Advancing the Dietetics Profession through the Foundation’s Philanthropy

Karen Stein, MFA

Editor’s Note: This is the fourth article in a series on the Academy’s history from 1990-present. Other articles appear in the November 2012 and February 2013 issues of the Journal.

Without charities, the United States would not be able to operate, says Charity Navigator, the most widely used, independent evaluator of US philanthropic organizations.1 Can the same be said of professional member associations? That is, would dietetics be able to operate without the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ Foundation? Although a philanthropic organization that supports an allied health profession may not be essential to the delivery of practice, it certainly is vital in furthering an association’s goals and making an impact on the country—on the world—through endowed initiatives that fulfill some of the most pressing issues of the time. The Academy’s Foundation has certainly exemplified this in the past several decades.

Just before 1990, the Foundation had its hands full with a multitude of activities, in addition to the continuation of conferring awards and scholarships to deserving students, practitioners, and corporate entities: it hosted its first annual Friends of the Foundation dinner to fund its programs, launched the National Center for Nutrition and Dietetics, oversaw publication of Carry the Flame (the book that serves as the starting point for this current Journal series of articles that explore the recent history of the Academy), and explored a host of consumer information drives.2 And the Foundation just kept growing at a rapid pace. By the time of its 30th anniversary celebration in 1996, there were more awards, scholarships, and funds, and several of these consumer initiatives were in full swing. The money kept coming in to fund all these ambitious programs.

In the mid-2000s, however, charitable foundations associated with member organizations were hitting the same wall: member interest and support was on the decline. By 2009, it was estimated that foundation endowment assets in aggregate had lost nearly $200 billion in value, and foundations felt compelled to get creative to keep the funds coming in.3 The Academy’s Foundation was not immune to this trend, as it witnessed a plateau in donations at around the same time. But change was already in the air, and this decline was short-lived—although the creativity was not. The Foundation had already taken a fresh look at its role—“how can we benefit RDs?”—and revamped it to seek out ways to promote and advocate for the unique skill sets and expertise of its members.4

The decisions made would come to influence the bulk of the Foundation’s outreach, perhaps even its image in the public sphere beyond the Academy. The 2006 strategic plan built on the Foundation’s reputation for being the leading provider of scholarships in dietetics, described its expectations that donors be highly satisfied that their philanthropic goals were being met, and it introduced a fresh focus: The Foundation expected to take on a leadership role in the fight against childhood obesity and form partnerships with related organizations to achieve that goal.5

This new tack led to a host of new programming as well as a repurposing of existing programs to springboard initiatives that would ultimately mobilize and generate a loud buzz among the membership. According to a donor report, in fiscal year 2009–2010, the Foundation reported a record-breaking year of revenues of >$4.2 million.

“The Foundation has evolved from a student scholarship-centered program to one that also promotes and funds research and public nutrition education,” says Neva Hudiburgh Cochran, MS, RD, who was the Foundation chair in 2006–2007. With the stronger push for members to get involved by promoting, raising money, and participating in the research and public education programs, and the wider array of awards and grants that recognize member achievements in research and education efforts, in the past 25 years, “The Foundation has established itself as the public outreach of the Academy and its members.”

Leadership and Fundraising

The Foundation is governed by a 13-member board of directors, including the Academy’s president-elect, financial officer, and chief executive officer; this board can include up to six directors, who are Academy members, and up to five public members. See Figure 1 for a list of all Foundation chairs from 1990 to the present.

As a charitable entity wholly dedicated to promoting nutrition via funded programs, initiatives, scholarships, and research, the Academy’s Foundation stands alone as one of a kind. Established in 1966 with tax-exempt status, the Foundation became the satellite organi-
tional entity for accepting financial contributions and gifts intended to fund educational and scientific programming and activities. The early years focused almost exclusively on conferring scholarships, awards, and grants, and administering the funds in its charge, but as anonymous and corporate donations began to pour in, the Foundation’s vision of how these funds could be used to make an indelible footprint within professional and consumer spheres expanded. Today, in addition to the $3 million the Foundation raises annually to support its grant and fundraising activities, the Foundation oversees $15 million used in the administration of scholarships, awards, research projects, consumer initiatives, and operations.

The Foundation’s excellence in philanthropy management has been no secret. Charity Navigator—whose evaluation criteria are based on fiscal health, accountability, and transparency—has awarded the Foundation its highest four-star rating more than once. In fact, the back-to-back four-star ratings in fiscal years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 are noteworthy, as only 16% of the 6,000+ charities evaluated by the group have ever earned this distinction.

The donated monies can be directed to the annual fund, which directs monies to areas of greatest need, scholarship funds, various research funds, and Kids Eat Right.

The fundraising drives for scholarship and annual funds have been entwined in the Foundation’s fabric for decades, but the Foundation has modified its appeals for donations over the years. For example, in the early 2000s, fundraising efforts were revamped to focus more on efforts at the affiliate level. Cochran, who had previously served as the Texas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (TAND) fundraising chair, took on the role of state fundraising coordinator for the Foundation. Fundraising chair recruitment, twice-yearly conference calls, newsletters, and an awards program in recognition of successful state-level efforts quickly became part of this collaborative, mutually beneficial system.

“Empowering fundraising chairs in each state helps put a face on the Foundation for grassroots members,” Cochran said.
leaders to take on the urgent issues of the times and develop exceptional program- ming—in the form of initiatives or endowments—that addresses the gaps in health care delivery and consumer information that dietetics practitioners can fulfill. The goals of the Foundation, says Susan C. Finn, PhD, RD, FADA—Academy president from 1992-1993 as well as a past Foundation chair (2007-2009) and ardent supporter of the Foundation—are broad and philanthropic, but very rewarding by virtue of being integral to the role of members outside the Academy. Of course, all this programming, from the scholarships to the awards to the initiatives to the endowments, requires funding at all levels, and the leaders of the Foundation are included among the most consistent donors to its various funds. “You can’t ask people to give if you yourself don’t give,” Finn says. It is this very dedicated leadership that has propelled the Foundation to a much more robust entity today.

GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AWARDS, AND SPECIAL FUNDS

The Foundation’s most enduring legacy is in its scholarships, grants, and awards programs. These programs, funded through initial gifts and subsequent contributions, help to keep the profession strong and active and represent the expanse of areas of interest across the dietetics profession.

Scholarships

Within a year of the Academy’s 1944 announcement that it would be investigating a scholarship fund, $489† had been generated from various sources. The Academy called it a modest beginning to assert its obligation to encourage graduate study in dietetics. By the time the Foundation took over administration of the scholarships program in 1966, the available funds toward grants, fellowships, and scholarships stood at $20,000.³

Today, of course, the total amount in the 1944 scholarship fund’s coffers

³According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index inflation calculator (http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl), this amount has the same buying power as approximately $6,200 in 2012.

Martin Yadrick, MS, MBA, RD, FADA, then-president of the Academy of the Nutrition and Dietetics, chats with Sonja Connor, MS, RD, LD, former speaker of the House of Delegates, at the Foundation’s Donor Reception at the 2008 Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo in Chicago, IL.

