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The Research Dietetic Practice Group (DPG) is an enthusiastic group of nutrition and dietetic professionals dedicated to improving understanding about the impact of food and nutrition on health and disease. The field of nutrition is multi-faceted; thus, DPG members have disparate research interests. However, the drive for evidence bonds us.

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**Mission**

*Lead the future of dietetics by promoting the conduct and application of research related to food, nutrition and dietetics.*

**Vision**

*Provide members with information and networking to allow them to be the valued source for conducting, interpreting, and applying research related to food, nutrition and dietetics.*

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**Rocking Nutrition Research**

A primary goal for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-2020 was making research more accessible for all members and help encourage dialogue between expert researchers and novices. The Research DPG also embraced the call to action to promote diversity and inclusion in the profession.

The following report provides an overview of the Research DPG activities implemented with the aim of achieving these goals.
Movers and Shakers

The Research DPG includes an exceptional group of nutrition professionals. The following members were recognized by the Academy during FY 2019-2020:

**Medallion Award**
- Karen Chapman-Novakofski, PhD, RD, LDN (University of Illinois)
- David H. Holben, PhD, RDN, LD, FAND (University of Mississippi)

**Excellence in Practice Award**
- Susan Steck, PhD, MPH, RD, FAND University of South Carolina

**Council on Future Practice Top Innovator Award**
- Tracey A. Ledoux, PhD, RD, FAND

**Marie and August LoPresti, Sr. Faculty Development Award**
- Mary-Jon Ludy, PhD, RDN, FAND, Bowling Green State University

**Emerging Dietetics Leader**
- Colleen M. Tewksbury, PhD, MPH, RD, LDN (PA)

**Outstanding Dietitian**
- Nicole Brown, MS, RDN, LD, ACSM EP-C (VA)
- Ingrid Lofgren, PhD, MPH, RD (RI)
- Esther F. Myers, PhD, RDN, FAND (International Affiliate)

**Outstanding Dietetics Educator**
- Hope Barkoukis, PhD, RDN, LD, FAND (Case Western Reserve University)
- Sarah Couch, PhD, RDN (DPD, University of Cincinnati)
- Merel Kozlosky, MS, RD (DI, National Institutes of Health)

**Recognized Young Dietitian**
- Maria Morgan-Bathke, PhD, RD, CD (MN)
- Andrea Moosreiner, MPH, RD (WI)
- Khawhlah S. Al-Muhanna, MS, RDN (OH)
- Eliza Short, RD (AZ)
Outstanding Dietetics Student

- Flaminia Aceranti (CT)
- KayLeigh Kaiser (TX)
- Emily K. Kuettel (NY)
- Hillary Nason (WA)
- Dimitra K. Thomopoulos (PA)
- Brooke Wickman, MS, RD (MN)
- Hannah Wilson, BS (GA)

Fueling Inquiring Minds

Members were kept abreast on a range of research issues, as well as offered strategies and tools to help facilitate and disseminate nutrition research.

News of Note

The Digest

*The Digest* went through a transformation during the FY 2019-2020. The three electronic issues available for download from the RDPG website offer a more user-friendly format. The scope of the articles included in *The Digest* was expanded. Now, in addition to featuring members’ research, this member newsletter offers insights and tips into research designs and dissemination. For example, the article on clinical research career options for RDNs with Master degrees and ten lessons learned at a clinical research boot camp training program.
@researchdpg

Twitter continued to be the primary social media outlet employed by the Research DPG to help promote research to members and others. During fiscal year 2019-2020, a "Twitter List" (curated timeline that people can subscribe to) of Research Dietitians was launched. The list currently has 113 members and serves as an additional strategy for highlighting research dietitians on Twitter. Also of note, several prominent researchers regularly tweet using the #RDresearch hashtag to share their research findings and insights.

The Research DPG has 1,577 Twitter followers and consistently achieves a 1-2% engagement rate on tweets (0.5% is considered a good engagement rate on Twitter; above 1% is great). World events (COVID pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement), however, impacted the Research DPG Twitter Feed. Last year’s average of 6,000 impressions per month dropped to about 2,000 impressions during FY 2019-2020, as these world happenings took center stage.

Groundwork was laid for allowing members and non-members to share their research stories via Twitter Takeovers. A draft contract to be signed by potential participants was approved by the EC and Academy. Execution of initiative is planned for next fiscal year.

E-blasts

Monthly Research DPG eBlasts gave members the opportunity to hear directly from the Executive Committee about organizational matters, as well as news about DPG and Academy activities. Other content included ACEND updates and the latest call for articles for *The Digest*.

