Dear NJAND members,

A new year is upon us, bringing with it new opportunities, challenges and, I can confidently predict, new successes. It is an honor to serve as your 2020-2021 President and work with all of you to continue growing our organization to meet the dynamic needs of our members and the communities we serve.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our immediate Past President, Janet Reid Hector, EdD RDN, and Megan Squires MS, RDN, Executive Director, for serving NJAND and preparing me to serve the organization this year.

On January 13, 2020, Governor Murphy signed into law The Dietitian/Nutritionist Licensing Act! Wow, what an accomplishment! The law specifically provides New Jersey RDN's title protection, as well as protects our scope of practice. This law will leverage New Jersey RDNs into the next chapter of our profession. Now, to make the Law come to life, the NJAND Executive Board and I will work in conjunction with the licensing board that charged with oversite of the law. Additionally, NJAND will be providing guidance on the logistics of the law to RDNs and key stakeholders, as well as orchestrating the logistics to enforce the law.

My vision is to take the gift of licensure and continue to grow the profession of RDNs in NJ. To accomplish this growth we must network, not only among ourselves, but also partner with those in complementary fields. Through the relationships built with those in other industries and continued growth with our Alliance Partners and our sponsors, we can continue to raise awareness that we are the...
nutrition experts. These partnerships will bring value to our profession and give NJAND a voice as the expert authority in the nutrition field.

In May, NJAND hired independent contractor, Ashley Q. Lombardi as our Sponsorship Coordinator. Ashley brings unique insight to NJAND with her strong business and retail background. Ashley is currently the Retail Dietitian for Village Supermarkets. We expect her make-it-work attitude and excellent rapport with vendors to achieve great things with NJAND.

I want to congratulate our newly elected Board members and thank you in advance for your time and commitment to The NJAND. Your expertise and arsenal of knowledge is an empowering asset to the members of NJAND. I am honored to serve with:

- President Elect: Marisa Sweeney
- Treasurer Elect: Danielle Revere
- Secretary: Jackie Ranalli
- And Delegate: Kathleen Carozza
- Past President: Janet Reid-Hector
- Region 1 Co-Chairs: Caitly Devlin and Lindsay Smolinski
- Region 2 Co-Chair: Mandy Enright and Meredith Hesselein
- Region 3 Co-Chairs: Donna Duardo and Amy Morel L'Horest
- Region 1 Nominating: Sarah Fine and Melissa Eaton
- Region 2 Nominating: Christina Frescki and Pinkin Panchal
- Region 2 Nominating: Danielle Data and Maria Stanish

I cannot leave you without touching on the subject of COVID-19. I must start by saying I hope you and your families are doing well, staying healthy, and navigating through these unusual times. In an effort to protect you and your families we have decided to cancel the 2020 Annual Meeting that was rescheduled for Friday, September 25, 2020. We plan to offer additional continuing education opportunities throughout the year to make up for the continuing education credits lost due to the cancellation. We have selected a date for the 2021 Annual Meeting so please mark your calendars and save-the-date for Friday, April 23, 2021. The meeting will take place at The Event Center at iPlay America in Freehold.

Many of us are considered essential workers and have truly served residents of New Jersey and surrounding states during this time. You are true heroes and we sincerely thank you! Stay strong and have a safe, healthy, and relaxing summer. I look forward to this next chapter we will spend together and to our future accomplishments.

Healthy regards,
Toni Marie Bowman, MBA, RDN, SNS
Each quarter we recognize the work of one of our many outstanding Ambassadors for the NJAND. This quarter we are going to change it up a bit and recognize one of our many student members. Kim Gladis recently completed an internship with the Academy’s Office for Public Policy in DC. As part of her internship, she worked with many members of the policy team including Pepin Tuma, who worked diligently in helping
"During my dietetic internship, I had the opportunity to do a rotation with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as a distance option for three weeks. During this time, I was able to connect with a variety of different people from both the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in the DC office as well as the NJ branch of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. During the internship, I was involved in weekly meetings with staff from AND. These meetings involved discussions of the most up to date topics in the realm of public policy. I was also afforded the opportunity to collaborate on projects that included updating a handout on all federally funded nutrition programs, researching the licensure laws for each state, looking into frequently asked questions for NJ's licensure law specifically, and writing up a comment to the USDA on their proposed rule changes for the Summer Food Service Program. Even though this was a distance internship, I felt like I was part of the team. This rotation was so informative and I learned so much. I always had an interest in public policy as I have a background working for the USDA’s Summer Food Service Program in New Jersey. I was so happy that I was able to work on assignments both on a nation and state specific level. I would encourage anyone looking for a unique experience in the nutrition field to get involved in public policy."