Carol V. Hall, RD (right), then-chair of the Foundation, is joined by Rowena Hubbard, a past Academy board member, to encourage attendees at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ 1996 Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo in San Antonio, TX, to donate in celebration of the Foundation’s 30th anniversary.
might reflect the amount of just one scholarship to be awarded. The Foundation’s scholarship program has skyrocketed to avail many more dollars to many more students. In 1991, 45 years after the scholarship fund began, the Foundation had awarded $145,950 in scholarship monies to students in need. According to donor reports, by 1997 this figure was in the $200,000 range, and by the 2011-2012 fiscal year, approximately $488,650 in scholarship funds had been disbursed to 211 students.

The necessity of these scholarships cannot be overstated, especially given the dizzying rate of tuition cost increases in the past several decades. Although the administration of Foundation scholarships has been a relatively constant system since 1964, and as endowed scholarships have endured, funded scholarships that are offered until the funding runs out have come and gone throughout the years.

Figure 2 profiles some of the major Foundation scholarships that have been established since 1990 and, at time of publication, are still available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year established</th>
<th>Name of scholarship</th>
<th>Scholarship’s intent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Colonel Katharine E. Manchester Scholarship</td>
<td>Named for a legend at the Academy—the first military dietitian to serve as the Academy president (1971), three-time Foundation chair in the 1980s, and one of the Foundation’s most prolific donors—this scholarship subsidizes the academic costs for an undergraduate or graduate dietetics student who intends to practice or teach within the field. Selection criteria are specifically flexible to ensure that awardees are addressing the practice areas of greatest need at the time of the award.</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Ann Selkowitz Litt Memorial Fund</td>
<td>To honor Litt's career as a nationally recognized nutritionist for the Washington Redskins National Football League team and a mentor to college and high school students alike, this fund awards full-time students enrolled in a dietetics program that leads to attainment of the registered dietitian credential.</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Diversity Leadership and Scholarship</td>
<td>This award for under-represented populations comprises two types: a scholarship for matriculating students, and a stipend for continuing education.</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) Doctoral Scholarship</td>
<td>To address the shortage of registered dietitians who have been conferred a doctoral degree, CDR established this fund to subsidize the educational costs for registered dietitians pursuing a doctorate in clinical nutrition, research, science, education, or public health.</td>
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Grants, Awards, and Fellowships
Like the scholarships program, the grants, awards, and fellowships administered by the Foundation have been an integral part of the Academy since 1966. Since 1990, the Foundation has witnessed the founding of several—classified as continuing education, recognition, and program development funds—that fulfill a multitude of purposes, often specific to the current practice or economic climate.

For example, in 1993, when the Ross Award in Women’s Health (since renamed the Abbott Nutrition Award in Women’s Health) was established to honor registered dietitians (RDs) who make significant contributions to this important field, the Foundation was in the midst of its campaign to promote the connection between nutrition and women’s health. (In fact, it was created to honor the efforts of Finn, who worked tirelessly on that endeavor.) Similarly, after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast region in 2005—leaving close to 100 Academy members in need of re-building their lives and businesses—the Foundation immediately kicked off fund-raising for the Disaster Relief Continuing Education and Credentialing Fund. This fund, thanks to generous donations from the Commission on Dietetic Registration, the Academy, and its members, supported members who were victims of this natural disaster and carried a caveat to allocate any unused funds toward helping fulfill emergency food and nutrition services in the areas of need and to hold over any remaining monies thereafter for members who might be victims of future disasters. And in 2011, at a time when it became clear that more and more uncredentialed individuals were offering nutrition services best provided by trained and academically prepared dietetics-credentialed practitioners, the Commission on Dietetic Registration launched its Grassroots Marketing Grant, which subsidizes RDs; dietetic technicians, registered (DTRs); DPGs; and member interest groups who promote Commission on Dietetic Registration credentials at the local level (to prospective employers or third-party payers).
### Table: Past Recipients of the Edna and Robert Langholz International Nutrition Award

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Recognized achievements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Elsie May Widdowson, PhD, DSc (England)</td>
<td>Widdowson played a major role in developing the tools for scientific analysis of food and the profession’s current understanding of the relationship between food and child growth.</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Perla Santos Ocampo, MD (Philippines)</td>
<td>Ocampo influenced international recommendations for oral rehydration and nutritional management from her work in pediatric nutrition and the impact of diarrheal diseases in Southeast Asian infants and children.</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Doris Howes Calloway, PhD, RD (United States)</td>
<td>Calloway was recognized for her scientific research into the human energy requirements, food consumption, and protein and her work in improving the quality of the world’s food supply.</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Andrew Prentice, PhD, and Ann Prentice, PhD (United Kingdom)</td>
<td>The only husband-and-wife team to date to confer this award, the Prentices were recognized for their respective contributions to international nutrition: Andrew for his research into pregnancy and lactation, energy requirements, and adaptations and malnutrition, and Ann for her research of bone health and how it affects the nutritional problems of countries at various levels of economic growth.</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Jean H. Hankin, DrPH, MS, MPH, RD (Ret) (United States)</td>
<td>Hankin’s research among a worldwide population into diet as a risk factor in the development of chronic disease led to her perfecting a dietary methodology that reveals differences in risk factors related to diet and is appropriate for use in multiple ethnic groups.</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>Jorn Dyerberg, MD, DMSc, DHC (Denmark)</td>
<td>Dyerberg’s studies on the health benefits of consuming fish oils broke new ground and served as the basis for ongoing research into the health benefits of n-3 fatty acids.</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Ricardo Uauy, PhD, MD (Chile)</td>
<td>Uauy, whose expertise lies in basic nutritional science, applied biomedical research, and population-based intervention programs, has served as an advisor to the United Nations, World Health Organization, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and has research interests in fatty acid metabolism, obesity prevention, and nutrition needs of older adults.</td>
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Figure 3. Past recipients of the Edna and Robert Langholz International Nutrition Award, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation’s highest honor.

The award considered to be the Foundation’s most prestigious—the Edna and Robert Langholz International Nutrition Award—was established in 1992, the year before Edna’s passing. Edna Langholz was an Academy past president (1981-1982), past Foundation chair (1983-1985), and recipient of the Academy’s Medallion and Marjorie Hulsizer Copher Awards. She and her husband, who had also served on the Foundation’s board, developed this biennial prize for recognizing an individual (regardless of professional background) for contributions to the practice of nutrition partly as a means to celebrate a combination of Edna’s love for food and nutrition and her extensive experience in international business. But elevating the stature of the profession and of the Academy across the globe represented the deepest intent of this award, in the form of cash and a bronze statue.

“Edna always felt that the [Academy] didn’t get enough credit for what it did and the members weren’t respected as much as they should be, given what they contributed to health across the globe,” Robert W. Langholz says. As a key example of that under-recognition, he identifies Elsie May Widdowson, PhD, DSc, the recipient of the inaugural Langolz Award: “She was the one who formulated calories,” he explains. “During World War II, Britain was starving to death and the government was smart enough to turn to someone knowledgeable in nutrition, who set out to ask, ‘What does it take for a person to survive nutritionally?’ It was a major breakthrough, but it was unrecognized in the international community. She was a great example of what this award is all about.”

The Langholzes believed that dietetics practitioners, within their sphere of expertise, and the Academy should have the same level of national recognition as other health care professions and organizations. But, Langholz notes, that effect relies on proactive efforts from within—an idea that encapsulates the spirit of the Langholz Award: “If you’re going to succeed at something,” he says, “you have to beat your own drum so that the world can recognize your ability, capability, and lead.”

