THE NEW JERSEY ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS REPORT
2019-2020

Janet Reid-Hector, EdD, RDN
President NJAND, 2019-2020
Megan Squires, MS, RDN
Executive Director
Overview

The New Jersey Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (NJAND) is a professional association of over 2302 (as of 5/14/20) members statewide. Our mission is to accelerate improvements in NJ’s health and wellness through food and nutrition. Our vision is a state where all NJ residents, at all stages of life, thrive through the transformative power of food and nutrition. Our membership consists of Registered Dietitian/Nutritionists (RDNs), Nutrition and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (NDTRs), master’s level and advanced practice health care professionals, and students. Our professional members are employed in various settings including clinical, community/public health, higher education, food service, private practice, food/industry, retail food stores and others.

Our guiding principles are to:
- Integrate research, professional development and practice to stimulate innovation and discovery and to expand workforce capacity and capability.
- Collaborate with mission-aligned partners to solve New Jersey’s food and nutrition challenges now and in the future
- Support food systems, policies, and practices in New Jersey that impact food, nutrition, wellness and healthcare sectors
- Have a statewide impact in eliminating all forms of malnutrition
- Amplify the contribution and branding of nutrition practitioners

Board of Directors

President                Janet Reid-Hector, EdD, RDN
President Elect          Toni Bowman, MBA, RDN
Secretary                Jackie Ranalli, MS, RDN
Immediate Past President Elizabeth Hanna, MS, RDN
State HOD Representative Chesney Blue, MPH, RDN
Treasurer                Jane Pilanski, RDN
Nominating Committee Chair Christina Riccardo, EdD, RDN, LDN
Region One Co-Chairs (one vote) Andrea Grasso-Irvine, MS, RDN
                              Caitlyn Devlin, RDN
Region Two Co-Chairs (one vote) Pinkin Panchal, MS, RDN
                              Mandy Enright, MS, RDN, RYT
Region Three Co-Chairs (one vote) Christina Stella, MS, RDN, CDN, CDE
                              Donna Duardo, MS, RDN

Committee Chairs

Bylaws                    Denise Langevin
Policy and Procedures     Christina Frescki
Membership                Eleanor Schiavo
Executive Director
The New Jersey Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is managed by our Executive Director (ED), Megan Squires, MS, RDN who is now in her sixth year in this position. The ED manages our organization’s administrative needs, assists with the coordination of all of our regional and Professional Networking Group (PNG) events throughout the year as well as our Annual Meeting. Having an RDN in this position has been very beneficial to the internal and external stakeholders, such as board members, general membership, and the public. Evaluations of the ED indicate that there is consistent and prompt responsiveness and support to members and the board, increased movement to implement new initiatives and projects, efficiency in achieving the organization’s strategic plans, effective communication among Board members, members, and external entities, and overall improved management of the NJAND.

Financial Management
The Treasurer manages the finances of the association and maintains the working relationship with our accounting firm for tax and audit preparation. The association receives approximately 60% of its operating funds from the Academy as a portion of membership dues returned to the affiliate. The NJAND receives a small amount of revenue from the review of regional continuing professional education activities, as well as sponsorship which typically brings in between $20,000-$25,000 annually. However this year, due to COVID-19 our Annual Meeting was rescheduled to our next fiscal year. Therefore we experienced a significant reduction in sponsorship. Our current revenue from sponsorship is ~$10,000. This year the board unanimously approved the hiring of a Sponsorship Coordinator. The Sponsorship Coordinator will be paid a salary of $15,000 plus a 5% commission on any new sponsor (one who has not sponsored the NJAND in the past) brought in. This position will initially be funded through our reserve funds, but the hope is that it will be self-sustaining and pay for itself as well as generate significant income for the association. The remaining budget is funded through partnerships, fees for programs, and using the reserve funds from prior years. The board has used reserve funds, approximately 20% of the budget, for licensure and legislative issues and the contract for our lobbyist, Advocacy and Management Group (AMG). These expenses will need to be evaluated in future budgets as the association’s current revenue stream cannot support these expenses. This year the NJAND achieved the goal of spending down our reserves as recommended by the Academy to ~54% of the budgeted expenses.
On Wednesday, October 30, 2019 the NJAND president attended a fundraising event for Senator Nellie Pou, Chair of the Senate Commerce Committee. This event almost depleted our PAC funds. Very little money was raised for our PAC fund this year. We implemented a virtual fundraising page on our website as well as posted a link to the fundraising page in our weekly Eblast. This generated $119.56. Insufficient PAC funds have been an ongoing issue. Several ideas for PAC fundraising have been proposed and are being evaluated for future implementation. The goal of raising funds for PAC is to have enough funds to make small donations to the legislators who can help keep our licensure law in place as well as to support legislation that affects our areas of practice.