Please join me in congratulating Kim on not just being selected for the internship but completing it remotely during COVID-19. She represented all of us here at the NJAND. If any student is interested in internship opportunities with the Academy’s policy team, please contact Public Policy Coordinator, Dan Dychtwald, at dkdychtwald@outlook.com.

Next quarter we will be profiling another ambassador. If you are interested in becoming an ambassador or would like more information on the program, please contact Rosemary at rosemaryodea@comcast.net.

Ambassador/Policy Updates

As part of Kim’s internship, she worked on a licensure Q&A with Pepin Tuma. The questions come from all of you and will be made available once they have been reviewed for completeness. We know all of you have concerns about licensure, the process, and how this impacts practice. Hopefully, this document will answer many of those questions.

Relevance of Regenerative Farming in Today's Conditions

Submitted by Monika Mahajan, MS, RDN
With the current emphasis on preservation of ecology, organic farming and sustainability to reduce carbon footprint, regenerative farming is starting to take center stage in agro business. “Regenerative Agriculture is a system of farming principles and practices that models healthy ecosystem design by increasing biodiversity, enriching soil by increasing microorganisms, improving watersheds and enhancing ecosystem services that are sustainable”. In regenerative farming everything is natural; there are no poisons or artificial methods to kill insects or pests even though they could be destructive to crops and fruits.

Regenerative farming is a very old technique of farming that was practiced in the past. It aims to capture carbon in soil and above ground biomass, thus helping reduce the carbon footprint and ultimately reversing the current global climate change. At the same time, it helps increase the yields and higher health and vitality for farming and ranching communities. This method of farming integrates and increases the interdependence of everything and everyone, thus helping create a healthy and sustainable ecosystem. It focuses on improving topsoil regeneration by getting billions of microorganisms to generate healthy soil that can help the farm. While it seems simple, it's not easy to cultivate an ecosystem that thrives on creating a habitat. To transition a farm to this way of farming where everything happens naturally, you need a long time - at least 7 years. There needs to be a balance of farms with wildlife and that can be hard initially. In the beginning, the farmer needs to play a bigger role in creating this ecosystem but within a few years the farm has the ability to run by itself.

Currently, we have about 4 billion acres of cultivated farmland, 8 billion acres of pastureland, and 10 billion acres of forestland. However, if we do continue the current farming practices on this land we might not be able to feed the world, halt the loss of biodiversity or stop the climate change. The loss of the world’s fertile soil and biodiversity, along with the loss of indigenous seeds and knowledge, poses a threat to our future survival. According to scientists, at the current rate of soil destruction due to erosion, deforestation, chemical pollution and carbon emissions, it will lead to serious damage to public health because it impacts the food supply by degrading topsoil nutrition and loss of minerals that will further diminish the nutrient quality of the produce.

In summary, regenerative agriculture leads to healthy soil capable of producing high quality, nutrient dense food while simultaneously improving the soil and, ultimately, leading to productive farms and healthy ecosystems and communities. It is a dynamic and holistic approach in organic farming practices that includes soil conservation, cover crops, crop rotation, composting, animal shelters and increased food production and farmers' income.
Nutrition, Health and Wellness Trends

Nutrition, Mental Health & Coronavirus

Submitted by Grace Engels, RDN

How has the coronavirus pandemic changed your life? For many, it has turned the world upside down. We can no longer go anywhere without being reminded that an international crisis is on hand: Facemasks abound, spray-painted lines on the ground tell us appropriate social distances and grocery stores seem to be swamped every opening hour.

Jobs have been lost, small businesses have shut down and schools and colleges have been closed; and all of this amidst concern that the fall will bring an increase in cases. It is not difficult to see that the mental health of many people is being negatively impacted by this pandemic.

In fact, the Kaiser Family Foundation reports in a recent poll that almost half of the US adult population feels their mental health has been negatively affected by the pandemic. The Foundation found that part of this is related to the ‘social distancing’ edicts that have been put in place; it makes sense, as it is commonly known that time in isolation leads to loneliness and poorer mental health. Additionally, the Center for Public Integrity maintains that calls to mental health hotlines have seen unprecedented increases in the past several months.