International dietetics is also celebrated by the Wimpfheimer-Guggenheim Fund for International Exchange in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Management. Sparking the interest of life member Alice Wimpfheimer, MS, RD, CDN (whose creativity and generosity also enabled this series of articles on the Academy’s history) to start this fund was her international background (born in Germany and attended Swiss and German schools) and a 2½-year jaunt traveling the globe. “Everybody has a different niche and can make a mark in a different way,” Wimpfheimer
says of her interest in creating this fund, which designates its purpose as serving as an information and resource network to foster international exchange of nutrition, dietetic, and management information to benefit the nutritional health of communities across the globe.

Although the Wimpfheimer-Guggenheim Fund was initiated in 1977, it has subsidized many important endeavors within the time span this article covers, including:

- Launching an annual essay contest—the Wimpfheimer-Guggenheim Fund for International Exchange in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Management—in 1993 that challenges nutritionists and dietetics practitioners to compose a compelling paper on a topic of international interest.
- Offering the First International Nutritionist/Dietitian Fellowship for Study in the United States to assist foreign nationals who pursue postgraduate work in the United States but intend to return to their home country to practice dietetics.
- Providing financial assistance to nutritionists and dietetics practitioners who work with government agencies and organizations (a past project encompassed assisting a nutritionist in Hungary in obtaining food composition tables for adaptation).
- Funding two issues annually of Dietetics Around the World, the newsletter of the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations, beginning in 1994 and continuing for several years thereafter (see Figure 4).
- Supporting new member organizations of the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations to assist them in developing their programs for participation in International Confederation of Dietetic Associations’ activities.
- Funding the International Diabetes Outcomes Study, which intends to test the universality of the Academy’s medical nutrition therapy (MNT) practice guidelines for adult type 1 and type 2 diabetes and implementation outcomes (this study will be discussed in greater detail in the article in this series that focuses on research).
- Establishing an international lectureship for the annual Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo to highlight original international projects in food and nutrition, dietetics education, research, and foodservice management; in 2009 in Denver, CO, Richard Uauy, PhD, MD (who also was
conferred the 2012 Langholz Award) delivered the inaugural lecture.

Figure 5 provides details about additional grant, fellowship, and award funds that the Foundation administers.

**DPG Scholarships and Grants**

Given the role of networking groups in advancing the practice and sociocultural components of the profession, the development of awards and scholarships via the Foundation represents a natural collaboration within the Academy.

Many of these funds were established near or in the last decade of the 20th century, and many have been revised to strengthen the criteria. The Pediatric Nutrition DPG, for example, established an endowment fund in 1982 for a student enrolled in graduate study, although the award’s criteria were updated in 2009 to require that applicants present a clearly defined research plan in the study of pediatric nutrition. The Dietitians in Nutrition Support DPG established a research fund for its members in 1989.

Since 1985, the Management in Food and Nutrition Systems DPG has provided funding for a member to participate in leadership activities of the Academy, and since 1987 it has offered a fund to cover costs to maintain registration status via continuing education credits for qualified professionals in need of assistance. More recently, the funds were changed to honor individuals important to the DPG: The continuing-education fund changed its name in 1991 to honor Elizabeth Frakes, MS, RD, who was instrumental in founding the Management in Food and Nutrition Systems DPG, and in 2011 the leadership award name was changed to honor Ruby P. Puckett, who served as Management in Food and Nutrition Systems’ chair in 2002.

Naming scholarships to honor living or legendary DPG pioneers is relatively common. The Public Health/Community Nutrition DPG has offered the Gwendolyn Rossell Memorial Scholarship since 1988 to be used for participating in educational programs that enhance the knowledge and/or skills of public health/community nutrition dietetics practitioners. Many named awards have been developed in the years since.

- Members of the Dietetics in Health Care Communities DPG are welcome to apply for the F. Ann Gallagher Award—named for a past president of the Academy (1999-2000)—which financially supports individuals who work in promoting state or federal legislation to advance the profession.
- In 2005, the School Nutrition Services DPG scholarship—established in 1998 to support graduate studies to enhance school nutrition practice-related job skills—was renamed for Frances Carr Parker, a long-standing DPG member who made her mark in encouraging RDs to become involved in child nutrition programs.
- The Kathryn Oliverio Bishirjian, MS, RD, LDN Healthy Aging DPG Scholarship—which aims to fund scholarly and educational pursuits in the area of nutrition and aging as it pertains to supporting the health, independence, and nutritional well-being of community-residing older adults—was named for a long-time member of the DPG and a mentor in the field of nutrition in older adults.
- The Weight Management DPG’s Rebecca Snowball Reeves continuing education awards, which provides educational stipends for dietetics practitioners whose area of practice focuses on obesity, was renamed in 2010 to honor the Academy’s past House of Delegates speaker (1999-2000) and past president (2005-2006), who put forth a great deal of effort in founding this DPG.
- The Diabetes Care and Education DPG’s added “Karen Goldstein Memorial Grant” to the Diabetes MNT Outcome Research grant name in 2009 in memory of a cherished DPG board member who had passed away.

Additional awards include the Food and Culinary Professionals DPG’s fund, offered to members since 2013, to encourage pursuit of delivering educa-

Alice Wimpfheimer, MS, RD, CDN (right), who initiated the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation’s Wimpfheimer-Guggenheim Fund for International Exchange in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Management—and funded this series of articles exploring the Academy’s recent history—meets with Beverly Bajus, former chief executive officer of the Academy, at the Elysian Hotel in New York, NY, in 1997.
INTRODUCING ICDA’S NEWSLETTER—
YOUR LINK TO DIETETICS
AND NUTRITION ORGANIZATIONS
AROUND THE WORLD

Your feedback on this pilot edition is encouraged to make future editions possible for the members of the International Committee of Dietetic Associations (ICDA). We hope you will agree that this newsletter is a great information resource for dietitians and nutritionists around the world. Please share copies with your colleagues, include excerpts from it in your association’s newsletter, and write us with your comments and suggestions.

At the 1992 ICDA Executive Committee meeting in Jerusalem, Israel, the idea for this newsletter was presented to the member countries of ICDA by Beverly Bajus, chief operating officer of The American Dietetic Association (ADA) and Foundation (ADAF) and the United States representative to ICDA. The European Federation of Associations of Dietitians’ members were also surveyed to gauge their interest in pursuing this idea. At the ICDA Executive Committee meeting in Manila, the Philippines, in February 1993, the committee agreed to proceed with a pilot issue.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO...

Alice Adelheid Wimpfheimer, MS, RD, of New York for suggesting the idea for this newsletter and for providing a grant from the Wimpfheimer-Guggenheim Fund for International Exchange in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Management. The grant is being administered by The American Dietetic Association Foundation (ADAF). Ms. Wimpfheimer advocates developing an information resource network for dietitians in practice and research throughout the world and notes:

"I am happy to support the mission of the ICDA through sponsorship of this newsletter. I believe the purpose of this newsletter should be to disseminate nutrition news of international interest, to honor requests for assistance, and to do joint research, thus facilitating exchange of proposed and existing programs and eliminating duplication of work. In this way each country is afforded the possibility of adapting the projects to its needs, thereby raising the nutritional health of the world community. I envision that the information contained in this newsletter will be shared with countries not yet in ICDA and with international allied organizations for improving global nutrition and universal well-being."

