a professor at UNF in the Chemistry Department. This is Dr. Melko’s first year as a professor at UNF.

What first got you interested in nutrition?
Well, I always enjoyed cooking and I was also really into competitive softball basically since I was old enough to hold a mitt. So, being an athlete at a young age gave me an opportunity to really see how nutrition affected my performance and that of my teammates. I would see some of them lose steam around the sixth inning or so and I learned to power through with nutritious food. After doing a senior high school project on diets, I decided to apply to Le Cordon Bleu in Minneapolis to be a chef. Cooking was really my thing. But then my mom told me about a dietitian she knew and I realized I could take my passion for food even further. Now I can incorporate my love of cooking to help others in counseling and also teaching.

Tell me a little bit about how you ended up in your current position.
Once I finished my DPD, I specifically applied to Penn State for my internship because they were the premier nutrition school and research center. I was also a big fan of Dr. Barbara Rolls and her work with The Volumetrics Diet. However, once I got into my internship, I wasn’t quite satisfied and wanted something more. Back then, dietitians couldn’t write orders and I just felt like I wasn’t making a difference. I decided I could be more effective as a researcher, so since I was already at Penn State I was able to find a clinical diabetes researcher to take me into her lab. I think basically I am where I am because I kept looking for more and kept putting myself out there. I met with a lot of advisors. I finished my internship in June and rolled right into my PhD program in August. There were also not a lot of PhD’s who had their RD credential at that time, and it was just becoming apparent that the two credentials were a desirable combination in our field.

I had done some work with Hershey in grad school and was really focused toward working in industry and doing food research at that time. After grad school I went to Nestle and worked in the hospital foods division working on tube feeds and supplements like Boost. I’m still partial to Boost after the work I did there. I also started working on their meal replacement program and helped develop products for that line for my post-doctoral experience.

Tell me about your research.
Most of my research was the work I did with Hershey in grad school. Although my advisor and I previously published a few research briefs on our work, the entire methods paper was not published until just a few weeks ago. I was working with my advisor to get all of that published while I was in New Mexico and it’s very gratifying to have it finally all out there.

What made you pursue your credential as a Certified Diabetes Educator?
When I was in New Mexico I worked at Sandia National Laboratories, which is a research lab run by the government. All the researchers there were working on government-type stuff and I was there to be a health resource for them. Very much like workplace wellness. There was a high population of diabetics there, so as I worked there it just made sense to become a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE). I worked with a team of four other dietitians and a few diabetes-focused physicians to bring a meal replacement program to the clinic.

What made you decide to move to Florida from New Mexico?
Once my husband finished his post-doc in New Mexico, he and I both agreed we wanted to work for a university that allows you to do both research and to teach, in equal proportions. A lot of big universities only allow one or the other.
My husband went grew up in Gainesville and went to University of Florida so we also knew we wanted to live in Florida. University of North Florida was just a perfect match for us both in terms of size, location, and opportunity. We were both lucky enough to get hired as professors at UNF. He teaches chemistry and physics. I also work part-time as a clinical dietitian at St. Vincent’s HealthCare Southside.

What's it like doing research with chocolate?
The chocolate project at Hershey was really cool because we could tailor it however we wanted. The program was basically a weight loss program. Hershey wanted to show you could eat chocolate every day and still lose weight. We developed a 16-week program for women that included calorie restriction with daily dark chocolate snacks. The control group had licorice as a snack. We also included nutrition education, which was really the key to the weight loss. As you can imagine, recruiting was no problem in a study based on chocolate. I also got to present my research at FNCE and received a research award for it, which was pretty cool.

What are best thing and the most frustrating thing about being a dietitian?
Dietetics like any health care profession is absolutely both rewarding and discouraging at the same time. In a helping profession, you go in and give it your all trying to make a difference and sometimes you are met with lukewarm enthusiasm. Knowing you can’t make someone change is the downside. But whether I am teaching or counseling patients, it’s the “a-ha moment” when I sit down with someone and the light bulb comes on and they are able to make a change that makes it all worthwhile for me. It can even be just as simple as explaining the concept of calories. It’s just that “a-ha moment”.