An area of mental health related to nutrition that is also being impacted is that of eating disorders. If you work with eating disorder patients or clients, you have heard of the uptick in stress and anxiety around behaviors and feelings relating to food. People who sense a lack of control in one area of their lives often seek control in other areas. Those in recovery from an
eating disorder or those who are susceptible to the development of one are at increased risk of negative outcomes in times of great stress.

As dietitians, we are well-aware of the importance of knowing what our scope is. However, there is no denying that mental health and nutrition have a strong relationship on many levels. Whether you work in an eating disorder center, have outpatients with disordered food behaviors, or simply want to be prepared if an inpatient or even family member comes to you with some questions, the following are some resources and ideas that can help you navigate nutrition, mental health and the current crisis:

- **Building Motivational Interviewing Skills, A Practitioner Workbook by David B. Rosengren.** Sharpen your motivational interviewing skills by working through the four processes of MI (engaging, focusing, evoking and planning) with this workbook. It will help you improve your use of open-ended questions, affirmation, reflective listening and summaries - all to provide the best care to patients who may be suffering from a lack of motivation or who simply want some ideas to cope with their current situations.

- **Anti Diet by Christy Harrison.** This book will give you some fascinating background on the history of diet culture including its origins, how it has been propagated and the impact it has had and continues to have on society. It dispels diet myths and can arm you with some great facts for a number of questions your clients might throw at you. There is even an audiobook available for it, which is great for us dietitians who have maintained decent job security through this all and continue to have busy lives.

- **General Tips for Your Client.** Encourage your client to remain connected with the practitioners they've been working with. Doctors, therapists and dietitians alike are starting to make their services more available via telehealth nowadays. Some clients might also benefit from building a structured plan for eating each day and making a schedule they stick to. You can encourage using an accountability partner for this as well. And lastly, encourage finding virtual support. This can be done by simply planning Zoom calls with family or friends for meals or joining in on a call during or after meals with one of the National Eating Disorders Association's virtual support groups.

Grace Engels works several per-diem RD jobs in North and Central Jersey and is a freelance content marketing writer on the side.
The Need for Diversity in Technology
Submitted by Jeanette Kimszal, RDN, NLC

This month I wanted to take the time to address the importance of diversity and inclusion in technology. In February I attended a Women in Technology event about the need for inclusion and diversity in social media. It was an eye-opening experience for me. I felt pretty dumb for not being more aware of the biases on these platforms. Humans are often inherently inner focused and only concerned about what is going on in their own lives. It can be hard to see outside of this, especially if you are a privileged white person.

Later that night I was scrolling through my own social feeds to see if anyone was addressing these matters. What I saw was predominately white figures boasting about nutrition and wellness. This is not surprising considering 81 percent of our profession consists of white people. There are very few individuals of other ethnicities in dietetics. According to the latest statistics from CDR (June 15th, 2020) there are only 0.3% Native Americans, 3% Hispanic and Latino individuals, 2.6 percent African Americans, and 3.9% Asians currently in the dietetics profession.

Why is there such a disparity in this profession? Could it be due to the lack of internship placements? Or the exorbitant cost of the extensive education? All of the above. Certain communities may not have the means, the ability to relocate, or pay for an internship out of pocket. Education is often privileged to certain communities and this causes a gap in those who can become part of this profession.

Another thing to consider is the lack of diversity training we receive as dietitians. Cultural competence is taught in the dietetics profession but it may not be enough. Patients may not feel comfortable with certain practitioners and they should have the ability to find a provider they feel most comfortable with. Patients should have the ability to call their insurance company and get a diverse group of dietitians. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

We also need to address those with disabilities. This means making things accessible to the hearing and visually impaired. Technology has given us the ability to put closed captions on our videos online as well as adding photo captions to our blog and social media posts. Photos should have a clear picture of what is there to be read to those who cannot see.

Overall you need to think about the communication you are sending out. Is it a message of inclusion? If you are unsure how to go about sending a message of inclusion, there is a great organization you can get involved with to learn more.
how you can become more diverse in your dietetics practices. It is called Diversify Dietetics and was founded by registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs) Deanna Bellany and Tamara Melton. The idea was born out of the need they felt was missing in our industry: a community to attract, encourage, and empower students and young professionals of color who were seeking careers in the field of nutrition and dietetics.

