

Dietetic Internship Newsletter

Issue XVI Fall 2022



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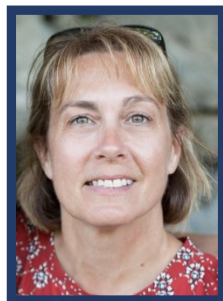
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Junior Dietetic Interns, September 2022



Junior Dietetic Interns (from left to right); Top row: Corrine McGrath, Caitlyn Winn, Lauren Roberts; Bottom row: Emma Denbow, Jordan Hess, Emma Watras

Letter from the Director



Dr. Mona Therrien-Genest
DI Director

Hello preceptors, faculty, interns, and alumni, and welcome to the 2022 edition of the UMaine Dietetic Internship Newsletter! My thanks goes out to our preceptors and site coordinators for another great year of supervised practice experience for our interns.

My congratulations goes out to our finishing interns in 2021/2022. They include Holly Corcoran, Brooke Hardy, Leigh Neptune, Kayla Parsons, Alexandra James, Emily Lavertu, and Maegan Perrault. These interns represented the UMaine Dietetic Internship to the best of their ability, exceeding expecta-

Continued on next page

Letter from the Director, continued...

tions and adapting to an ever-changing world. We are so proud of their accomplishments.

A special thanks goes out to all who participated in our Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND®) site visit for accreditation, which occurred September 18-20 of this year. Reviewers met with program alumni, UMaine administration, junior interns, senior interns, our advisory committee, graduate faculty, preceptors, student support services, and the Graduate School. A special thank you to Kate Yerxa, Alex Gayton, Alex Bosse, Amber Gard, and Brandon Hay, who met individually with our site reviewers to represent our community, foodservice management, and clinical sites respectively.

The site visit report was received on November 1st, 2022. The reviewers had the following general comments: they noted the strong sense of community and pride within the University of Maine as evidenced by undergraduates applying for dietetic internships, and graduates serving both as preceptors and/or faculty. Reviewers commented on the obvious dedication and commitment of faculty and preceptors involved in the delivery of the UMaine Dietetic Internship Program's curriculum and supervised practice. Areas needing improvement included providing a plan to ensure that all preceptors would receive training on strategies to recognize biases in self and others and reduce instances of microaggressions and discrimination.

To address the need for preceptor training on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), a series of webinars have been provided by ACEND. The webinars are aimed at reducing instances of bias and discrimination, relating to the profession of dietetics. There are 4 webinars in the series with free CPEUs provided for each. An email was sent to all sites on November 8 with a link to recorded webinars along with a form to record preceptor participation. We appreciate all who complete this training.

Finally, I wish all of you a great end to 2022. Thank you for your continued support of the University of Maine Dietetic Internship Program. As always, feel free to contact myself or my colleague, Julie Milan, with any questions. We look forward to another great year of working with all of you!

Sincerely

Mona Therrien-Genest

The UMaine DI Program's Comprehensive Self-Study Report was submitted to ACEND for review in June of 2022. Site reviewers visited our program this fall. Reviewers noted the strong sense of community and pride within the University of Maine as evidenced by undergraduates applying for dietetic internships, and graduates serving both as preceptors and/or faculty.



University of Maine

Nutrition and Dietetics Internship Program

Comprehensive Self-Study Report

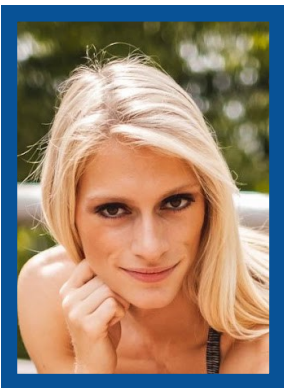
for

The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)

Semi-Annual Pinning Ceremony

Interns from the classes of 2021 and 2022 were awarded the RDN pin and a certificate for completing their dietetic internship in December 2021 and August 2022, respectively. Pinning ceremonies are held on a semi-annual basis to commemorate graduating interns entrance into the dietetics profession. Congratulations, graduates, and thank you to all of our preceptors and faculty who support our interns!

Class of 2021 -- December Graduates



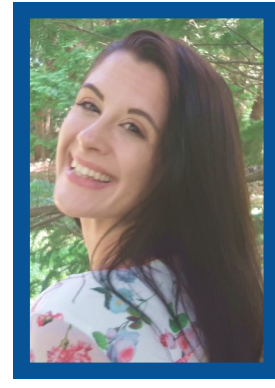
Holly Corcoran



Brooke Hardy



Leigh Neptune

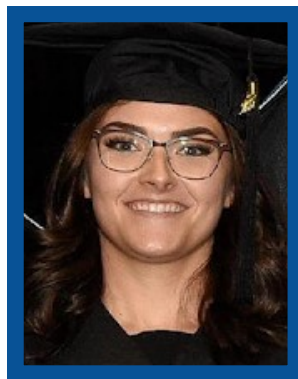


Kayla Parsons

Class of 2022 -- August Graduates



Alexandra James



Emily Lavertu



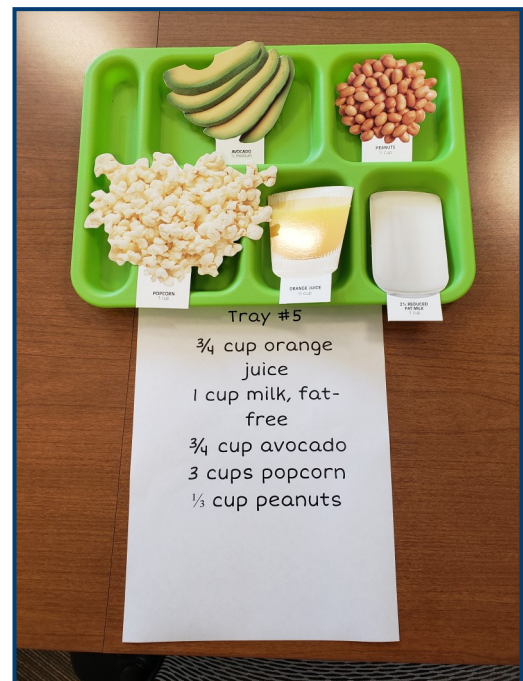
Maegan Perrault

Interns in the Field — Alexandra James at the Annual New Foodservice Director Bootcamp



Alexandra James, during her Community Rotation, at the Maine Department of Education, Child Nutrition Services

During her community rotation, dietetic Intern, Alexandra James, completed a project designed to test the knowledge of new foodservice directors at the annual New Director Bootcamp, a training for new directors held by the Maine Department of Education (DOE), Child Nutrition Services. The project included making seven meal trays, three of which were reimbursable; the remaining four were not. Alexandra said that the meal trays helped to “create some good talking points”. She also explained that in order for a meal to be “reimbursable, it must meet daily and weekly serving sizes for the age group that is being served”, and “these meal patterns are federally regulated”. Alexandra completed this project under the supervision of preceptors, Adriane Ackroyd, MPH, RD and Stephanie Stambach, MS, RD, SNS at DOE, Child Nutrition Services.



Interns Develop Content for a Student Resources Page on the Maine Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND) Website

Last spring, senior dietetic interns, Sarah Griffiths and Sarah Loring, worked on a project to compile important nutrition student resources with the overall goal of creating a student-focused webpage on the Maine Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND) website. Interns initiated the process by determining topics relevant to both undergraduate and graduate nutrition majors. They identified five categories of resources: 1) pathways to registration as an RDN or NDTR; 2) landing a dietetic internship; 3) scholarships; 4) success at the registration exam; and 5) career resources and mentoring. The interns met with Eileen Molloy, MAND Communications Chair, and Julie Milan, MAND Communications Committee Member, to review and further streamline the resource list. The content was added to a newly developed Student Member Resources page on the MAND site and is now accessible to members at the following link: <https://www.eatrightmaine.org/>.

Welcome to MAND Student Member Resources



Pathways to Registration as an RDN or NDTR



Landing a Dietetic Internship



Scholarships Graduation Ceremony



Success at the Registration Exam



Career Resources & Mentoring

Visit the MAND website to access the new [Student Member Resources page.](#)

The Role Food Security Status, Financial Literacy, and Nutrition Literacy Play on the Diet Quality of College Students

~ Amelia Sullivan's Master's Thesis

What is the topic of your research, and why did you choose to pursue this area?

The objective of my research was to explore the role food security status, financial literacy, and nutrition literacy play in the diet quality of college students. This research additionally sought to understand mediational relationships among these factors that could impact diet quality. Data were collected utilizing a case study of undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Maine. My research interest includes both community nutrition and nutrition behavior.

Thus, constructing my research question, I postulated: *if a college student demonstrates high nutrition and financial literacy, this implies they could purchase enough nutritionally adequate foods for a healthy lifestyle; therefore, could strong nutrition and financial literacy improve both food security status and diet quality?*

Would you give a brief summary of your research, including some background information, methods and major findings?

Traditional college students are notorious for poor diet quality due, in part, to pressure to meet academic obligations and fit into this new environment socially. Dietary choices are often multifactorial, therefore, attributing poor diet quality to the college environment merely scratches the surface of the problem at hand. Other factors to consider include food security, financial, and nutrition literacy. Within the current literature, no studies have investigated the novel impact food security status, financial literacy, and nutrition literacy have on the diet quality of college students in the United States.

A cross-sectional convenience sample of college students at UMaine completed an online questionnaire assessing health behaviors.

A Correlation was run to analyze participants' continuous variables and examine directionality of relationships. A MANCOVA was run to explore group differences between interactive nutrition literacy and diet quality while controlling for gender and meal plan differences. Differences between financial literacy attitude and diet quality, controlling for socioeconomic, gender, and meal plan differences, were analyzed using a MANCOVA. Established by the correlation results, a path analysis directed which model best fit to explain diet quality in this population.

Results were consistent with the research objectives: students with above average interactive nutrition literacy and financial literacy attitude had significantly higher diet quality. Additionally, interactive nutrition literacy and financial literacy attitude were strongly correlated. Interestingly, food security status was not a significant predictor of diet quality in this population. These results suggest that interactive nutrition literacy and financial literacy attitude play a role in diet quality, despite students' food security status.

What are some limitations and implications for your research?

Limitations of this study include a lack of diversity among the participants sampled; participants were primarily white and female. Additionally, this survey did not consider whether participants were international or domestic students. As the University of Maine is home to over 500 international students from over 70 countries, this is an important factor to study, especially considering international students may face difficulties adjusting to American culture, which could result in poor diet quality. Lastly, this study was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Recent studies investigating the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on college students have found that students' diet quality and physical activity levels were impacted negatively.

Based on your findings and a review of the current literature, what advice or recommendations would you give to the general public?

This study justifies educational and wellness interventions that target college-aged students' nutrition and financial literacy to improve diet quality and food security. Education regarding nutritional literacy and financial literacy aids in building behavior change in early adulthood, resulting in reduced risk of chronic disease development, less burden on healthcare resources, and the potential to pass healthy lifestyles to future generations of leaders in the United States.



Amelia Sullivan

Master's Student & Senior Dietetic Intern

Amelia holds a bachelor's degree in Food Science & Human Nutrition from the University of Maine. She defended her thesis in November and plans to submit her research for publication. Amelia recently travelled to the American Public Health Association's annual meeting in Boston, MA, to orally present her findings. She begins her dietetic internship in January and will graduate in 2023 with her Master's degree. Congratulations, Amelia!

The Relationship between Intuitive Eating and Body Mass Index and Diet Quality in College Students

~ Ashley Reynold's Master's Thesis

What is the topic of your research, and why did you choose to pursue this area?

The topic of my research is looking at the relationship between intuitive eating and both body mass index and diet quality in college students. I pursued the topic of intuitive eating because since being in college, I have been exposed to diet culture and watched both family and friends struggle with dieting so I wanted to investigate a healthier alternative and look at the physical benefits intuitive eating can have.

Would you give a brief summary of your research, including some background information, methods and major findings?

College students may suffer from poor eating habits or even eating disorders, have frequent consumption of foods high in added sugar and saturated fat, fast food, and reduced fruit and vegetable (F/V) intake. One alternative to the common diet culture that may help improve college students' eating behavior is IE. IE is a theoretical framework that emphasizes internal recognition of homeostatic signals and physiological hunger and satiety cues, rather than environmental and emotional cues; it is truly an "anti-diet".

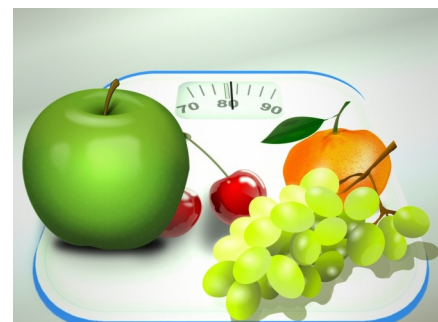
A cross-sectional convenience sample of college students completed an online survey consisting of the USDA's short-Healthy Eating Index (sHEI) and the Intuitive Eating Scale-2 (23 items). BMI was calculated using self-reported height and weight. Descriptive statistics were used for group characteristics. A linear regression was used to test if IE scores significantly predicted BMI. An independent t-test was used to compare BMIs of students with IE scores above and below the average. Pearson's correlation coefficients determined significant relationships between dietary components and IE scores. A one-way multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was used

to identify differences in consumption of dietary components among students with scores above and below average IE scores, while controlling for BMI.

College students who had IE scores above the average (3.3) had lower BMIs than students with scores below the average but showed mixed results in relation to DQ. Students who had IE scores above the average consumed more F/V and less sodium but consumed more added sugar and saturated fat. The results provide preliminary justification for IE education for this population to help encourage healthy BMIs.

What are some limitations and implications for your research?

One limitation of this study was that most of the research sample were white (88.6%), female (71.1%), and heterosexual (72.1%), which limits the perspective of the study and makes it difficult to generalize results. The study did not account for food security status which may be a limitation. Another limitation may be that the study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. An additional limitation is that the cross-sectional study had room for response error because all the data was self-reported.



This study provides justification for IE based educational interventions for college students to help improve DQ and to reach and maintain a healthy BMI.

Based on your findings and a review of the current literature, what advice or recommendations would you give to the general public?

Based on my findings and a review of the current literature, I would advise the general public to educate themselves on intuitive eating and begin trying to incorporate and practice it in their everyday lives based on both the physical and mental benefits it can have, especially compared with traditional dieting methods.



Ashley Reynolds
Master's Student & Senior Dietetic Intern

Ashley currently holds a bachelor's degree in Food Science & Human Nutrition from the University of Maine. She defended her thesis in November and plans to submit her research for publication in the near future. Ashley begins her dietetic internship in January and will graduate in August 2023 with her Master's degree. Congratulations, Ashley!

Alumni News

Dates are year starting the DI Program

Class of 2009

Stephanie (Cummings) Stambach welcomed a baby boy, Elias "Eli" Charles Stambach in July 2021! At the Maine Department of Education, Child Nutrition, she was promoted to Child Nutrition Supervisor.

Class of 2010

Elyse (Peters) Lewis welcomed her third child in May of 2021. As of August 2022, Elyse is working as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) at Maine Medical Center.

Class of 2010

Anh Thu Truong is a clinical dietitian at Maine Medical Center (MMC) since 2012. She is an active member on the Wellness Council, Wellness Garden Committee, Sustainability Committee and Diabetes Education Work Group at MMC. She currently holds the secretary position on the executive board for the Maine Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Anh Thu has two sweet boys, Jayden and Jackson, and lives with her family in Portland. She loves reading, gardening and enjoys going on various outdoor adventures with her family to explore the beauty of Maine.

Class of 2012

Rachael (Pepin) Rende will be celebrating eight years with MaineGeneral in March of 2023. She sat for the Certified Nutrition Support Clinician (CNSC) exam in April and successfully renewed her certification originally obtained in 2017. Rachael recently transitioned from a clinical dietitian, covering the inpatient critical care unit, to an Oncology Nutrition Specialist at the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care. She and her husband welcomed a baby boy in August of this year.

Class of 2013

Tom Mellette, his wife, and two children have relocated back to Maine from North Carolina. He and his wife have both accepted positions at Maine Medical Center!

Class of 2017

Jennifer (Minieri) Heartcastle is working as a program manager for a nonprofit and has a very unique job for a dietitian! She would love to share more about the program and the work she is doing in public health!

*Stay Connected with the UMaine DI Program!
Share your news with us!*

Send alumni updates to:

Julie Milan, Assistant Director
umaine.diprogram@gmail.com



Dietetic Internship Program
5735 Hitchner Hall
Orono, ME 04469-5735

Job Announcements

Dietitian, Cary Medical Center, Caribou, ME

Per Diem, Remote work is possible
Could become a part-time position.

Contact Aubrie Conary
for more information:
207-498-1211
agross@carymed.org

To apply online, access
job posting [here](#).

Full-time Clinical Dietitian at Northern Light A.R. Gould Hospital

Sign-on Bonus Eligible: \$8000

Contact Nicole Doughty
for more information
207-768-4358
ndoughty@northernlight.org

To apply online, access
job posting [here](#).

Clinical Dietitian – \$5,000 Sign-On Bonus



You want to work where your passion to make a difference is valued.

We're with you. Come join us.

- A supportive culture of teamwork and safety in a positive work environment
- Discount of 30 percent on health care services provided by MaineGeneral and discounts at area businesses
- Financial support for certifications and training
- Paid parental bonding leave
- Access to career navigation services
- Generous earned time
- Student loan reimbursement for Registered Dietitians up to \$4,800

To learn more, please contact
Denise Beland, RD/LD, Clinical
Nutrition Manager, at 207-626-1315
or denise.beland@mainegeneral.org.



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University of Maine Dietetic Internship

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