The Treasurer continues to update the treasurer’s manual, streamline management of on-line payment sources and manage day to day financial operations. The Bookkeeper assists with the management and reconciliation of specific accounts alongside the Treasurer. Quickbooks™ online is used by the treasurer and bookkeeper and is connected to our bank account. We continue to work with our accountant to file taxes annually and ensure the organization is in good financial standing.

The Academy recommends that the association maintain 50-100% of the annual budget in reserve funds. In the past we had funds significantly above this level. We strategically spent down these funds over the past two years and now we are maintaining our reserve funds at the recommended level. Excluding PAC and the scholarship accounts we currently have $95,946.56 (5/11/20). Reserve funds this year have been used to:

- Cover the cost of working with our Lobbyist group, AMG
- Travel expenses for Executive Director to attend FNCE

### Account Balances as of May 31, 2019

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<thead>
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**Strategic Plan**
The NJAND board met three years ago on September 9, 2017 to discuss the strategic plan and determined that it would be beneficial to emulate a similar mission, vision and guiding principles consistent with those that The AND had adopted. Guiding principles replaced core values and objectives and goals were laid out for each. The goals of our Strategic Plan are tracked using a monitoring and progress form and are updated, at least quarterly to reflect progress related to each goal.

**Guiding Principle 1:** Integrate research, professional development and practice to stimulate innovation and discovery and to expand workforce capacity and capability.

To support this principle, the NJAND has committed to promoting food and nutrition related research being conducted by the NJAND members by building bridges between clinicians and researchers. The NJAND has connected members who seek to work collaboratively on research initiatives. This has been, and will continue to be accomplished mainly via eblasts, regional events, and professional networking groups. A website section highlighting current research being conducted by members, as well as by members from neighboring associations in NY and PA, including links to publications, has been created on the eatrighnj.org website.

To continue the focus on members engaging in research activities, the NJAND will use the annual meeting evaluation survey to ask members what food and nutrition related topic they would like to see further explored through research. This survey will go out in our next fiscal year, following the Annual Meeting.

The NJAND is also committed to assisting new board members to transition into their roles on the board by creating a mentor/mentee program. An annual transition meeting is typically scheduled in June of each year and orientation webinars are hosted in August and September for incoming board members. This year we do not have a transition meeting date in place due to the restrictions put in place by the state because of COVID-19. We are exploring other opportunities for an in-person transition meeting in the fall.

**Guiding Principle 2:** Collaborate with mission-aligned partners to solve New Jersey’s food and nutrition challenges now and in the future.

To support this principle, the board developed the NJAND Alliance Partnership Agreement to establish and maintain alliances/partnerships with not-for profit organizations/institutions that support the NJAND mission, vision, and strategic plan while increasing the visibility of the NJAND and its members in our organization. The NJAND has been able to successfully secure five alliance partners: The New Jersey School Nutrition Association, CUMAC, The American Association of Diabetes Educators- NJ Chapter, NJ Public Health Association, and the Community Food Bank of South Jersey.
Guiding Principle 3: Support food systems, policies, and practices in New Jersey that impact food, nutrition, wellness and healthcare sector

To support this principle, the public policy team has been 100% compliant with responding to Legislative Action Alerts sent by The Academy.

On February 21, 2020, a Public Policy Workshop for nutrition advocacy was held at the Institute of Food, Nutrition and Health (IFNH), School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS), on the New Brunswick campus. This event was organized by Pinkin Panchal MS, RDN, Assistant Teaching Professor in the Department of Nutritional Sciences and Coordinator for Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) Program and Dan Dychtwald, NJAND Public Policy Coordinator in collaboration with the national and state affiliates of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND). The goal of this event was to enhance student awareness of federal and legislative processes for the development and implementation of Nutrition Policy. The morning session of the program included a series of lectures on national and state legislative initiatives. To prepare students to become actively involved in this process, presentations included proposed changes to standards for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), re-authorization of the Farm Bill, current issues with Food Labeling and an overview of various public health programs which prioritize nutrition services, such as Women Infants and Children (WIC). Highlights of the afternoon session included student led debates on various topics utilizing evidence-based practice to support the vital role of nutrition in health and wellness. To promote grassroots advocacy within Rutgers University and beyond, this workshop was extended to faculty and students from various dietetics education programs in the region. These included Montclair State University, Cedar Crest College, NutraSource supervised practice programs and RU, School of Health Professions FEM program for a total of 80 participants. We plan to host this event annually.