Their mission is to increase diversity in the field of nutrition by empowering students and young professionals from underrepresented minority groups to join the next generation of nutrition experts. They wanted an organization that was inclusive of all ethnic and racial groups.

Specifically, one that was connecting over social media. The goal is for Diversify Dietetics to fill in those gaps and complement initiatives of the Academy’s Member Interest Groups (MIG)s. If you are interested in learning more about Diversify Dietetics you can check out their official website at https://www.diversifydietetics.org/. Diversity and inclusion in technology is something that can be learned. It will help you become a better dietitian.

How the Pandemic is Shifting the Dietetics Profession

Submitted by Dina Aronson, MS, RDN

The COVID-19 pandemic has undeniably shifted not only the way we think about, market, and deliver nutrition services, but the way we experience and portray our own profession. Whether you practice MNT, consult, coach, do PR, are industry-employed, or work in culinary, your job has changed in some capacity over the past few months and will likely continue to transform to accommodate our evolving society and economy, driven mainly by the pandemic and its pervasive effects.

Virtual Everything
Our learning, networking, and practice as dietitians are bound by the limits imposed by lockdowns, social distancing and diminished travel. This has led to the unfortunate cancellations or postponements of many professional events, including our own. But plans are in place for virtual transitioning. Did you ever imagine FNCE would be an online-only experience? That is the reality this year, following the successful lead of large health conferences, the Today’s Dietitian Symposium and other dietetics events. Fortunately, widely accessible tools like Zoom and Webex have normalized virtual meetings and discussions. Although these provide important opportunities for considerable interaction and learning, I think most of us would agree that the experience of human connection can never be fully reproduced two-dimensionally.

Jobs
When one door closes, others open. Some of us are busier and more
needed at work than ever before, while others have been furloughed or lost their job completely. COVID-19 has both annihilated jobs and blazed a trail for new opportunities through a dramatic reconstruction of our professional landscape. We must adapt to new challenges and demands and that means adjusting our expectations and perhaps widening our nets a bit. It may be a good time to seek opportunities in telehealth, virtual education, or maybe even launch your own business to serve the needs of this new normal. And because of current economic policy, you may find significant financial forgiveness, incentives and funding opportunities. For example, investments in digital health startups are at an all-time high.

Personalized nutrition, nutrigenomics, plant-forward diets, sustainability, and optimizing immunity are particularly hot trending areas you could look into incorporating into a virtual practice.

If you’re not up for something that ambitious, you could dip your toe into something traditional or even temporary or part-time. Try dietitian staffing services like Dietitians on Demand, Dietitian Pros, iHire Nutrition, and RD Nutrition Consultants. Don’t forget LinkedIn, the many DPG job boards, and of course NJAND’s own job board.

Expanded Reimbursement for Telehealth Services
The Academy has been vocal in its pursuit for comprehensive coverage for MNT and related services. Once CMS approved telehealth as a temporarily reimbursable service, the Academy acted swiftly in its additional requests for expanded flexibilities including an allowance for audio-only telehealth for seniors who cannot operate audio-visual technologies. As of July, CMS has announced an expansion of audio-only phone services, as well as reimbursements for additional telehealth services including physical, occupational, and speech therapy. Other organizations are pressuring CMS to extend telehealth reimbursement beyond the current "COVID-19 emergency period" to indefinitely. In the meantime, rules can change at any time. Keep up with the progress here:

https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/Telehealth/

https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/Telehealth/Telehealth-Codes

Diabetes prevention programs, cardiac rehab, lifestyle coaching, general nutrition counseling and other education-based nutrition care services may allow for telehealth reimbursement depending upon the insurance and how it's coded. The Academy has an extensive resource library at Eatright Pro, and you can often get answers to your questions on relevant DPG email listservs.

Whatever the outcome, it is important to embrace the paradigm shift of
Wellness and Culinary
There’s no question that the pandemic has reshaped the way Americans eat. We’re seeing a dichotomous return to home cooking right alongside a massive surge in all things delivery: meal kits, heat-and-eat options, groceries and restaurants. People are seeking ways to get healthier at home and we are the experts that can help! Pretty much whatever you’re selling - cooking instruction, food products, weight management services, lifestyle coaching, books, classes, private consulting - can be moved online as more and more people seek assistance from the digital world.