During FY 2019-2020, eBlasts were sent out mid-month to about 800 to 900 members. An average of 50% of recipients read the eBlast. Of note, eBlasts about EC nominations, those sent prior to FNCE® and around election time (reminders to vote and announcement of winners) had the highest readership.

The content of the eBlasts was expanded during this fiscal year; for example, each month a website feature was spotlighted and reminders to join the EML included.
RDPG Website

In an effort to keep the website updated, increase website traffic, and improve member engagement, the RDPG homepage was regularly updated and new pages/features added during FY 2019-2020.

Annual maintenance and updates included:

- Updated pages: Events, Contact Us, Leadership, Voting Member, Bios, Sponsors, Governance, The Digest, Webinars, Apply for Awards & Grants, and RDPG @ FNCE®.
- Open volunteer positions and elected positions were advertised on the website when appropriate.
- Events were also promoted on the website. A Diversify Dietetics webinar featuring RDPG diversity liaison Shelly DeBiasse was advertised on the RDPG homepage, as well as the Enhancing Diversity in the Dietetics Profession webinar series. The pre-FNCE® BNEO symposium, a webinar from the Diabetes Care and Education DPG, and a PepsiCo’s Nutrition Services survey were sent to members via sponsored eblasts, as well as updates of new issues of The Digest.

New pages and features were also created during the year:

- New pages: Member Recognition, External Awards & Grants, and members-only Elections.
- New features: In addition to listing member who received RDPG and member grants/awards, RDPG members who received Academy awards were highlighted on the homepage. In addition, separate pages were created to archive member accomplishments. Furthermore, to increase website traffic was a website highlight created for the monthly eblasts. Website features highlighted include: EML, webinars, mentorship program, member directory, Council on Research, and the DPG Research Toolkit.
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the following pages that are typically behind a membership login wall were made publicly available: Webinars, The Digest, and the DPG Research Toolkit. These resources were advertised in the Academy Student Liaison online community and in various student networks, and I believe they were shared in the NDEP online community.

Pages that are currently being revamped include the History page, the Awards - Past Recipients page, and the newly created Students page and Diversity in Nutrition & Dietetics page. Developments of these pages have been initiated through collaborations with the RDPG historian, student liaison, and diversity liaison.

In hopes of adding more visually appealing website content and in preparation of the Dry Wash to High Logic website host transition, the website committee added a volunteer.
Funding and Recognizing Researchers

Research DPG awards funded research efforts and recognized members for their research accomplishments. Grants and awards for FY 2019-2020 follow.

Research Funding

Sugar Association/Research DPG Pilot Grant ($10,000)
Meera Penumetcha, University of Central Missouri
Project title: Development and validation of a lipid oxidation index (LOI) for commonly consumed foods

Mead Johnson Nutrition/Research DPG Student Pilot Grant ($1,200)
Lisa M. Lanza, Drexel University
Project title: Regional prefrontal cortex activation to potentially rewarding activities in postpartum women with and without depression compared to nulligravida women.

Megan Elaine Larson, Bowling Green State University
Project title: Comparison of body composition assessment techniques in collegiate and maters level swimmers.

Mead Johnson Nutrition/Research DPG Student Pilot Grant ($300)
Matthew Landry, The University of Texas at Austin
Project title: National School Lunch Program associated with higher dietary quality.

Laura Niederer, Marywood University
Project title: Identifying primary care providers to increase dietitian referrals.

Prabhdeep Sandha, University of Mississippi
Project title: Impact of a produce intervention on parental produce intake and behaviors.
Published First Author Award
Susan E. Steck, University of South Carolina
Steck et al. Calcium, magnesium, and whole-milk intakes and high-aggressive prostate cancer in the North Carolina-Louisiana Prostate Cancer Project.

Emerging Investigator First Author Award
Kate Gardner Burt, Lehman College

Professional Achievement
The Research DPG selected and facilitated the nomination process for two exceptional members for national awards and honors; one member was nominated for the Medallion Award and the second for the Excellence in Practice Award.

The DPG Medallion nominee, Dr. Kendra Kattelmann, was selected for a 2020 Academy Medallion Award!

Congratulations!
Offering Training and Education for Members

Mentorship, webinars, and an in-person symposium offered special training education opportunities for members. Some activities were offered to the general community of nutrition professionals.

RDPG Mentorship Program

During FY 2019-2020, the RDPG Mentorship Program executed a 6-month mentorship program with nine pairs of mentors/mentees. Mentee accomplishments included securing a research position, attending a professional conference for the first time, developing a presentation for ASPEN, and preparing a manuscript for submission.

All of the participants were very positive about the experience. In the Summer 2020 issue of *The Digest*, doctoral student Chen Du, MS, RDN, CNSC, LD, wrote:

“What I learned from Dr. Tucker and how I interacted with her helped me realize the power and the importance of mentorship. After nine months of being mentored by Dr. Tucker, I was motivated to continue my academic journey with a clearer vision and goals as well as a better understanding of how to be successful in graduate school. I was energized and delighted.”

Others reported similar sentiments via the final program evaluation:

- 82% of respondents provided an overall rating of 4-5 on a 1-5 scale where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent.
- 46% of respondents indicated they plan to continue the mentorship outside of the RDPG program.
Webinars

Four webinars were offered during FY 2019-2020. All are still available on the Research DPG website for members to watch and earn continuing professional education units (CPEUs). Three of the webinars were a product of the Diversity Mini-Grant awarded to the Research DPG in 2019. Of note, they raised our awareness to the fact that we had never before offered webinars that with closed captioning. Webinar topics included:

- Enhancing Diversity in the Dietetics Profession: Stories from RD/RDNs with Disabilities (3-webinar series).
- Intermittent Fasting and Time-Restricted Feeding.

Pre-Conference Symposium

A 3-CPEU, pre-conference symposium was held the Saturday before FNCE® 2019 kicked off. The Gut Microbiome and Prebiotics: A Powerful Synergy for Health and Prevention was made possible from a grant from Beneo. The 100-plus attendees learned from experts about the role of gut microbes in maintaining host health and metabolic balance.

The symposium included a live technical demonstration session on fibers and what they can do in a food matrix when it comes to recipe development and improvement of nutritional profiles. We will conclude with a panel of speakers and experts discussing the main themes of the symposium and answering questions.
Promoting Diversity and Inclusion

The Research DPG was awarded an Academy Diversity Grants in 2019 and the Diversity and Inclusion Promotion Grant ($10,000) in 2020. As noted above, the 2019 Diversity Mini-grant funding was used to develop webinars to raise awareness about the unique experiences and challenges of registered dietitian nutritionist and other nutrition professionals with disabilities.

Advocacy

Letters were sent to CDR and ACEND leadership recommending revision of their demographic data collection categories to include gender non-binary and disability. Positive responses were received; the leadership noted that these revisions are underway.
Facilitating Networking for Experts and Novices

During FY 2019-2020, the Research DPG offers the opportunity for nutrition researchers at all stages of their career to mingle.

**Member Directory**

The Member Directory provided a vehicle for offering members ready access to contact information and networking. Currently 842 members share their information through the Directory.

**Electronic Mailing List**

The DPG electronic mailing list offered members real-time updates on DPG activities, funding opportunity announcements, and the opportunity to dialogue with other members 197 members participated during the fiscal year.

**FNCE Member Events**

Instead of the usual breakfast, the Member Reception was an evening networking event. The participants enjoyed the opportunity to meet and catch up with other members. Academy Board of Director and RDPG member, Milton Stokes provide insights into the strategic initiatives of the national organization.

At the FNCE® DPG/MIG Showcase, the Research DPG poster featured members conducting research across the United States and abroad. During the Showcase, members visited and the EC spoke with other RDNs about why to join the DPG.
Research Dietetics Practice Group

Members at Work in the USA and Abroad!
Giving Nutrition Researchers a Voice

EC members also served as liaisons to key Academy groups, giving a voice to Research DPG members on national priorities and policies.

Council on Research

A liaison for the Research DPG serves on the Academy's Council on Research. This provides our DPG input into strategic discussions about research priorities and activities. Council on Research news was included in e-blasts and the electronic mailing list throughout FY 2019-2020.

Policy

During FY 2019-2020, the Research DPG explored strategies to increase engagement among DPG members and highlight the relationship between policy and research. A member survey collected information regarding the member’s research focus. Thus far, 36 responded (and counting) showcasing the wide variety of expertise among Research DPG membership. This information will be used to contact members whose work is directly influenced by the Academy's policy initiative and call to action. The first of a series of articles was included in *The Digest*, which highlighted a DPG member’s work related to one of the Academy’s current policy initiatives.

House of Delegates

A Research DPG member also serves on the House of Delegates, which is one of the member governing bodies for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The House of Delegates is one avenue for the Research DPG to voice our priorities and help formulate solutions to the myriad of challenges facing the profession of nutrition and dietetics. During FY 2019-2020, the HOD representative provided updates through articles in *The Digest* and via e-blasts.

DPG History

During the FY, significant progress was also made on documenting the history of the Research DPG. An historical timeline of organizational milestones was compiled and, once finalized, will be posted on the Research DPG.
Serving the Needs of Members

A group of dedicated volunteers perform the work of the Research DPG. Academy Staff Liaison Katie Gustafson helps facilitate DPG activities.

2019-2020 Voting Members

- Chair: Barbara Gordon
- Chair Elect: Nancy Emenaker
- Past Chair: Ashley Vargas
- Secretary: Erin McKinley
- Treasurer: Maria Morgan-Bathke
- Nominating Committee Chair: Mary Lesser
- HOD Delegate: David Holben

2019-2020 Non-Voting Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMY LIAISONS</th>
<th>MEMBERSHIP SERVICES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACEND Liaison: Andrea Lobene</td>
<td>Membership Coordinator: Heather Gerrish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council on Research Liaison: Mary-Jon Ludy</td>
<td>Membership Liaison: Leila Shinn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Liaison: Shelly DeBiasse</td>
<td>Mentorship Chair: Whitney Linsenmeyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historian: Sandra Gomez-Perez</td>
<td>Student Representative: Katie Arlinghaus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy and Advocacy Leader: Nicole Reed</td>
<td>CPEU Administrator: Ines Anchondo</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>AWARDS COMMITTEE</th>
<th>NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair: Tracey Ledoux</td>
<td>Editor-in-Chief: Tricia Psota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair: Joann Mc Dermid</td>
<td>Assistant Editor: Lori Stockert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gigi Kwok-Hinsley</td>
<td>Assistant Editor: Judy Gould</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Reporter: Danielle Torisky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Reporter: Erin Gaffney-Stromberg</td>
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<tr>
<th>FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE</th>
<th>WEBINAR COMMITTEE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair: Lauri Byerley</td>
<td>Co-Chair: Maria Azrad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair: Carol Berg Sloan</td>
<td>Co-Chair: Jennifer Waters</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOMINATING COMMITTEE</th>
<th>WEBSITE COMMITTEE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair: Mary Lesser</td>
<td>Website Coordinator: Brooke Wickman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Tucker</td>
<td>Social Networking Coordinator: Kevin Klatt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil Karl</td>
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</table>
Planning and Administration

The volunteers comprising the DPG Executive Committee conducted monthly, one-hour teleconferences. Additional calls were conducted among various committees and also, as needed.

During FY 2019-2020, As a final phase of a five-year strategic planning exercise, a team of volunteers worked on refining the mission and vision of the Research DPG. As detailed, a variety of DPG activities met the goal of the first strategy of the strategic plan; specifically, to help expand prospective food and nutrition research.

Financial Stewardship

The Sponsorship Prospectus—a document detailing potential sponsorship opportunities—was updated and approved by the Executive Committee. During FY 2019-2020, sponsors providing funding for the symposium, research grants, and e-blasts. A special thanks to the following sponsors:

- Beneo
- California Walnut Commission
- Calorie Control Council
- International Food Additives Council
- Mead Johnson
- PepsiCo
- Sugar Association

Financial Status

Dues for RDPG remained at $30 (was $25 in the 2014-15 year) for Active members. As had been decided in the previous year, starting fiscal year 2019-2020, student membership dues increased to $15 (previously was $10). This increase reflects the introduction of additional student benefits (mentorship and award opportunities).
Membership increased about 3 percent during the fiscal year. As of May 31, 2019 (end of fiscal year), there were 1,005 RDPG member; May 31, 2020 membership was at 1,030.

Also of note, the Academy launched an effort to help with the operational tasks of the practice groups with the hope of allowing the volunteer leaders to focus more on the mission of their DPGs—hopefully, this will translate to a greater growth in membership in future years.

An Academy and RDPG goal is to maintain our percentage of reserve at 100. This is done to balance depletion of finances as well and use member funds toward programs, services, and awards that are important to our members. In addition, funds were being saved to cover the expenses associated with the goal of moving the website to a more robust platform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL STATUS (FY 2019 -2020)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budgeted Revenue</td>
<td>$65,570</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actual Revenue</td>
<td>$74,244</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue Excess/Deficit</td>
<td>$8,674</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budgeted Expenses</td>
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<td>Actual Expenses</td>
<td>$58,378</td>
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<td>Budgeted Excess/Deficit</td>
<td>-$697</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excess Revenue – Budget Deficit</td>
<td>$7,997</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Investment Reserves (as of May 31, 2020)</td>
<td>$101,946*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve % of 2020 Budget (as of May 31, 2020)</td>
<td>177%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*The RDPG Executive Committee voted to spend conservatively in response to turbulent market fluctuations related to the COVID-19 pandemic.