This year due to COVID-19 restrictions, we were unable to host a Legislative Advocacy Day. We plan to do this next Spring. E-blast invitations are continuously sent out to the membership asking for participation on our public policy team so that we are able to provide comment and feedback on legislation from various professional backgrounds etc.,

Guiding Principle 4: Have a statewide impact in eliminating all forms of malnutrition

To support this goal, for the last two years, our Annual Meeting Committee coordinated Nutrition-Focused Physical Assessment (NFPA) workshops for members. We plan to continue this again at our 88th Annual Meeting and offer both beginner and advanced Nutrition Focused Physical Assessment Workshops. Additionally, the NJAND has a malnutrition section on the
website that promotes awareness and identification of malnutrition by providing easy access resources and templates for charting malnutrition in medical records, information about coding and reimbursement, NFPA, Electronic Clinical Quality Measures (CMS initiative), links to related videos and podcasts. This page is updated on an ongoing basis by the executive director as well as via requests for submissions being sent out weekly to members to share resources and best practices.

**Guiding Principle 5:** Amplify the contribution and branding of nutrition practitioners

To promote our members’ professional achievement, innovations, research conducted or spearheaded, awards and publications, etc, a member spotlight section was created on the NJAND website as well as promoted via eblasts, and all social media outlets with a goal to highlight one members (RDN, DTR, or Student) on the first of each month.

The social media team continues to ensure that the NJAND has an active presence online, scheduling at least one monthly repost from a RDN/NDTR websites/social media sites to advertise food and nutrition services our members offer, at least one monthly post of an aesthetically appealing and professional grade picture of a healthy recipe, recipe contest for public with prize giveaway, or a food/nutrition related question to engage conversation with public followers and a food/nutrition related topic at least once daily. The committee has been able to expand its members via e-blast requests sent out to members inviting them to participate and share their talents and skills.

**Awards and Scholarships**

The NJAND Awards Committee uses the Academy’s guidelines and criteria to evaluate each nominee for awards. Award categories include Outstanding Student, Student Initiative, Recognized Young Dietitian of the Year, Registered Dietetic Technician of the Year, Emerging Dietetics Leader, and the Carolyn Sebastianelli Distinguished Member Award. The Outstanding Dietetic Educator award is administered by the Nutrition and Dietetics Educators and Preceptors (NDEP) group and is awarded by region and for each type of accredited program.

All other awards are administered by the NJAND. The award recipients are recognized during the Annual Meeting business session and receive complementary registration to the Annual Meeting, a Certificate and/or Plaque. Fifty-year members are also recognized at the meeting. A spreadsheet of award recipients is maintained and published annually on the NJAND website. In the past, New Jersey provided $50,000 to the Foundation of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for the perpetual maintenance of two annual New Jersey student scholarships that are awarded by the foundation. One promotes leadership in the profession and the other focuses on
diversity. To apply for one of these scholarships, students must be a resident of New Jersey enrolled in an accredited nutrition and dietetics program and apply through the Foundation. In addition to two scholarships funded through the Foundation, our fundraising chair coordinates a scholarship raffle at the annual meeting. This raises an average of $1,000 a year that helps fund a small scholarship to the Outstanding Student Award recipients.

The NJAND donates a silent auction item annually for the Foundation’s Silent Auction held at FNCE. Funds raised support activities of the Foundation of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

**Award Recipients this year include:**
Carolyn Sebastianelli Distinguished Member Award: Luanne J Hughes, MS, RDN
Emerging Dietetic Leader Award: Toni Marie Bowman, MBA, RDN
Recognized Young Dietitian of the Year Award: Jane Pilanski, RDN
Recognized Dietetic Technician of the Year (RDTY) - Julie Scalera
Dietetic Student Initiative Award (DSIA) - Paige Heiden
Outstanding Dietetic Student Award (ODSA) - Heather M J Thomas
Didactic Program in Dietetics
Outstanding Dietetic Student Award (ODSA) - Grace - Marie Amethyst Perez (FEM-Rutgers) - Coordinated Program in Dietetics
Outstanding Dietetic Student Award (ODSA) - Kelly Struck