Another area of increased demand is, of course, food pantries and meal programs for those in need. A dietitian can help with program development, fund-raising, grant writing; procurement of higher quality products, making the most of ingredients, organizing wellness initiatives, and educating populations on budget-friendly, healthful cooking. Many nonprofit organizations would benefit from an RD’s skills and expertise.

In this time, more than ever, the only constant in life is change. Whatever the future may bring, may we all continue to stand united in our efforts to optimize the health and well-being of the populations we serve even as challenges abound, demands intensify, politics divide, technology soars and priorities are continually reshaped.

For further reading:
Why virtual care will outlast the pandemic. Mohana Ravindranath. Politico, 6/12/20


Telehealth Will Continue to Grow After Coronavirus Pandemic. Emily Sokol, mHealth Intelligence, 6/12/20.

Dina Aronson, MS, RDN is lead dietitian and head of content for Diet ID, a digital health company offering solutions for diet assessment and behavior change.
As the NJ Delegate I am charged with representing NJAND members at the national level, in all matters related to the profession, to the Academy's House of Delegates. I would like to provide you with an update. Due to the pandemic the HOD will move to virtual meetings this year. In the past, the HOD has looked at issues for the profession as "mega-issues" and last year moved to identifying "professional" and "strategic" issues as these terms seemed to create confusion among the delegates and members. Therefore, the term that will be used now is "critical-issues". Basically, these are issues that seriously impact the profession, membership and our workplaces.

Not surprisingly, the topic of focus for this year, is diversity and inclusion. This expansive topic will be divided into sub-areas and delegates will be able to choose an area of focus based on interest and expertise. For example, as an educator, I might sign up for diversity and inclusion in our educational system.

Recently, I participated in a book club regarding implicit bias with other members of Nutrition and Dietetics Educators of Practitioners (NDEP). We read and discussed the book "Biased: Uncovering the Hidden Prejudice That Shapes What We See, Think, and Do". It's a very interesting science based look at why and how implicit bias impacts our interactions historically and in the present day.

I'd like to offer to coordinate the reading and discussion of this book by NJAND members, so if you are interested in this topic, please sign up here https://forms.gle/PpPaMU6A8KM1Gjkn9 and I will be in touch. If you are interested in the area of implicit bias and are not aware of it, Harvard runs Project Implicit. This project helps one to examine implicit bias in health care issues, and other issues in addition to race based implicit bias.

Kathleen Carozza, MA, RDN, FAND
Delegate, NJAND

Post and Search Jobs!

NJAND is now posting employment opportunities on our website. This is a free service for members and is something members are requesting. Jobs must be nutrition and dietetics related. They will be posted within four business days of receipt and stay posted for a minimum of two weeks.
Professional Networking Groups and Listservs Bring Members Together!

The number of professional networking groups has grown to nine throughout the state. We have the following covered, but are open to more! The purpose is for RDNs and NDTRs as well as nutrition students to get to know each other better, develop professional relationships and talk about life and the profession.

- African American (meeting primarily in north jersey)
- Central Jersey
- Essex County
- Greater Morristown Area
- Hunterdon County
- Hudson County
- Jersey Shore
- South Jersey
- Bergen County

Listservs now focus on four professional practice areas as follows:

- NDTR
- School Nutrition
- Functional Medicine
- Pediatrics

The purpose of the listservs is to share information about particular areas of practice using electronic means. Sharing information, answering questions and supporting each other in practice allows for professional growth, especially for those feeling isolated in their area of practice. Members interested in joining a professional networking group or listserv can email Megan Squires, MS, RDN at: executivedirector@eatrightnj.org.

If you are interested in forming either a new Professional Networking Group or Listserv, please e-mail Megan Squires, MS, RDN at executivedirector@eatrightnj.org.

Academy Resources for Members and the Media!

Get the most out of your membership!

Did you know the Academy provides updated media information, sample public service announcements, and info-graphics for your use?

Follow the link, EatrightProMediaResources
Upon following the link, click on the menu tab, then on "Trends and Reviews" where you will find reviews of nutrition related apps and books!

Looking for graphics to use for your social media or nutrition education material? Did you know the USDA Agricultural Research Services offers a variety of food, farm and nutrition related graphics and pictures that are free and legal to use?

**STAY CONNECTED**

[icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram]