

The Press

The Newsletter for the **NewYork-Presbyterian** Dietetic Internship Program



Letter from the Editors

As we approach the end of summer, we celebrate the graduation of the 98th Class of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital Dietetic Interns. In this newsletter, we reflect on our accomplishments and experiences this past year in the program. Such experiences include hosting the P.R.E.C.E.P.T. Workshop, participating in the internship's newly designed Health and Wellbeing rotation, giving back to the community during the Heart-2-Heart events, and many more exciting accomplishments. As we look forward to new beginnings this September, we recognize and appreciate all the hard work we have done to further our learning in preparation for our role as future clinicians. The 98th and 99th classes of dietetic interns wish each other the best for the remainder of the internship and for our future careers in the world of Nutrition and Dietetics!

-Nicole Kuerzi, 98th class & Pratigya Singh, 99th class Dietetic Interns

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Coleen's Message

Dear Dietetic Interns, Graduates, Preceptors and Advisory Board Members,

As I reflect on all of the fun and exciting activities of learning our dietetic interns and nutrition fellows have accomplished over the past year, I am inspired by the growth and development of each of our interns and fellows. And this is why it brings me great pleasure to highlight for you the events and accomplishments our dietetic interns and nutrition fellows participated in over the past 50 weeks.

In this issue of *The Press* you will discover how our students collaborated with our partners in *NYPBeHealthy* to participate in a hospital-wide initiative promoting *NYPBeHealthy* meal options in our retail areas that were not only nutritious but also easy to make. Through the pages of our Newsletter you will also see their approach to clinical dietetics and the healing of patients through food and their engagement in continuous improvement processes. Furthermore, you will uncover the leadership skills our interns have by showcasing their public speaking and program development skills through the P.R.E.C.E.P.T. Workshop. In addition to these notable activities, the Dietetic Internship Program ventured in to a new-found association with the Culinary Nutrition Program at Johnson & Wales University. We hosted our inaugural learning experience blending the creative culinary approach while maintaining the therapeutic integrity of some diets to afford patients and patrons of NYP the opportunity taste new flavors and cuisines while following their diet restrictions.

Our interns have learned the skills of flexibility and volunteerism throughout their program year. We know these skills will be valuable to them as they enter the Nutrition and Dietetics workforce. It is our hope that the experiential learning they obtained from our Dietetic Internship Program will engage them to be change drivers in Nutrition and Dietetics and pave the way for future practice to shape our profession to remain the Nutrition Experts that we are.

Respectfully yours,

Coleen Liscano



Graduation of the 97th Class

The graduation of NewYork – Presbyterian Hospital's 97th Class of Dietetic Interns was an event full of reflection, recognition and celebration. The ceremony took place in the Uris Auditorium of NYP/Weill Cornell Medical Center. The guests were welcomed by Dr. Ernie Esquivel, Clerkship Director of Medicine. His welcome message also urged us to treat our patients as individuals, taking various "detours" with them as we listen to their unique story. Following his welcome, we heard from Roy Weeks, the Vice President of Support Services for the East Campus who delivered opening remarks and congratulated the interns on their accomplishments. This year's keynote speaker was Dr. Evelyn Attia, the Director of the Eating Disorders Research Unit at the New York State Psychiatric Institute. During the Behavioral Health Rotation, dietetic interns have the opportunity to observe Dr. Attia as she conducts her evaluation with eating disorder patients. Her words reminded us that our profession facilitates the ever-important mind-body connection needed to successfully treat patients with a variety of illnesses.

Later in the ceremony, the Preceptor of the Year Award was presented to Stephanie Roit, MS, RD, CDN. Presenters Esohe Guobadia and Catherine Karnatz delivered a heartfelt speech thanking Stephanie for going the extra mile in order to provide the best care and optimal learning environment for both patients and interns. The interns of the 97th class then took time to thank their training partners with kind words. Furthermore, Katie Johnson, graduate from the 97th class, addressed her class directly, commemorating the lifelong friendships formed within the program and celebrating the different career paths the class will soon embark on as they begin the transition from interns to practitioners. Finally, closing remarks from Administrative Director of Clinical Nutrition, Louise Merriman, MS, RD, CDN, offered advice to the graduating class as she took us through the history of the NYP Dietetic Internship Program and reflected on her time in her own internship. Her words left us with a greater respect for the past, how far we have come and how much we have to look forward to. Congratulations to the 97th class!

- Nicole Kuerzi, Dietetic Intern, 98th Class



Preceptors of the Year

Stephanie Roit, MS, RD, CDN was awarded as the East Campus Preceptor of the Year by the 97th class of Dietetic Interns. Stephanie was the preceptor for the Oncology Rotation at the time she received this award. Stephanie is described as a preceptor who goes above and beyond to provide rich learning opportunities for the dietetic interns she precepts. Stephanie cares for her patients with great empathy and the dietetic interns highlighted her unique style of interviewing patients to create a connection. Stephanie models great inter-professional collaboration and develops her dietetic interns' confidence to become advocates for their patients. It is clear that Stephanie enjoys precepting and makes an effort to create meaningful experiences for her interns.



Joyce Porter, RD, CDN, CNSC was awarded as the West Campus Preceptor of the Year by the 97th class of Dietetic Interns. As a staff relief dietitian, Joyce was the preceptor for multiple rotations, including the Neurology Rotation. Joyce is described as a preceptor who will go out of her way to assist dietetic interns, even if she is not their primary preceptor. Joyce models compassion and leadership for her interns and challenges them to take on new and challenging learning experiences. Joyce demonstrates great flexibility and agility as a preceptor covering many diverse patient populations and develops these skills in her interns. It is evident that Joyce enjoys precepting and goes the extra mile to ensure her dietetic interns have meaningful learning experiences.



- Gena Seraita, MS, RD, CDN Senior Dietitian

Heart-2-Heart

The 98th class of dietetic interns learned that the role of nutrition education goes beyond hospital walls by participating in the annual Heart-2-Heart Community Outreach Program. This program provides free health-screenings to underserved communities throughout the New York City boroughs. This student-led program of Weill Cornell Medical College has been offering this service since 2010. This year the class took trips to the Caldwell Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in the Bronx, Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn, Mamre S.D.A. Church in Brooklyn, and the New Life Center of Truth in Brooklyn. At each event, medical students and doctors conduct health screens to identify health issues such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Community members are then given the opportunity to receive personalized nutrition education and counseling from a dietetic intern. These counseling sessions are individualized with the goal of providing important nutrition information and tools to allow the participant to make meaningful changes to their diets.

One of the most amazing parts of the Heart-2-Heart event is the work that goes on before the event. The best way to give effective and personalized care is to know your patient population. The dietetic interns researched the communities where they would participate in the program and practiced cultural sensitivity by creating education materials and recipes based on the cultural background of the populations' and the demographics of the area. Each group targets one health issue that is specific to the population, such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. From this information the group develops an educational handout of tips to help prevent and treat these disease states. Together with the medical students, dietetic interns strive to incorporate medical nutrition therapy as the first line of defense for managing chronic illness and promoting healthy life choices. The 98th class had great pride in partaking in the event and giving back to the community. The experience with the Heart-2-Heart Program is truly fulfilling and gives interns great insight on best practice in individualized care. The dietetic interns from the 98th Class are looking forward to what future communities will be served by the 99th Class of dietetic interns this Fall!



-Maura Benedict, Dietetic Intern, 98th Class

Culinary Nutrition Internship

Bridget Guarino has a passion for the culinary arts and healing through food, so when she heard about the Culinary Nutrition Internship at NewYork-Presbyterian (NYP) it was a perfect fit. Bridget studied culinary nutrition at Johnson & Wales University (JWU) with aspirations to become a Registered Dietitian. This inaugural experience between NYP and JWU was a nine-week experience that exposed Bridget to how nutrition therapy, through food, can impact patients in a hospital setting. While a majority of her work was completed at the Allen Hospital, Bridget was exposed to and learned from the different Food Service operations at various NYP campuses including Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Once she was familiar with the operations, Bridget worked on her main project during this internship, developing *NYPBeHealthy* recipes. During her time at NYP, Bridget developed and submitted 10 recipes. She methodically created creative recipes that were not only delicious but served to nourish the patient population by being compliant with at least two different therapeutic diets. Bridget sampled two of her dishes during her last week with us. A proposal was made to have these dishes available in the retail space for purchase. Additionally, these dishes can be offered to patients in the future. Bridget was NYP's first Culinary Nutrition Student to complete this experience and we were lucky to gain her expertise through her work during this nine-week period.



-Lisa Cianciotta, Dietetic Intern, 99th class

Food as Medicine: Bringing Everyone to the Table

Food as Medicine has become a movement in raising awareness on the therapeutic nature of food, providing health professionals the means to educate patients on their diet and the amazing role food may play in their lives. NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital's Food as Medicine event was successful at uniting like-minded Physicians, Registered Dietitians, Registered Nurses, Chefs and thought provoking leaders together to discuss the benefits of integrating nutrition into clinical practice. This gathering opened avenues of discussion for incorporating a plant-based diet into the treatment and prevention of various chronic diseases. Through shared initiatives, the hospital is taking steps towards making food a formal part of treatment. The initiative is dedicated to preventing diseases and improving the health of patients, employees and communities by "prescribing" nutritional changes.



Dietetic interns had the opportunity to volunteer for this event and work alongside food service staff. This experience provided delicious insight into the numerous benefits of plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, and whole grains. Research on the power of food to treat or reverse disease is beginning to accumulate. Therefore, it is crucial to think critically about current research in order to better educate and inform our patients. Overall, this event made great strides by establishing a community whereby professionals and experts in the field may come together to share thoughts on how to make nutrition the foundation for reversing the effects of chronic diseases. The dietetic interns were honored and proud to be a part of such initiatives as future experts in the field of nutrition.



- Susan Juray, MS, Dietetic Intern, 98th Class

Height-Weight Study

Every three years, the dietetic interns are granted the opportunity to be a part of The Food and Nutrition Department's Quality Surveillance Study on Admission Height and Weight. This triennial project sets out to analyze the frequency of accurate height and weight documentation and the timeliness of initial nutrition screens in the Nursing Admission Documents and Flowsheets. Across six NewYork-Presbyterian sites, the 98th and 99th classes collectively set out to conquer the task at hand. During the selected 3-week time period, the interns were assigned units for which they review medical records and conduct a visual assessment of all admitted patients to confirm the accuracy of their height and weight upon admission to the hospital. Additionally, the interns investigate to confirm if the Nutrition Screen for all admitted patients was completed within the first 24 hours of admission. The first 24 hours post-admission are sensitive for data collection, and the accuracy is essential to the care we provide our patients.

The data is compiled and evaluated by a Core Team of dietetic interns who will present their findings to the Clinical Nutrition Management and the Hospital Quality Teams. The formal presentation to the management teams is the culminating experience of this assessment and is an integral catalyst for patient-focused quality improvement. For example, this study previously yielded measures to accrue pediatric length boards for Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital and Komansky Children's Hospital to improve assessment and documentation of lengths. The submission of findings that come from the study allow us to assess a need and act on our motto to *Put Our Patients First*. Additionally, this project fosters inter-professional collaboration between Clinical Nutrition and Nursing Management. This is a thoughtfully developed relationship which is vital to patient centered care. As our 98th class nears completion of their dietetic internship, the valuable competencies achieved by all interns through this undertaking will carry over until our 2022 protégés embark on this journey once again.

-Sofia Sanchez Porush, Dietetic Intern, 99th Class

P.R.E.C.E.P.T. Workshop

In April the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) Dietetic Internship Program held its 2nd Annual P.R.E.C.E.P.T. Workshop at NYP/Columbia University Irving Medical Center. The dietetic interns contribute to this workshop from start to finish. The goal of this program is to be a resource to preceptors and provide Registered Dietitians with the tools they need to best develop their dietetic interns, the future of our field. This year's workshop included concepts of Fad Diets and a session Nutrition Focused Physical Exam throughout the life cycle. During the breakout sessions, a Precepting 101 was available for new preceptors to learn skills that they may apply as they begin to precept. For more seasoned preceptors, a round table session focused on "Crucial Conversations" was held to afford them the opportunity to discuss complex situations that may arise when precepting and share insights on how to support interns through these difficult situations.

With each Workshop, we strive to reach more people to aid in expanding our pool of knowledge. For our 2nd Annual workshop, participants we continued to offer the option to attend via a virtual platform. This allowed professionals across the country to participate in the event. The P.R.E.C.E.P.T. Workshop ultimately serves to **P**repare **R**esourceful, **E**mpowered, **C**ollaborative, **E**ngaged, and **P**assionate **T**eachers that will shape the future of our field of nutrition and dietetics. It also affords the dietetic interns in our program the unique opportunity to give back and pay it forward by providing a valuable resource for their preceptors. Preceptors play a crucial role the education of Registered Dietitians and the opportunity to give back to them is priceless.

-Pratigya Sighn, Dietetic Intern, 99th Class



NYPBeHealthy: More than a Recipe

NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) dedicates itself not only to the well-being of their patients, but also to their employees and communities. *NYPBeHealthy* is a program created to help employees improve and maintain their health and overall well-being. During one very exciting week in the program year, dietetic interns complete a rotation in Health and Wellbeing. Interns spend time with Wellness Coaches at NYP/Queens, assist NYP Corporate employees with *BeHealthy* initiatives and create a recipe to be served at one of the NYP retail dining areas.

The recipes created by the dietetic interns were developed to meet *NYPBeHealthy* nutritional criteria, and an added requirement this year was to make the recipe whole food plant-based. These recipes assist with NYP's Food and Nutrition Department initiative to increase the availability of Plant-Based Meals in our retail areas. Plant-based diets can help reduce the risk of chronic illnesses and are good for the environment. Intern recipes included Lentil and Sweet Potato Shepherd's Pie and Mango Quinoa Medley. Samples of the recipes were provided outside retail cafeterias and then made available for purchase at both Weill Cornell Medical Center and Columbia University Irving Medical Center.

One pair of Dietetic Interns created a recipe for Chickpea and Kale Curry, which was sampled and offered in the Heights Cafe at the Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Patrons could enjoy the new plant-based creation and take home a handout containing recipe instructions and nutrition information. The recipe was so impactful that it inspired participants to share the information. In fact, it was highlighted on the Hackensack Meridian John Theurer Cancer Center Facebook page as an exemplary recipe for people interested in plant-based meals options. This experience highlights the impact dietetic interns can have beyond NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital in providing information that empowers individuals to make healthy choices.

-Rebecca Yellin, Dietetic Intern 98th Class



Louise's Remarks: Your Leadership Legacy

As our 50-week Dietetic Internship Program comes to completion for the 98th Class of Dietetic Interns, I would like to extend a warm welcome from all of us in the NYP Department of Food & Nutrition and Dietetic Internship Advisory Board to our newest alumni! It's astounding to note that, with this graduating class, the NYP Dietetic Internship totals 1,646 graduates!

As you continue in your professional careers, remember the roots that you have established here at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital by embracing your membership in our NYP Dietetic Internship Alumni Association. Reflecting upon the past 50 weeks, I am drawn to think about the legacy of leadership that you are leaving with us at NYP. Simply put, a legacy of leadership is making a positive impact - no matter how big or small - on whatever you touch.



With this in mind, what are some of the leadership characteristics demonstrated by the 98th Class that have allowed you to achieve a positive imprint at New-York Presbyterian Hospital?

A Positive Attitude – Despite challenges, I have lots of memories of your smiling faces waiting for the shuttle, during class day, on the patient care units and while getting lunch - enthusiasm energizes individual and team effectiveness in dealing with expected and unexpected change. As Ralph Waldo Emerson once stated, “Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm”... and, I will add, without a positive attitude!

Resilience – Whether routine assignments, challenging patient cases or special assignments like room service startups or our Food as Medicine Networking Event, you always exhibited a “can do” attitude!

Responsibility – An ethical commitment to the nutritional care of patients has been essential to your outcomes and highlights your professional integrity overall.

Communication – From huddles, to meetings to debates and PES statements... the timely, complete and respectful communication provided by the 98th Class has been another hallmark of your success.

Confidence – With hard work and perseverance, you have earned the personal and professional self-esteem that will take you far in life and their professional careers.

Creativity – The 98th class members have learned to utilize resources in new and unique ways...going way beyond the \$6.25 lunch allowance!

Motivation – You have achieved well beyond your own and others expectations with a passion to succeed in providing care and in a job well done!

Empathy – Purely technical skills and cognitive abilities don't fulfill the competencies needed to practice in healthcare today; the ability to work with teams paved the way for the 98th class to work effectively with patients, NYP staff members and each other.

Humor - As the 98th Class has shown us, laughter is a transformational tool that magnetizes positive energy! ...let's also remember that amazing leaders are not perfect – biographies are filled with the quirks of leaders who are, after all, human! Amazing leaders use their own personal level of skill, knowledge and emotional intelligence to improve all that they do to leave a lasting positive imprint and by doing that they also improve themselves.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to have had the 98th class with us this past year. We thank you for your many contributions to patient care, our dietetic internship program and to our clinical nutrition and food service programs. We wish our 98th Class of Dietetic Internship Graduates every success and look forward to hearing about your next amazing chapters!

-Louise Merriman, MS, RD, CDN, Administrative Director, Clinical Nutrition, NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital

Congratulations to the 98th Class of NYP Dietetic Interns



The Newsletter for the NewYork-Presbyterian Dietetic Internship Program Editorial Team is looking for contributors for our next issue of **The Press**.

If you have:

- A nutrition related blog that you would like to us to feature
- An event that you would like to advertise
- A non-traditional career path you would like to share
- Other ideas for future articles

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