**Bylaws**
This year no changes to the bylaws were made by the NJAND.

**Diversity**
For the 2019-2020 FY, NJAND applied and won a $1000 mini-grant from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to promote diversity in dietetics. The NJAND board voted to double the grant to strengthen our state diversity initiatives. Our grant focuses on outreach to high school age students from diverse backgrounds. These outreach events would introduce students to the field of dietetics and were planned to be conducted at career fairs, college fairs and planned presentations at high schools throughout the state of NJ. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these events have been put on hold until the next school year.

**Policy and Procedures**
No new policies or procedures were created this fiscal year.

**Position Descriptions**
Board members are asked to review their position description annually and provide edits to the ED. The position descriptions are used by the nominating committee and in recruiting volunteers, so continuous updating is vital.

**Membership**
The membership chair tracks membership monthly and implements member surveys. The member chair works with the ED to identify member interests.

**Membership Regions**
The state continues to operate with three regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region 1 (South)</th>
<th>Region 2 (Central)</th>
<th>Region 3 (North)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>Hunterdon</td>
<td>Bergen</td>
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<td>Burlington</td>
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<td>Salem</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>Warren</td>
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**Member Breakdown**
The membership is approximately 2/5\textsuperscript{th} from Region Three, 2/5\textsuperscript{th} from Region Two and 1/5\textsuperscript{th} from Region One. Additional student membership in Region 1 may reflect the newly accredited program at Rowan University.

There are concerns from Region One that there are more events held in other regions, partially to address this a rotational plan for the annual meeting was developed, however we need volunteers from region one to assistance with meeting planning in that region.

**Member Survey**
The NJAND conducts an annual membership survey. Our survey for 2020 was sent to members on May 6\textsuperscript{th} and was open for one week, with separate reminders sent in the e-blast. We received 169 responses which amounts to a 7\% response rate. A summary of the survey follows.

Our members are most aware of the electronic newsletter, weekly E-blast, the website, professional networking groups and the annual meeting. Members are the least aware of our ambassador program, diversity initiatives, and our member partner benefits. Those activities that ranked the highest in importance were; free job postings, the website, the electronic newsletter and the annual meeting. Members are most satisfied with the newsletter, eblast, and website and feel that the affiliate awards, state delegate and the monthly spotlight are not important to the organization.
The majority of our membership visits the website monthly to check the calendar of events and job posts. Facebook and Instagram remain the social media channels of choice. Sixty-three percent of our members are interested in more in-person networking events. Cocktails remain the most popular choice for networking events. Members also stated they would be most likely to attend a professional networking event if CPE’s were offered.

The largest obstacle to volunteering seems to be time. Members would be more likely to volunteer if they earned CPE’s, developed a new skill, or received a small stipend. The majority of our membership is not interested in a member interest group.

Members would like web links on our website and guest speakers to increase our opportunities for continuing education. A recipe corner was the most popular new benefit selected on the survey. Webinars were suggested as a benefit to members. The top five webinars selected were:

1. Food Trends
2. Gut Microbiome, Nutrigenomics
3. Functional/Integrative Medicine
4. FAD Diets
5. Patient Centered Homes/Telehealth

Membership Benefits
A member information page is available on the NJAND website at www.eatrightnj.org/new-member-information. It provides a variety of information including the mission, regions by county, and allows for easy e-mail access to board members and professional networking and listserv group coordinators.

The NJAND continues to offer elected board members free registration to the annual meeting and reduced registration to appointed board members. The NJAND offers discounted member vision and dental benefits as well as a membership partnership opportunity. The membership partnerships are available at three levels and allow members with businesses to gain access to the rest of the membership through communications and the annual meeting.

Professional Networking Groups (PNG’s), Listserves, and Regional Events
The goal for these groups is to provide opportunities to meet other professionals in a social environment for networking opportunities. Professional Networking Groups typically meet quarterly but sometimes less often depending on the leadership and group interests. Current PNG’s include:

- African American RD’s
- Jersey Shore Area
- Greater Morristown Area
Events held this past year include:

Bergen County
- 2/5/20: The Cornerstone at Hillside

Hunterdon County
- 6/5/219: Movie Night - Planet Pure Nation
- 11/6/19: Movie Night – Forks Over Knives
- 3/9/20: Cooking Vegan, Hunterdon Medical Center

Hudson County PNG
- 1/29/20 The Lokal Eatery and Bar

Essex County PNG
- 2/20/20: Montclair Brewery

Southern Jersey PNG:
- 1/30/20: La Scala’s Fire
- 2/27/20: Zed’s Brewery

Region 1
- 11/19/19: Clinicians and Cookbooks: A Look at One Dietitians Success in Hoptials and beyond. Presenter: Amy Silveria von Sydow Green, MS, MD, RDN. 22 Attendees

Region 2
- 11/15/19: Breaking Down Social Media: When to Tween, Like, and Hashtag. Presenter: Mandy Enright, MS, RDN. 7 Attendees

Region 3
• **12/10/2020**: Nutrition Support for the Critically Ill. Speaker: Wendy Bennett RDN, CNSC- 26 attendees
• **5/20/20**: Webinar: Endocannabinoid System, Cannabis, and the Immune System. Presenter Laura Lagano, MS, RDN, CDN

**Community Outreach and National Nutrition Month**

The NJAND’s goal is to improve community outreach throughout the year and collaborate with Dietetic Internships in assigning students to coordinate events with the NJAND and fulfill their community service rotation requirements simultaneously. This year we were planning to host National Nutrition Month Events at senior centers across the state, however due to the COVID-19 restrictions these events were cancelled.

**Social Media and Website**

The NJAND has had established social media outlets: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram which are maintained by our Social Media Chairs. Over the last year we have increased our social media presence with an increased number of Tweets by 52 followers, Facebook by 151 followers, with 1,338 likes and increased our followers on Instagram by 250. The LinkedIn page has 143 followers, which has increased by 166% in the last 30 days. In addition, the LinkedIn page has 39 page views and 21 unique visitors to the page in the last 30 days and helps to build a stronger presence and increase engagement among members and the public.

The NJAND’s mobile friendly, website at www.eatrightnj.org is updated regularly and has new sections created in line with our updated strategic plan including malnutrition resources and member highlights. Event information for the NJAND professional networking meetings, continuing education programs and other local programs are posted and updated on our website in the Calendar of Events section by our Executive Director.

**Legislation and Public Policy**

Our advocacy team, and lobbying firm, AMG, diligently worked with us on advancing our licensure efforts through negotiations with the Certified Nutrition Specialists, CrossFit, and the Council on Holistic Health Educators. Historically, the Certified Nutrition Specialists were our largest opponents of the licensure bill. This year we were able to come to an agreement to offer a dual pathway to licensure that would license RDNs and CNSs based upon academic requirements, individual supervised practice pathways and professional testing standards specific to each organization’s national accreditation requirements.

The amended version of the legislation also addressed concerns raised by other groups who work in the health and nutrition industry. Previous versions of the legislation had restrictions outside of medical nutrition therapy. Amendments were agreed to that addressed concerns raised by the
New Jersey Athletic Trainers and the Health and Racquetball Club Association. The amended version of the bill requires those who provide medical nutrition therapy to be licensed and protects the public by preventing the use of a number of professional titles from unlicensed individuals.

After over three decades of work, on January 13, 2020 the governor finally signed the Dietitian Nutritionist Licensing Act into law! A timeline of what transpired is below. We have submitted recommendations for the licensing board and are awaiting regulations from the state.

Meetings on Licensure:
- June 4, 2019 – Met with the Assembly Majority Office
- October 15, 2019 – Met with Senator Joseph Cryan
- October 28, 2019 – Met with Senator Pou (Chair of Senate Commerce Committee)
- October 28, 2019 – Met with Senator Scutari
- November 7, 2019 – Met with CrossFit and Holistic Health Educators
- November 12, 2019 – Met with Senator Kean

Legislative Voting Sessions:
- June 13, 2020 - Passed in Assembly Appropriations Committee
- June 20, 2019 – Passed in the Assembly Voting Session
- November 14, 2019 – Passed in the Senate Commerce Committee
- December 5, 2019 – Passed in the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee
- December 16, 2019 – Passed in Senate Voting Session
- December 16, 2019 – Passed again in Assembly to match with the small changes made in the Senate
- January 13, 2020 – Signed by Governor

Our Ambassador program has grown and we have been able to secure ambassadors for 49 out of 50 NJ districts. The NJAND continues to lack representation for district 9. An Ambassador Training webinar was hosted by AMG on September 18, 2019 to help support and prepare our ambassadors before they began to communicate with or meet with legislators in person.

This year the public policy committee focused on bills regarding school lunch and school lunch shaming. Our Public Policy Coordinator personally reached out to Assemblyman Herb Conway’s office regarding his bill to eliminate reduced-priced lunch and to move to free, as well as Assemblywoman Pamela Lampitt’s office on her lunch shaming bill. In addition Meredith Hesselein, a public policy committee member provided in-person comments on changes to the composition of school lunches from a nutritional standpoint based on proposed changes from the USDA. The NJAND also commented on the following bills:

- A1104 Murphy (D7) — "Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act"; requires certain school meal information be provided to students' parents; establishes protocols for identifying eligible students for meal programs; prohibits stigmatizing student with bill in arrears.
• A1630 - Lampitt (D6) — Requires school districts to take certain actions in circumstances when school meal bill is in arrears; prohibits shaming students with school meal bills in arrears; prohibits certain district actions in collecting unpaid school meal fees
• A1631 - Lampitt (D6) — Requires school districts to take certain actions to increase participation in free or reduced priced meal programs; prohibits shaming students with school meal bills in arrears; prohibits certain district actions in collecting unpaid school meal fees.
• A1632 - Lampitt (D6) — Requires school district to establish "School Meal Fund" to assist students with school meal bill in arrears.
• A4856 - Murphy (D7) — "Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act"; requires certain school meal information be provided to students' parents; establishes protocols for identifying eligible students for meal programs; prohibits stigmatizing student with bill in arrears.
• A5855 - Coughlin (D19) — Requires State to pay difference between federal allocation and total cost of reduced price breakfast or lunch; appropriates $4.5 million.
• A5901 - Lampitt (D6) — Clarifies that school district is not required to restrict access to school meals if school meal bill is in arrears.
• A5902 - Lampitt (D6) — Requires school districts to take certain actions to increase participation in free or reduced priced meal programs; prohibits shaming students with school meal bills in arrears; prohibits certain district actions in collecting unpaid school meal fees.
• A4062 = Lampitt (D6) — Requires Department of Agriculture to promote school meal programs.
• AJR28 - Giblin (D34) — Permanently designates last week in February as "Eating Disorders Awareness Week" in New Jersey.
• AJR169 - Wolfe (R10) — Designates the second week of October of each year as "Obesity Care Week" in NJ.
• S1033 - Ruiz (D29) — Requires public schools to comply with more stringent school lunch and breakfast nutrition standards adopted by USDA in 2012.
• S687 - Ruiz (D29) — "Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act"; requires certain school meal information be provided to students' parents; establishes protocols for identifying eligible students for meal programs; prohibits stigmatizing student with bill in arrears.
• S4200 - Ruiz (D29) — Requires State to pay difference between federal allocation and total cost of reduced price breakfast or lunch; appropriates $4.5 million.
• S2527 - Ruiz (D29) — Requires Department of Agriculture to promote school meal programs.
• SJR125 - Gopal (D11) — Designates the second week of October of each year as "Obesity Care Week" in NJ.

The NJAND attended the Policy and Advocacy Summit (formerly PPW) and met with all state senators and representatives with two face-to-face meeting. The TROA and DSMT Acts were discussed and the team got at least one additional representative to sign on.
NJAND HOD Representation:
Our HOD Delegate participated in two House of Delegate meetings; one in-person fall meeting in Philadelphia and one virtual meeting in the January 2020. The virtual spring meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the fall 2019 meeting, delegates discussed technology/big data as a strategic issue and the Total Diet Approach. Under the technology/big data discussions, the HOD explored areas of AI, data sets, improved outcomes and how to elevate the role of RDNs/NDTRs through technology. A task force and think tank was developed to further research, prioritize and develop action plans for gaps identified during this dialogue. As a professional issue the Total Diet Approach was presented for adoption on how to present healthy lifestyle habits to the public. Delegates heard from a panel of nutrition communicators providing strategies on how to present this to consumers.

During the winter 2020 delegate meeting evidence-based practice was discussed. The HOD felt an urgent need to educate and align credentialed food and nutrition practitioners around the foundational values of evidence-based practice. Delegates discussed and formulated reports on barriers and solutions to improve stronger skills toward evidence-based practice. Solutions included upgrading the Evidence Analysis Library and developing a training toolkit for students, educators, and practitioners.

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