What do you think is the future of dietetics?
I’m pleased to see that the future is really getting back to old school food. Cooking real food at home in the kitchen. Also, cooking different ethnic foods is a big trend we need to start paying attention to. I really liked that we cooked a lot in my DPD. We learned so much about cultural food preparations. That really helped build my knowledge foundation and it came full circle when I was working with the Hispanic population in New Mexico. You can’t take away people’s traditional foods. You have to work with them. My biggest advice to an aspiring dietitian is to learn how to cook.

What would you say your cooking philosophy is?
It’s about experimenting with things that you like. Try it out, stir it in, if you don’t like it, it’s okay, it’s just food. Try again with something else. It’s not the end of the world if you make a bad dish. Learn to get outside of your comfort zone. Try new restaurants and then come home and try to recreate it in your own healthy way.

Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of nutrition?
As you can tell, I like to cook! It’s something my husband and I like to do together. We are creating our own little family cookbook of recipes we have modified to be healthier. I really love to modify comfort foods. I even made a cauliflower rice pudding. Outside of the kitchen, I don’t play softball anymore, but now I really am in to running. I run every day. I might do a marathon or a triathlon one day, but for right now half marathons are perfect for me.

What are your plans for the future?
My husband and I both really love Jacksonville. It’s a great climate and we love exploring new restaurants here. I hope to teach even more classes at UNF and get more involved in department activities and also maybe even develop a diabetes program in my clinical role at the hospital. I’m also thinking of trying to get some funding so we can grow our research program in the department.

If you could only eat one fruit or vegetable for a year what would it be?
I eat carrots and apples every day. I can’t pick just one. They are both so versatile. They can be soft or crunchy, and can be used in either savory or sweet dishes. I bake apples with cinnamon, I put carrots into desserts, I like them raw, whatever. But I can’t decide which my favorite is.

If you could get paid to do anything, what would it be?
I love watching The Food Network. Actually my DVR is full of Christmas cooking specials right now. I would really love to have my own cooking show on there. Cooking demonstrations are just so much fun for me.
What brought you to UNF? What made you decide to study nutrition?
I was originally studying biomedical sciences at USF with no exact idea of what I wanted to do with my life. At the time, I was living a very unhealthy lifestyle. After recognizing my unclear future and poor health, I decided that I needed to make a change. I began researching proper nutrition, and I fell in love with the subject. I transferred from USF to UNF to begin the nutrition program with a dream of becoming a registered dietitian.

What is your best/worst memory from being at UNF thus far?
The best memory I have of UNF so far is the nutrition program study abroad trip to Italy. I experienced the beautiful Tuscany and Umbria regions, the most amazing food I have ever tasted, and friendships that will last a lifetime. The worst memory I have of UNF so far is bioorganic chemistry. I learned a lot, and I survived, but it was definitely a tough semester to say the least!

What are you currently involved with at UNF?
I am currently a senior in the nutrition program and the president of the Student Nutrition and Dietetic Association (SNDA). The other officers and I put together monthly meetings to connect with the students in the program and to announce volunteer opportunities, upcoming events, and occasional guest speakers involved in the nutrition field. We also organize networking and fundraising efforts, such as our mentor/mentee program and Market Day sales.

What brought you to UNF? What made you decide to study nutrition?
I chose UNF for my undergrad because of its location and because three of my family members had already attended here. I chose nutrition because of my love for food. I had cooked for several years before starting the undergraduate nutrition program and during that time I was finishing up my AA. When it came time to choose a degree to pursue, I looked on UNF’s website and although there were some other degrees that seemed interesting, nutrition was the only one I was really excited about pursuing.

What is your best/worst memory from being at UNF thus far?
The best memory I have here was graduation. Graduating made me feel like all of my hard work had paid off, especially because I had gotten into my school of choice for internship. During graduation I was excited I had completed my Bachelors, nervous about starting the Masters program, sad the Bachelors program was over and happy for my friends that matched. That day I felt a roller coaster of emotions but above all else I was happy.

What are you currently involved with at UNF?
I like to help out when I can with various studies. I help Dr. Sealey-Potts and Dr. Ali with studies they lead. With Dr. Sealey-Potts I help with her Episcopal Children Services study, as well as with her Healthy Eating and Living Spiritually study. With Dr. Ali I mostly attend to the lab work associated with the studies he is currently conducting. Besides that, I am in the MS/DI program and scheduled to graduate December 2015.
Congratulations to all recent graduates from the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics’ graduate program! From left to right: Rachel Hochwald, Jenny Hamm, Kendall Kennedy, Christie Shubert, Katherine Wiley, Shadai Martin, Kelsey Korey, Julia McGrath, Taylor Leedy, Doreen Bevans, Mikel Bryant, Danielle Villano, and Coreen Alexander.
**Clinical Study**

The Departments of Nutrition and Dietetics and Exercise Science are currently conducting an ongoing clinical study examining the effects of exercise intensity and intake regulatory in normal weight vs. obese 19-25 year old males. Subjects will be required to attend four separate occasions to participate in a screening session and perform sedentary, moderate, and vigorous exercise sessions. After each exercise, subjects will be allowed unlimited pizza where amount eaten will be weighed and recorded. During each exercise session, blood samples will be taken at seven different time points to measure glucose and three appetite hormones: ghrelin, PYY, and insulin. A Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) questionnaire will also be asked at each time point to assess the subject’s feelings during that time. Due to specific exclusion criteria, we are in need of more obese male participants. In the near future, the department will begin recruiting females following the same criteria as the males. If you are interested in becoming involved with this clinical study, please contact Diana Maier at n086129@ospreys.unf.edu.

Valeria Palamidy

**Animal Study**

By Merriam-Webster, research can be defined as an investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws. Animals are often used as “models” in research for studying human disease. According to the Journal of Nutrition, “animal research has contributed heavily to what we know today about nutrition and metabolism”. Under the guidance of Dr. Jahanmihan, our lab’s current focus is The Role of Maternal Dietary Proteins in Development of Metabolic Syndrome in Offspring. This study will hopefully contribute to the understanding of how dietary epigenetic influences impact human health. We are looking forward to continuing our research throughout the semester.

Shawna Jenkins

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**Achievements**

- 200 Surefire Ways to Eat Well and Feel Better. (Rodriguez, J., Ed. 2014. Four Winds Press.)
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Updates  
Mike Tan

In August, the Academy launched a new web-based resource to help RD’s provide high-quality care, track outcomes, and research areas of nutrition science. The application is called ANDHII (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Health Informatics Infrastructure). ANDHII and the Nutrition Care Process will go hand-in-hand. ANDHII allows practitioners to use graphs and spreadsheets to track outcomes over time and will contribute to national research initiatives as well. Please visit the website (https://www.andhii.org/) for additional information.

This past October the annual Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo (FNCE) was held in Atlanta. UNF was well represented there as we were one of four programs to win the School Spirit Award for most attendees. We were afforded the opportunity to meet the Academy President, Sonja Connor MS, RDN, LD, at a luncheon for the winners and will also receive CDs containing all the conference’s presentations. Next year FNCE will be held in Nashville, TN in early October.

AND recently launched their new website (http://www.neweatrightpro.org/) designed specifically for nutritional professionals, while the traditional website (eatright.org) will transition to become a reliable resource for the general public. The new website includes powerful resources and tools focusing on leadership, research, practice, and advocacy among others. Please check it out!

For those who are not currently members of the AND please consider joining. Some brief highlights of membership benefits include the previously mentioned ANDHII, the Evidence Analysis Library, scholarship opportunities, career resources, practice resources, networking opportunities, and many more. Active membership is $255 (dues: $230, processing fee: $25) and student membership is $50. Please see http://www.eatright.org/membershipinfo/ for more details. Student members will benefit from the Career Starter Dues program, which is a gradual increase in membership dues over 5 years once you become an Active Member (i.e. Credentialed RDN). For more information, please email students@eatright.org or call the Academy Member Service Center at 800/877-1600, ext. 5000 (Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m. CST).