ICDA MISSION

At the ICDA Executive Committee meeting in Manila, a mission statement was proposed: "ICDA’s mission is to serve as a forum and/or structure for strengthening linkages and bringing about greater competencies, effectiveness, and efficiency in the global dietetics community." This statement will be discussed with members at the ICDA meeting during the 1996 Congress in the

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**Figure 4. DIETETICS Around the World, the newsletter of the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations, was funded for several years by the Wimpfheimer-Guggenheim Fund for International Exchange in Nutrition, Dietetics, and Management. Pictured is the front page of the debut issue, published in 1994.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year established</th>
<th>Name of grant/fellowship/award</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Anita Owen Award of Recognition for Innovative Nutrition Education</td>
<td>Recognition of excellence in innovative models for dietetics information and delivery of nutrition education to the public, and encouragement of development of such models, are supported by this award.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Pittsburgh Dietetic Association Leadership Development Award</td>
<td>This award recognizes emerging leaders among recent supervised practice graduates in the Pittsburgh, PA, metropolitan area and encourages participation in association activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Judy Ford Stokes Memorial Award for Innovation in Administrative Dietetics</td>
<td>Development in administrative dietetics—chiefly in generating revenue, saving money, or designing a foodservice system—is encouraged and supported by this award.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Mary Abbott Hess Award for Recognition of an Innovative Food/Culinary Effort</td>
<td>Funded by the Illinois Dietetic Association and Mary Abbott Hess, past Academy president (1990-1991), this award encourages innovations in food and culinary education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Susan T. Borra Fellowship in Nutrition Education</td>
<td>This past president of the Academy (2001-2002) and past Foundation chair launched this fellowship to provide individuals the opportunity to enhance their nutrition communication skills at universities, public health organizations, or professional societies.</td>
</tr>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Colonel Katharine E. Manchester Scholarship</td>
<td>A secondary component of this scholarship is to award a currently practicing administrative dietitian who has warranted special recognition for unusual competence in the field.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Karen Lechowich Continuing Education Award</td>
<td>This award provides assistance to new Academy members who wish to attend the annual Food &amp; Nutrition Conference &amp; Expo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Margaret Dullea Simko Award for Excellence at a Clinical Poster Session</td>
<td>Participants in the Food &amp; Nutrition Conference &amp; Expo poster sessions are eligible for this award, which recognizes quality contributions to these events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Colgate Palmolive Fellowship in Nutrition, Oral Health/Dental Education</td>
<td>This corporate-sponsored fellowship supports doctoral research into the connections between nutrition and oral health or nutrition education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Marie and August LoPresti, Sr Endowment Fund Faculty Development Award</td>
<td>To honor the LoPrestis’ involvement in the dietetics, foodservice, and hospitality fields, this award funds continuing education pursuits of Ohio university and college faculty in these disciplines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Elaine Monsen Award</td>
<td>Created to honor the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ longtime editor-in-chief (1983-2003), this award recognizes an individual who has created an outstanding body of research literature in dietetics, food, and nutrition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Grace L. Ostensio Nutrition and Public Policy Fellowship</td>
<td>This fellowship gives an Academy member the opportunity to participate in the 1-year American Association for the Advancement of Science Congressional Science and Engineering Fellows program, serving as a special assistant in a legislative/government position that benefits from scientific input.</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Frederick Green Memorial Internship in Nutrition Communications</td>
<td>Established by past Foundation chair Neva Hudiborough Cochran, MS, RD, LD (2006-2007), this award provides a grant to a student enrolled in a nutrition and dietetics program and slated for a noncredit, unpaid, 6- to 8-week summer internship with an Academy member who specializes in nutrition communications (specifically related to media and public relations).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Margene Wagstaff Fellowship for Innovation in Dietetics Education</td>
<td>This award recognizes pursuit of professional values among entry-level dietetics practitioners.</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>American Overseas Dietetic Association International Project Award</td>
<td>To foster collaboration and knowledge share among the international community of food and nutrition practitioners, this award is for American Overseas Dietetic Association members who enter into a project partnership with another food and nutrition practitioner that will benefit the local community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) Simulation Grants</td>
<td>In the interest of prodding development of interactive technology-based simulations that incorporate supervised practice competencies of the Accreditation Council for Education and Nutrition in Dietetics, particularly in areas where preceptors are sparse; CDR launched this fund.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>CDR Leadership Grant</td>
<td>Registered dietitians and dietetic technicians, registered who demonstrate key business skills and wish to pursue leadership training in the interest of furthering their careers are eligible for this grant.</td>
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Figure 5. Grant, fellowship, and award funds administered by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation.
A Foundation-Administered Fund Is Born

Boasting approximately 6,000 annual dues-paying members, the Diabetes Care and Education (DCE) DPG is one of the largest practice groups in a focus area that historically has been very successful in securing project funding from industry. But representing a good problem to have, DCE continually ended each fiscal year with a surplus headed straight into the reserve fund, which, by the early 2000s, had grown to be quite large.

Sandra A. Parker, RD, CDE, DCE’s treasurer at that time, was asked to work with other members to brainstorm an idea that had been batted around for some time: how could the surplus be used to fund a grant for members. Thanks to a challenge in the early 1990s, a natural frontrunner emerged. When the physicians at the American Diabetes Association were writing practice guidelines, DCE members were asked to provide documented evidence that MNT was an effective treatment. There was just one problem: they did not have any.

At about that same time, the Academy had stepped into involvement in the development of practice guidelines. With grant money from the Foundation to cover the costs of development, field-testing, and evaluation of practice guidelines for type 2 diabetes, says Marion Franz, MS, RD, LD, CDE, a member active in these efforts, DCE was able to heed the American Diabetes Association’s call. This Foundation-funded research yielded the first documented evidence in the United States that MNT interventions performed by RDs treating patients with type 2 diabetes were clinically effective.

As clinical RDs, we always need to answer three questions,” says Franz. “First, what evidence do you have that what you do is effective? Second, what are the expected outcomes of your intervention? And third, what type of nutrition intervention leads to these outcomes?” Although this initial DCE study satisfied the American Diabetes Association’s initial queries, DCE was not satisfied with just the one study.

We wanted to build a strong fund that would support ongoing grants over the years,” says Parker. DCE agreed to use those grants in the funding smaller studies for RDs to conduct chart audits or perform interventions to add to the body of evidence of MNT effectiveness in treatment of diabetes. A committee stacked with practitioners with research experience—Franz; Ann Daly, MS, RD, BC-ADM, CDE; Hope Warsaw, MMSc, RD, CDE; and Joyce Green Pastors, MS, RD, CDE—was established to determine the award criteria.

The fund—to support members’ research in diabetes MNT—is probably one of the most wonderful ways we can provide a service to DCE members,” notes Parker. “There is a need for this sort of research, to provide evidence to support the work we do, and there aren’t many funds out there to support it. At the time this fund was created, it was pretty rare.”

Parker adds that the biggest gain in offering this grant is that financial support for members who conduct research on diabetes MNT reaps the outcome of evidence of the impact of diabetes MNT—an outcome that radiates out into the general populace of RDs with a focus area in diabetes MNT practice. “It’s win-win-win, all the way around,” she says.

Among the first awardees was a group of RD clinicians performing a multisite outcomes study of implementation of the American Diabetes Association practice guidelines, whose funding from the Wisconsin Dietetic Association ran dry. With funding from DCE, the clinicians were able to continue their work, which was ultimately published in the December 2004 issue of the Journal of the American Dietetics Association in “Outcomes Monitoring of Health, Behavior, and Quality of Life after Nutrition Intervention in Adults with Type 2 Diabetes” by Lemon and colleagues.

To do effective research, you need big money,” Franz says, before going on to emphasize why funds of this nature are so important. “No outside group is going to fund projects for us to prove that what RDs do is effective. That’s our responsibility.”

nional lecturerships and culinary learning presentations, and the Vegetarian Nutrition’s Public and Professional Education Fund, which was launched in 2003 with settlement monies from Block v McDonald’s (the lawsuit that had questioned the veracity of the defendant’s claims about vegetarian offerings on its menu).

As relative newcomers to the Academy portfolio of member benefits, scholarships are not commonly offered by member interest groups via the Foundation. However, since 1996, more than a decade before these groups were bestowed official Academy recognition in the bylaws, the National Organization for Blacks in Dietetics and Nutrition member interest group has availed a scholarship for its members.

Perhaps the most prolific scholarship-granting DPG is the Dietetics in Health Care Communities DPG. Known as the Consultant Dietitians in Health Care Facilities DPG when these scholarships were established, Dietetics in Health Care Communities launched the Gaynold Jensen Continuing Education Scholarship for participation in educational programs that enhance the contributions of consultant RDs to health care (1981); a board scholarship for dietetics students with an expressed interest in this focus area of practice (1988, although the fund type was amended in 1990); and the Horizon Scholarship for students demonstrating academic achievement and leadership potential within the field in 1992.

But at $20,000 biannually, the largest DPG-funded award administered by the Foundation is the Diabetes Care and Education’s Karen Goldstein Memorial Grant for Diabetes MNT Outcome Research. The narrative behind this fund’s development (see the Sidebar) demonstrates the careful consideration and planning that goes into the decision to create Foundation-administered funds.

THE FOUNDATION’S OUTREACH INITIATIVES

The 1990s witnessed an explosion in the administration of Foundation campaigns focused on bringing healthful nutrition messaging and programming to targeted demographic sectors—and the health practitioners who treat them—as actionable concerns came to the surface. Whether the health care delivery community was taking note of a shortage in effective and adequate research and education or a growing health crisis, the Foundation has been a proactive force on behalf of its members to enter the fold and promote the essential works of RDs and DTRs.

Initiatives of the Early 1990s

In 1989, with Foundation funding, the Academy’s National Center for Nutrition and Dietetics had launched operations. This very ambitious project encompassed a consumer hotline; management of National Nutrition Month; an InfoCenter for library services for members; research ventures; nutrition forums; and a multitude of initiatives surrounding important topics including, notably, childhood nutrition and food safety, which would factor prominently into the Foundation’s activities in the first decade of the 21st century.

The Healthy Start…Food to Grow On program was in full swing in 1991. This
collaborative effort between the Food Marketing Institute, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Foundation resulted in a series of consumer brochures on basic nutrition needs for toddlers and children up to age 6, along with a parent—child activity book and suggestions for store promotions distributed to 1,600 supermarket members of the Food Marketing Institute. These four brochures, drafted under the Foundation’s direction, crystallized some very important tips for parents and caregivers.

Originally a venture of the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, another initiative of this era was Project LEAN. Project LEAN represented a national social marketing campaign to reduce the amount of fat in consumers’ diets and ultimately encourage consumers to be their own advocates by demanding that more foods available in the marketplace comprise less fat. The need for such a drive was evident in consumer surveys in the 1980s, with general concern about dietary fat rising steadily over the years.10

In the first 3 years’ administration by the Kaiser Foundation, the project encompassed consumer information publications and a hotline; radio, print, and television public service announcements; and community campaigns in concert with >30 professional organizations and government agencies. But because of dietetics’ cross section of public health and commercial marketplace, the Kaiser Foundation handed the reins of this initiative to the Academy in 1991, when consumers’ concern about fat had jumped 33% in just 8 years.10

Additional resource development was swift once Project LEAN was in the Foundation’s hands. New and revised consumer information booklets were published—with the revised booklet generating nearly 10,000 requests via the consumer hotline within a month of its release, according to the Academy’s 1992 annual report—as were materials to assist health care professionals and educators with commencing campaigns and consumer challenges at the state and local levels. Recipes from the Project LEAN’s Food Professionals Working Group were published in two issues of Better Homes and Gardens in 1992 and 1993 and in a recipe book developed in cooperation with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

In fact, fiscal year 1992 to 1993 represented a busy time for the Foundation.

• With funding from DuPont, it launched the Children’s Food Safety Kit.
• With funding from The Sugar Association, it cosponsored (with the Food Marketing Institute and the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports) a conference on developing new directions for nutrition and fitness programming in concert with Healthy People 2000.
• In advance of publication of the new labeling regulations that came with passage of the Federal Nutritional Labeling and Education Act of 1990, with grant support from Campbell Soup Company and in cooperation with the Food Processors Institute, it developed regional workshops to help practitioners assist consumers in understanding the new food labels.
• With help from Kraft General Foods, it launched a campaign targeting media and to help them with how to communicate new labeling requirements to consumers.
• As part of an alliance of the Foundation, the US Food and Drug Administration, the US Department of Agriculture, and close to 40 associations related to the food, nutrition, and health sectors, it collaborated on publication of the consumer publication Label Facts for Healthful Eating.

**The Physician Nutrition Education Project**

A 1993 initiative to increase physicians’ knowledge of nutrition and improve their ability to identify patients’ nutrition needs was born of a 1985 study of the National Academy of Sciences that showed a paltry amount of resources dedicated to nutrition education in US medical schools.

Team up with RDs experienced in medical education was a consortium of family and general physicians who jointly guided this effort. With funding from Nestlé, in addition to the development of physician-targeted educational and informative materials and projects—including nutrition-knowledge self-assessment modules, a CD-ROM about nutrition produced in tandem with the American Medical Association, and a booth at the American Academy of Family Physicians’ Scientific Assembly in 1993—this effort provided leadership and communication skills seminars for RDs who work with physicians.11

**Nutrition and Health for Older Americans**

The aging of the US population has been on the radar of health care practitioners and researchers alike for decades. Increases in life expectancy and the reality that “baby boomers”—representing one third of the US population—were beginning to reach classification status as older adults, people aged 65 years and older came to be the fastest-growing population demographic in the country in the 1990s. The Academy was very much attuned to this new reality: it had lent strong support to the Nutrition Screening Initiative and advocated for minimum nutrition standards written into the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act in 1991.12 Furthermore, at the 1995 strategic planning conference, participants periodically raised this topic, as it was an issue relevant in some way to each member, public, and policy programming the Academy had in the hopper.13,14

As a sagacious response to these dialogues, the Foundation forged ahead with its plan to launch the Nutrition and Health for Older Americans campaign in 1996. The initiative’s tagline, “Investing in Your Health—Food, Fitness, and Fun from 50 Forward,” set the tone for a member education campaign that promoted a positive approach in encouraging healthful living in the later years of the life span.

Although it was a first priority, the initiative was not just about delivering members’ toolkits with useful information to help them understand behavioral aspects of health and nutrition habits when working with this population. It also incorporated a series of *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* articles exploring aging-related issues such as nutritional health assess-
Nutrition and Health Campaign for Women

In 1990, as the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues was gaining steam in its mission to craft political strategies and legislation with the goal of improving women’s health, the Office of Research on Women’s Health of the National Institutes of Health—under the direction of its first female director, Bernadine Healy—and the Society for the Advancement of Women’s Health Research directed criticism at a troubling realization: There was a dearth of research on the diseases known to mostly affect women. This was particularly concerning given that women were also the greatest consumers of health care, notes Finn, who points out that this problem was endemic throughout medical research, and even the earliest studies to identify the effects of estrogen did not include women as subjects.

The Academy had an obvious interest in this issue. That there is a known connection between sound nutrition practices and a reduction in the risks of the diseases in question—osteooporosis, heart disease, and breast cancer—positioned the Academy to blaze a path toward heeding the call for more research. The result, the Nutrition and Health Campaign for Women, which debuted in 1993, represented a tremendous opportunity for Academy members to demonstrate their crucial role in addressing nutrition-related shortfalls in research and education. The media took notice and the campaign received wide coverage in print and broadcast media, including a segment on NBC’s “Weekend Today.”

Brochures, National Center for Nutrition and Dietics hotline messaging, and member toolkits were among the activities in the full-court press to mobilize members to communicate the campaign’s message. The Academy wanted to be at the table for all of this,” says Finn. “We helped groups concerned about women’s health to write grants that would be funded by the National Institutes of Health, which translated to our playing a role in shaping the entire platform. And this platform helped us to showcase our members.”

By the time the Nutrition and Health Campaign for Women had come to a close, indeed the funding from multiple sources had run out, but there was a more noteworthy influence on its conclusion: “We began to see women integrated into many studies,” Finn says. “We accomplished what we set out to do.”

Home Food Safety

Just as dietetics practitioners’ expertise is not limited to nutrition, the Foundation’s initiatives were not limited to nutrition messaging targeting demographic sectors. In the late 1990s, foodborne illness was on the rise—estimates of annual US cases ranged from 6.5 to 33 million and there had been an increase of 25% in cases contracted in the home—and had become endemic enough by then that it captured the attention of key groups. Healthy People 2010 had added a goal of reducing foodborne illness into its outline for the decade and a specific objective within that goal was to increase the number of consumers who understood and employed safe food practices. The Foundation saw in this an opportunity to cast dietetics practitioners as the experts in another domain, one that applies science to practice: home food safety. In partnership with ConAgra, the Foundation made its second foray into food-safety programming, but with a much broader and ambitious scope, and launched a consumer-education program: Home Food Safety . . . It’s in Your Hands.

After a July 1999 sneak preview of the program on television and radio stations in major metropolitan markets, this campaign rolled out with the release of a baseline survey showing what consumers did and did not know about foodborne illness and the evidence that such an effort was needed. Centering on four key messages—wash hands often, keep raw meats separate from ready-to-eat foods, cook to proper temperatures using a meat thermometer, and refrigerate foods promptly below 40°F—this campaign included a dedicated website with consumer safety information, media saturation with Academy spokespeople that aired on television and in more than 2,600 Walmart stores, and a targeted mailing outreach effort.

By 2002, a follow-up survey showed that although there had been strides in consumer awareness and knowledge of food safety made in the 3 years since the campaign’s launch, the consensus was that the work needed to continue. So although it had originally been conceived as a 3-year program, the Foundation, in keeping with one of

FROM THE ACADEMY

‡This wide range reflects the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s later acknowledgement that its 1999 estimates of foodborne illness prevalence did not use a tool as reliable as the one currently employed. The new tool identifies and ranks the bacteria, viruses, and pathogens most responsible for causing foodborne illness.
the Academy’s strategic goals at the time to keep a proactive focus on emerging issues within food and nutrition, continued this endeavor.

In 2005, Home Food Safety . . . It’s in Your Hands won a prestigious national award in a heated competition with other very influential and impressive groups. In earning the recognition for Superior Achievement in Branding and Reputation—to honor programs that demonstrate the highest standards of innovation, integrity, and effectiveness—in the Gold SABRE’s Cause-Related Marketing category, the Foundation beat out Lee National Denim Day, Yoplait Saves Lids to Save Lives, Ben and Jerry’s Rock the Vote, and the Iraq Humanitarian Airlift program.

The next year, despite its success, ConAgra withdrew its funding; however, this was short-lived, as the program kept going strong in the years after and the company’s funding commitment was renewed in 2010. To commemorate the revived partnership, the Foundation launched the Food Safety Challenge program, wherein students in dietetics programs can be awarded funds to educate students and work to improve food safety for students living on campus.

Zeroing in on an At-Risk Population

While the 1990s represented an era of juggling multiple, disparate programming at once, the 2000s heralded a new day with a new focus for the Foundation’s initiatives.

By the mid-1990s, overweight and obesity were observed and identified as a trend to closely watch, as the number of individuals identified as obese jumped 6 points, from 12% to 18% from 1991 to 1998. For kids and teens, these steadily climbing numbers were just as perplexing: From 1976 to 1980, 5.5% of kids and teens aged 2 to 19 years were considered obese, but that number shot up to 10% from 1988 to 1994 and to 13.9% in just the 1-year period of 1999 to 2000.

So by 1999, health officials had declared the state of overweight and obesity in the United States to be “epidemic” and 2 years later, with the release of its report, Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity, David Satcher’s Office of the US Surgeon General noted that overweight and obesity were soon to represent a cause of preventable deaths on par with cigarette smoking.

Childhood overweight and obesity naturally broke out as an area for intense scrutiny, with the idea that thwarting the early development of unhealthful behaviors could lower the accelerating prevalence. When the US Surgeon General’s report was released, 13% of the US population of kids and teens were overweight or obese and the rate of type 2 diabetes was increasing at an unprecedented pace: new diagnoses of type 2 diabetes, which had been charted at a negligible percentage in children before the 1990s, tripled what they were in 1980.

At the same time that these trends were being detected, the Foundation, in concert with the Academy’s renewed look at strategic planning that went beyond establishing a mission and values to identify specific goals and strategies to achieve them, was deep in the process of rewriting its own strategic plan. Child and adolescent nutrition emerged, and has remained since, as the Foundation’s top priority for programming and initiatives. “Who can deny that obesity with children is important,” says Finn, adding that “it would be foolish to ignore it.”

Child Nutrition and Health Program

Just as the health care community was grasping the notable increase in overweight and obesity among kids and teens in the mid-1990s, researchers observed a puzzling disconnect among kids between demonstrating general knowledge of healthful food and physical activity and translating it into healthful habits. At the same time, the Clinton administration and Congress were embroiled in intense debate on health care reform that included threatened cuts to child nutrition programs, including school breakfast and lunch programs.

The Foundation’s 1995 launch of the Child Nutrition and Health Program—which received funding from individual contributors as well as Ross Products Division, Abbott Laboratories, Kraft Foods, Nutrasweet Company, Nutricia, the Pediatric Nutrition DPG, the Peanut Institute, HealthTech, and Hershey Food Corporation—launched soon after and encompassed an ambitious, multifaceted program including a

Healthy Weight for Kids

In 2001, riding the success of the Child Nutrition and Health Campaign, the Academy’s Children’s Healthy Weight Task Force (chaired by Guy Johnson, PhD) was in deliberations for what would be the Foundation’s next move in its anti—childhood-obesity programming. This task force was looking to boost the involvement of communities in confronting these issues and augment the skills of RDs and DTRs to better equip them to tackle these complicated matters. The task force assembled a summit of representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Tufts University, National Institutes of Health, US Dietary Agency, and the International Life Sciences Institute to discuss the extant childhood-obesity initiatives and identify programming gaps where the Academy could lead the way. And it was of utmost urgency that the Academy lead the way. In the 2002 environmental scan, obesity was identified as an area of “crisis opportunity” for the profession.

The Healthy Weight for Kids program—which received funding from individual contributors as well as Ross Products Division, Abbott Laboratories, Kraft Foods, Nutrasweet Company, Nutricia, the Pediatric Nutrition DPG, the Peanut Institute, HealthTech, and Hershey Food Corporation—launched soon after and encompassed an ambitious, multifaceted program including a

yielded new research on topics including the behavioral factors of kids of low socioeconomic status that affect dietary patterns, how child—parent interaction affects nutrition among Latino preschoolers, neophobia, and responsive eating.

The campaign certainly also grabbed the attention of the media, using an intensive strategy to produce public service announcements that aired on Saturday morning children’s television programming, publish two advertorials in kid- and parent-oriented national magazines, and capture >300 million hits in print media coverage.

By 1998, all the original objectives of this initiative were conquered, but the program was still in full force; soon, the Foundation would be gearing up to determine its next moves in adding to the mix in the fight against child obesity.
survey on family nutrition, a self-assessment tool for practitioners, and a grant program partnership with General Mills. This program denoted an important moment in the Foundation’s history, as it attracted a lot of attention to the Academy and to dietetics practitioners and opened a lot of doors to new opportunities.

Family Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey and Screening Initiative

The Family Nutrition and Physical Activity screening initiative, endowed by the Foundation’s Ann Hertzler Fund, addressed a major deficit in the treatment of weight management identified during the task force deliberations: There was a paltry amount of materials for assessing family-related determinants that influence inappropriate weight gain in children and contribute to risk factors for overweight once those children reach adulthood. This screening tool represented a means for authorities in pediatric and family health clinics, schools, and health fairs to more effectively identify who should be considered for prevention or intervention treatment.30


To give dietetics practitioners a glimpse into kids’ and parents’ perceptions and practices surrounding weight, physical activity, food selection, and eating behavior and how these affected kids’ ability to attain or maintain a healthy weight—and to give the Foundation a launching point for determining its future programming—the Family Nutrition and Physical Activity survey was distributed to a representative sample of US parent–child pairs.32 After a 2003 field test of the survey (made possible by a donation from the Rey-Vaden Family Foundation, in memory of Academy past president-elect, Allene Vaden), the Academy released a paper that discussed the results and provided commentary. More than 150 US newspapers, with a combined readership of approximately 4 million, published this article.33

This groundbreaking survey was re-administered in 2010, repeating two thirds of the original 2003 questions but including amended content modules based on environmental scans, focus groups, and literature reviews that revealed more current data on childhood obesity risk and prevention factors.34 The 2010 survey, which served to bolster that a program like Kids Eat Right was needed, showed improvements since 2003 and identified areas for more intervention.35

Hearts N Parks

Another push within the Healthy Weight for Kids public education campaign was to equip parks employees with nutrition information to help them field public inquiries when leading health-related activities in their facilities. According to a 2002 Foundation donor report, the partnership between the Academy; the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; and the National Parks and Recreation Association resulted in the pilot test of the Hearts N Parks program in communities in 10 states. For the Academy’s part, RDs were appointed as state coordinators and advisers to work with these park employees as resources for nutrition information as requested and needed.

Champions for Healthy Kids

The Foundation partnered with the General Mills Foundation and the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports in 2002 to debut the “Champions for Healthy Kids” program—a program that is still going strong today and boasts of having helped nearly 1 million children in the decade since it began.36 Administered by General Mills Foundation, “Champions for Healthy Kids” awards $10,000 in 1-year grants annually to 50 qualified agencies—not-for-profit organizations, health departments, government agencies, schools, and Native American tribes—that work to improve eating and physical activity behaviors of children aged 2 to 18 years in communities where both the need for such programs and the likelihood for sustainable impact are great.36

A boon to RDs, General Mills recognized the importance of academic credentials and experience in the delivery of nutrition information—so because this program requires a scientific basis to any program that receives funding, built into the applicant requirements is that an RD or DTR be involved directly or in an advisory capacity.

Champions for Healthy Kids” delivers funding to grassroots groups in low-income communities that were unlikely to receive funding from other sources. That an organization likely to be awarded funds toward its work had a perceptible level of teacher commitment, and commitment of youth participants was higher in organizations seeking out new partnerships, were noted in early program evaluation. Grant recipients over the years have included Happy Feet and Healthy Eats in 2003; Boston Public Health Commission’s Wellness in Childcare, Girl Scouts USA, and Buffalo Inner City Ballet in 2004; La Rabida Children’s Hospital Family Nutrition Education project in 2005; and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe’s Youth Diabetes Prevention Program and North Dakota State University Development Foundation’s Munch and Crunch Afterschool Program in 2009.

It is noteworthy that imposing an end date on the grants did not necessarily spell the end for these projects. Among the recipient programs, nearly 80% continued after the period of the grant funding had expired. This figure alone denotes precisely why the Foundation gets involved in initiatives of this nature. Furthermore, when the program celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2012, 10 “best of the best” legacy award recipients were identified and awarded an additional $50,000 to continue their program with proven outcomes in bolstering nutrition and physical fitness among children.

When Cochran was chair of the Foundation in 2006, she noted that such grants “promote the types of activities the [Academy] Foundation believes hold the greatest potential to have a positive, lasting impact on young people’s nutrition and physical activity.” It also underscores how the impact of the Foundation supersedes merely the delivery of dollars. This sentiment is echoed by Finn, who makes the point that, across all the Foundation initiatives, “It’s not always about money. You have to have creativity, a team of people who are passionate about the program, and the workers to make it happen.”

Cochran notes that a survey of past grant recipients presented at a 2007 summit commemorating the Champions program’s 5-year mark yielded the documented evidence that the program was a success for all involved. After participating, children in these funded programs were ultimately more
physically active and more knowledgeable of key nutrition topics, and RDs emerged as having the greatest impact among all participating health professionals on the relationship between nutrition and physical activity.

Meanwhile, says Cochran, the Foundation was seeking to focus even more resources into programs that targeted childhood obesity and was exploring more activities to support its 2006 strategic plan. Such programs “positioned the Academy and the Foundation to address a serious public health problem while promoting and utilizing the expertise of RDs in making a difference in child nutrition and weight issues,” she says. The first initiative under the 2006 strategic plan was the Healthy Schools Partnership.

Healthy Schools Partnership
As the Healthy Weight for Kids program was gaining momentum, a very troubling development was emerging within the larger context of childhood obesity. Thanks to a perfect storm of cultural beliefs that overweight is a healthy weight, grocery store deserts, a prominent presence of fast-food restaurants and convenience stores, and struggling school systems designating physical education as a low priority, the rates of overweight and obesity among urban youth were staggering.