Participate in an Exercise Study and get Free Pizza

Must be a healthy adult male who is:
- 19-25 years old
- used to aerobic exercise
- any weight, but otherwise healthy
- without known cardiovascular, pulmonary, or metabolic disease (like diabetes), or musculoskeletal problems that limit your ability to exercise

The study will be conducted in the Exercise Physiology Lab in the Brooks College of Health (Bldg 39, room 4062). Participants will...
- have their maximal exercise capacity, body composition, fasting plasma glucose, and total cholesterol tested
- undergo 3 exercise sessions (on a stationary bike) lasting ~30 minutes
- Provide a few drops of blood via “finger prick”
- Total time for each session will be 4.5 hours/session (total: 13.5 hours)
- There will be no monetary compensation but each participant will be provided all the pizza they want to eat after each exercise session

Call or email Dr. Jahan-mihan at: (904) 620-5359: alireza.jahan-mihan@unf.edu if you are interested.
Erika is the Clinical Nutrition Manager at St. Vincent’s HealthCare Southside. She manages a team of three staff dietitians and is currently a clinical preceptor for dietetic interns in Jacksonville. She and her husband have a fifteen year old daughter, a set of twin seven year olds (boy and girl), and a new baby girl on the way. Erika is a wonderful asset to her hospital, the Jacksonville dietetic community, and especially to our Department of Nutrition and Dietetics as an alumnus and as a preceptor.

Erika, what first got you interested in nutrition?

Well, I always wanted to be in the medical field, whether it be med school, nursing school, or nurse practitioner school. I just didn’t realize nutrition was a career option until I took my first undergraduate nutrition class. I was hooked. That class, combined with the fact that I just had my first baby, made me want to head in the direction of dietetics. It was my goal that me and my daughter not be in school at the same time and the nutrition program could help me achieve that. I succeeded, but it was close!

What was your education path like?

I started college the summer after high school graduation. I went to Florida State College at Jacksonville (then Florida Community College at Jacksonville) and obtained an associate’s degree, then once I decided to major in nutrition and dietetics, I switched over to University of North Florida’s (UNF’s) didactic program in dietetics (DPD). I didn’t originally plan on going to grad school because I had not had a break since high school. I wanted to be done! I really decided last minute to apply to the combined program because I knew UNF would be the best and I had already built all the relationships with the people at the school. It was the only internship program I applied to. So I’m so glad I got in!

Tell me a little bit about how you ended up in your current position.

When I first finished school and became a dietitian, I was really into community dietetics. My first job was for the department of health. I graduated in December and worked there the following February through September. I left there to take a job in South Florida as both a Food Service Director and Clinical Dietitian. I was both employee and my own director. It was a really small hospital with only twenty-seven beds in a really isolated area near Lake Okeechobee. The closest real town was an hour and fifteen minutes away. I was one of only two dietitians in the entire county. At first it was me and my husband and daughter, but then I had the twins. After seven challenging months of a long commute and nursing twins, we decided to come home to Jacksonville. I really hated leaving that job because I loved it there. I had just got the staff and facility just how I wanted it. I mean, they even passed the Joint Commission re-accreditation while I was on maternity leave, without my supervision. I was so proud of them for that. I reported to the hospital CEO and built close working relationships directly with the surgeons and anesthesiologists, so those were the people who shaped my first professional opinions on medical nutrition.

When I first came back to Jacksonville, I began working for Memorial Hospital as a Clinical Dietitian, which I was hesitant to do at first because community and food service were always my favorite. Memorial is such a larger hospital where I came from and it also had a team of seven dietitians to collaborate with there. So it was a wonderful opportunity because I had so much to learn. I consider myself a life-long learner and always am looking for new things to learn, whether their usefulness is immediately apparent or not. The best thing about being in a facility with a group of dietitians is that you can always keep up on the newest research. At the small hospital, I had to keep up with information on my own, but at the bigger hospital, the food service company (Morrison’s) really kept the information coming down the pipeline for us. I left Memorial to take the current position I am in now at St. Vincent’s HealthCare Southside as Clinical Nutrition Manager. TouchPoint, a food service contract company, is technically my employer. Even as a manager, TouchPoint keeps me really informed. I only have to apply the new information to the logistics of my specific hospital, which is really nice.

What are some things you like to do around Jacksonville on your day off?

Well, being a dietitian, you know I love to go to the farmers’ markets. My family and I might hit up the Beaches Green Market at Jarboe Park, the market at Beaver Street, and the Riverside Arts Market all on one Saturday. I love getting fresh, local stuff. Then we’ll pick a new recipe and start cooking together. I forgot to add that I love, love to try new restaurants with my husband or friends whenever I get the chance.
What career advice would you offer to aspiring dietitians?

I really think dietetic interns should get as much non-conventional experience as possible. For example, in my final rotation of my MS/DI, I went to Nemour’s and did program and community work rather than a lot of clinical. They were just developing their program CHOMP and I did some website development with little quizzes and puzzles for kids to learn about nutrition. I was also one of the first interns to go to Volunteers in Medicine, which is the free clinic here in Jacksonville for uninsured working adults and their families. I approached them and asked them to take me as an intern. Doing something no one had really done before was really fun for me. I recommend that to interns because it makes you think outside of the box in terms of job opportunities.

What has being a preceptor been like for you?

I started being a preceptor right away after school when I was working at the Department of Health. Then of course I was so isolated in south Florida, I really didn’t start taking interns again until I came back to Memorial. We always had interns at Memorial and it was there that I really got used to it and realizing how important it is to be a preceptor. I’ve been a preceptor for UNF of course, but also for some distance internships and other universities such as Florida State University and Bowling Green University. In addition to interns, I have always mentored my employees, whether it was to help them become a CDM, or to encourage them to follow their dreams of traveling. It’s just always so good to see people grow.

What advice would you offer to other preceptors?

Sometimes the student doesn’t want to grow like you want them to grow. It’s like being a parent. You can’t want this for them more than they want it themselves. They have to want to succeed. They have to find the solutions for themselves, not just be handed the answers. That’s just setting the intern up for failure down the road. I also think it’s important for the entire dietary staff, especially the dietitians, to understand the importance of taking on interns. It makes us all grow as professionals.

What are your hopes and plans for the next five years both career and non-career related?

Well I did teach for one semester at UNF when I first moved back to Jacksonville. I really loved teaching college students and being able to share my real life professional experiences. I would really like to go back into teaching one day, but since I now have a new little one on the way, I think it might have to wait a while. For the time being, I am really happy and comfortable here. I would just like to grow professionally as a Clinical Nutrition Manager as my hospital grows. I also look forward to having more employees to mentor in the future. I’m in a really great place.

Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of nutrition?

Zumba is one of my favorite things ever. I also really love to plan parties. I’m such a foodie and I like to throw at least one big party every quarter. It’s usually a girls’ night in. You know, like Martinis & Manis or if it’s someone’s anniversary. That’s just so fun to me, cooking food from scratch, decorating, dancing, and being with the girls. Girl time is very important.

Who cooks the food at home?

I really think cooking at home is a lost art. I like to try two new things every week. I also let my kids get involved. My fifteen year old makes at least one meal a week by herself and my seven year old twins often help me make things together as a team.

If you could get paid to do anything, what would it be?

I would just love to paint. Walls, furniture, I love it all! I’ve also seriously considered party planning, but not weddings. I just wanna have fun with it. Weddings are too serious.

What is one fun fact people don’t know about you?

I eloped with my husband just a month before undergraduate graduation. He was a professional marathoner and we quietly eloped a few days before the Gate River Run. Everyone started calling us the River Run Couple.

Tammy Baranowski

Contact us!

Alicia Bersey – Editor in Chief
Dr. Alireza Jahan-mihan – Faculty Advisor
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Tamara Melton is a UNF alumnus, receiving her bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics in 2005. Today, Tamara is the program director for Health Informatics and Georgia State University, a national spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and a mother of two.

**How did UNF change your life?**

“I transferred to UNF from Florida State College of Jacksonville in 2003. I received by bachelor’s in 2005. The courses at UNF were much harder than the classes at FSCJ. I was academically challenged on many levels. I had to learn how to balance work and school, which was difficult. I was working 32 hours a week as a front desk agent at the Hilton Garden off JTB and Belfort.”

**What were the most valuable lessons you learned from UNF’s DND program?**

“Perseverance, to start. Learning how to ask for help is another. I remember Dr. Rodriguez and Dr. Christie being two of the most helpful individuals. Being flexible when working with different types of people such as my classmates, and also being opened minded. You don’t really know what area of nutrition you want to study, but you get a greater insight when you take classes such as MNT”

**What was your best memory from UNF?**

“I was the president of the Student Nutrition Club. I got to pull together a group of about 10 students to travel to FNCE in California. We did a lot of fund raisers, car washes, and I spent many hours petitioning student government for funds. I was very determined to get student government to pay for our trip. In the end, we were able to get out flight and our registration paid for. It was an amazing experience”

**What is one piece of advice that you can give for our current undergrad and graduate students?**

“Get involved. Get involved with the ADA and other dietetic communities. I know Jacksonville has a lot going on such as the Jacksonville Dietetics Association and the Florida Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. At the social gatherings you get to meet people, and people get to know your name. That’s how you get hired. People get hired through networking. You don’t have to be a social butterfly, but you should definitely get involved.”

Dennis Yarizadeh
Nutrition Journal Club (NJC) Updates

Nutrition Journal Club will be focusing on trending nutrition topics for each phase of the life span in Spring 2015.

The first meeting will highlight connections between childhood nutrition and artificial food additives by discussing an article titled, “Amounts of Artificial Food Colors in Commonly Consumed Beverages and Potential Behavioral Implications for Consumption in Children”.

Each month afterward the club will progress through the life cycle by considering adolescents, adults, and then the elderly.

**Meetings will be held on every 3rd Wednesday of each month at 3:00 PM.**

For further updates like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/unfjournalclub](http://www.facebook.com/unfjournalclub)
Every year there is a Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo that is put on by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for RD's, DTR's, and students from all over the country to attend, learn and network with their peers. This year, the conference was held in Atlanta, Georgia. There are so many things to do at FNCE you almost have to have an agenda picked out prior to arriving at the conference! Personally, one of my favorite parts of FNCE was the outstanding exhibition hall with endless rows of food vendors handing out an enormous amount of samples, educational information, and new products. In addition to the EXPO, there were a ton of amazing nutrition based sessions going on all day every hour. One of my personal favorite educational sessions was a talk about personal branding. I found the whole presentation extremely helpful and walked away with a notebook full of tips on how to better my chances of getting an internship (which I know is on the minds of many students). Speaking of internships, for students they had a separate hall filled with internship directors and preceptors from various schools and programs around the country. Though I was a little overwhelmed by the amount of students and schools, I was able to take away some valuable information from some of the schools I plan on applying to in the spring!

I was told by many people that you never forget your first FNCE, and I believe they were right! If you were unable to attend this years or just couldn't get enough of FNCE 2014, then grab your cowboy boots and get ready for FNCE 2015 in Nashville Tennessee!
Let’s be honest, when thinking about nutrition trends gluten-free is the elephant in the room. So, let’s talk about it! The amount of gluten-free products on grocery store shelves grew tremendously during 2014 and by the looks of it this craze isn’t dying down any time soon.

According to several professional Academy members that attended FNCE this past October, manufacturers are not slowing down on developing and marketing their gluten-free products. In fact, Kathleen Zelman MPH, RD and, director of nutrition for WebMD was quoted saying, “…EVERYTHING is gluten free, despite the fact that only 1-2 percent of the population has celiac disease,” regarding the trends that were buzzing through FNCE this year. Whether or not people “need” to go gluten-free, the gluten-free trend could help add more variety and nutrition to a person’s diet. Due to the main source of gluten in the diet being wheat, this gluten-free trend is opening the doors for so many other grain alternatives to shine such as quinoa (a dietitian’s fav!), millet, and buckwheat. Consuming these different grains is a great way to add variety to the diet. Every plant offers its own unique set of nutrients this is a way of getting a wider variation of vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients into the diet.

But, (there’s always a ‘but’!) there is a downside to this gluten-free trend. Many people have jumped on this bandwagon assuming it was a path to weight loss. Ten to fifteen years ago, this assumption could have been true. But today, manufacturers are developing gluten-free products so quickly that the grocery stores carry more GF products than they did even five years ago. In previous years, a gluten-free diet consisted of fruits, vegetables, protein and less refined carbohydrates. As dietitians and dietetic students we know that consuming a diet like this it would lead to weight loss. But, it’s different now.

Many of the gluten-free products that are in the stores now are highly processed, can be high in fat, carbohydrates, and aren’t necessarily low in calories. It’s been reported that people who don’t have a gluten-sensitivity that partake on a GF diet sometimes gain weight. It’s like this…when you see a product that says “Low-fat” or “Low-carb” YES, the amount of grams of that specific macronutrient is reduced, but SOMETHING on that nutrient list is higher. Take for example low-fat tortilla chips, they have much more salt on them that regular tortilla chips. The manufacturer had to add flavor back in somewhere. So, if you decide to follow the gluten-free trend, just be sure to read your nutrition facts carefully. Bottom line: Gluten-free doesn’t necessarily mean low-calorie.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH: DRAGON NOODLES

- 4 oz. lo mein noodles (linguine noodles will work, as well)
- 2 Tbsp butter
- ¼ tsp crushed red pepper
- 1 large egg
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp soy sauce
- 1 handful fresh cilantro
- 1 sliced green onion

1. Cook noodles according to package. Drain the water.
2. Prepare the sauce: In a small bowl stir together the brown sugar, soy sauce, and sriracha. Set aside.
3. Melt the 2 Tbsp of butter in a skillet on medium-low heat. Add the red pepper.
4. Whisk the egg and add it to the skillet. Stir gently and cook through. Turn off the heat when the egg is cooked through.
5. Add the noodles and the sauce to the skillet. Turn the heat back on to low (to evaporate any excess moisture) and stir until everything is coated well with the sauce. Sprinkle the sliced green onions and cilantro leaves on top and enjoy!

Brooke Zaner
**Study Abroad in Italy with DND**

Spend 16 days in Umbria and Tuscany, Italy  
**June 9th – June 24th, 2015**

Study Italian with native speakers, cook Italian foods and live in an Italian villa

Learn about the Mediterranean diet and experience the food and culture of Umbria and Tuscany

SAILS scholarships available!!!

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**THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

This 16 day program is an analysis of how social, psychological, historical and cultural factors impact food, nutrition, and society in Umbria and Tuscany Italy. Students will gain an understanding of the Italian food system and how the Mediterranean diet affects societal health. Emphasis will be given to understanding how food-related social factors impact nutrition and dietetic practice. Class structure will include lectures, discussions and experiential learning excursions in Italy where students will visit the producers of olive oil, wine, fruits and vegetables, bread, sausage, prosciutto, and pecorino cheese.

Students will also participate in cooking demonstrations with Italian cooks and learn to prepare dishes from classic Umbrian cuisine, learn about the nutritional benefits of the Mediterranean diet and differences in the food culture which influence health.

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**The Cost**

The cost of the program is approximately $2500.00 and it includes: lodging, most meals, excursions, language & cooking classes, and local transportation. It does not include: airfare, tuition, 12 lunches in Italy, $25 for speakers or spending money which is paid by the student prior to or during the trip.

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For an application and for further information, contact the course faculty leader:

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Department of Nutrition & Dietetics  
Brooks College of Health
Study Abroad in Canada
With DND

Spend 18 days in Toronto, Montreal and Niagara Falls, Canada

Jul 1st – Jul 18th, 2015

Visit the most diverse city in the world and learn about multiculturalism.

Visit University of Toronto and McGill University and learn about research in Canada

*A unique opportunity to experience foods from various cultures all in one place!

SAILS scholarships available!!!

As one of the most diverse countries in the world, visiting Canada provides an exceptional opportunity to explore various cultures and ethnicities in one place. Moreover, you will become familiar with a government-based health care system in Canada. You will visit departments of nutritional Sciences, hospitals, research centers and government offices to learn about health care system in Canada and also to observe ongoing clinical and animal research in the field of nutrition and dietetics in Canada. It will be also an incredible opportunity to meet some of world famous research leaders in the field of nutrition at University of Toronto and at McGill University. It will help to formulate new ideas for your own research which is in compliance with our goal in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics to develop research in the field of Nutrition at UNF.

The Cost

The cost of the program is approximately $3000.00 and it includes: Airfare, lodging, most meals, excursions, and local transportation. It does not include: tuition, or spending money.

For an application and for further information, contact the course faculty leader:

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