What began in 2007 as a 12-week pilot program in inner-city schools in Kansas City, MO, the Healthy Schools Partnership represented a coalition between the Academy, PE for Life (a physical education advocacy group), and the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition. The program sought to encourage kids of lower socioeconomic backgrounds in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades to have fun while staying active through innovative—and, most importantly, daily—physical education in their schools. With funding from the Grocery Manufacturers Association’s partner companies via the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition Foundation, the Academy’s Foundation developed an RD Nutrition Coaches program to allow RDs to work in tandem with the physical education teachers and provide education on energy intake and expenditure to achieve energy balance. A large part of the program’s success was in the Foundation’s very shrewd approach: rather than moving into the schools with a presupposition that an umbrella “nutrition for kids” approach would succeed, the Foundation waited to finalize its strategies until it sent its team of coaches into the community to get to know the neighborhoods and the grocery stores, investigate the available programs and services that could help families with the program’s target goals, and build strong ties with school administrators and cafeteria and physical education staff.

The Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation was watching all of this unfold. Once it became clear that this pilot program was capably, creatively, and consistently meeting its goals, the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation launched a national initiative to tackle obesity across the country using the Healthy Schools Partnership as its model.

In 2010, with additional funding from the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation, the program expanded to eight new schools in Kansas City and greater Des Moines region. By this time, a new project was breaking out as the Foundation’s primary initiative—but one that aligned with the goals of Healthy Schools Partnership. Because of its emphasis on educating students about energy balance, the Healthy Schools Partnership was renamed Energy Balance 4 Kids with Play (or EB4K with Play) and as it expanded into more regions, it was absorbed into the newer, larger endeavor: Kids Eat Right.

Kids Eat Right
Although the sharp rise in rates of obesity seemed to hit a plateau in 2008, the rates were leveling off at very high numbers. To be sure, in 2010, data indicated that 12.5 million (17%) US children aged 2 to 19 years were obese. Even though all the Foundation’s childhood obesity initiatives to this point were demonstrating marked success in meeting their goals, it was...
time to roll out something new, something bigger, something that continued to drive home the Academy’s buzzword of the time: prevention.

Perhaps the bellwether initiative of the Foundation, Kids Eat Right represents the first joint initiative between the Academy and the Foundation. Dedicated to fulfilling the Foundation’s primary strategic planning objective to invest in childhood obesity-prevention and reduction initiatives, Kids Eat Right supports the Academy’s strategic plan for childhood obesity prevention. Kids Eat Right also supports the efforts of First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! program and President Barack Obama’s Task Force on Childhood Obesity to end the childhood obesity epidemic within a generation. The hallmark of this member-driven campaign is the mobilization of Academy members-volunteers who promote quality nutrition for all kids through grassroots actions in school change, community outreach, and worksite wellness; influence policy; and work with the media. According to the Academy’s annual report for 2011, within the first year of operation, >2,300 members had signed on and got right to work on developing programs through the Kids Eat Right members-only website (www.kidseatright.org/volunteer). The Foundation, in collaboration with several Academy DPGs, developed educational toolkits and presentations targeted at kids and adults that were downloadable for Kids Eat Right members. The Foundation offered mini-grants as an incentive to use these toolkits and presentations across the country. By July 2012, the Foundation had awarded $30,000 in mini-grants; by March 2013, that number had climbed to >$99,000, with programming reaching >25,000 kids and adults. Simplistically, Kids Eat Right aims to focus the conversation about childhood obesity on prevention via healthful eating using evidence-based nutrition guidance. Explicitly, the three goals are:

- educate key audiences about the necessity of a quality diet and the consequences of poor nutrition;
- advocate on behalf of a quality nutrition approach to promote growth and development; and
- demonstrate the food and nutrition expertise of RDs through educational programming and advocacy.

There is a wide range of potential along the spectrum of what it takes to fight childhood obesity, and the multitude of exciting member-led initiatives since 2010 could fill pages upon pages. In Kids Eat Right’s first year alone, member-led initiatives included developing a community vegetable garden to teach and encourage kids in Georgia about eating healthful foods, hosting culinary demonstrations in California schools, working closely with Illinois legislators to pass Kids Eat Right-related resolutions, developing cooking activities for inner-city students to address food insecurity in New York, and developing a campaign of nutrition and physical activity messaging for schools in Arizona. Although volunteers eagerly lined up to join the campaign, there is always a need for more individuals to be a part of the drive. Toward that end, the Foundation began an affiliate challenge, awarding a monetary prize to the affiliates who enlist the most volunteers.

As part of the Kids Eat Right public education outreach efforts, a website to help busy families shop smart, cook healthfully, and eat right was created (www.kidseatright.org). This website contains tips, articles, recipes, and videos, all contributed by RDs and approved by the Academy’s Knowledge Center. The kidseatright.org site has had nearly 2 million hits since its launch, and Kids Eat Right messaging has splashed across billboards in 26 states in all regions of the country.

Because of its rapid and electrifying success, Kids Eat Right continues to grow. Along with continuation of the successful EB4K with Play, collaborations with other organizations have allowed the Foundation to develop, implement, and evaluate innovative projects and programs, showing the impact of RDs in leading environmental changes in the community and behavioral changes with kids and families. Along with Champions for Healthy Kids, which became integrated into the Kids Eat Right programming, some of these projects have included:

- Meet the Challenge!: Through the Iowa Department of Education, a US Department of

Member-volunteers deliver presentations using Kids Eat Right toolkits. Left to right: Laura Thomas, MEd, RD, LD, uses the Kids Eat Right Family Champions toolkit; Kate Kinne, RD, LD, uses the Kids Eat Right Family Meals toolkit; and Dianne Cogburn, MPH, RD, LDN, uses the Healthy Snacking toolkit.
Agriculture Team Nutrition Grant allowed the Foundation to train and continually support a team of RDs to provide technical expertise to schools in revamping their breakfast and lunch menus and wellness policy. The challenge: To help these schools apply for a prestigious US Department of Agriculture Healthier US Schools Challenge Award.

- RD-Parent Empowerment Program: With MetLife funding, and in collaboration with Healthy Children Healthy Futures, RDs are bringing their expert knowledge and skills to schools and community sites in Chicago, IL; San Francisco, CA; Washington, DC; and Johnson City, TN; to empower parents to be healthier role models for their families.

- Fuel Up to Play 60: In this partnership in 2010-2011, RDs facilitated the Fuel Up To Play 60 program in 100 schools. Fuel Up To Play 60 leverages the star power of the National Football League and the nutrition knowledge of the National Dairy Council, this program seeks to empower kids to initiate important changes in nutrition and physical activity programming in their own schools.

- Expert Partners in Practice: In partnership with Mead Johnson Nutritionals, this pilot educational program for health care professionals targeted childhood obesity and treatment and promotion of good infant nutrition/feeding practices for new mothers with infants as old as 6 months.

- Nutrition Evaluation Tool: With the US Department of Health and Human Services’ Community Food Nutrition Program issuing grants for projects that focus on childhood obesity, a system for evaluating these projects was necessary. The Foundation, with an US Department of Health and Human Services’ grant, developed a tool to help bolster grantees’ understanding of the project goals and to help the Community Food Nutrition Program better evaluate why some programs are more effective than others.

- Ad Council Partnership: The Foundation’s membership in the 28-member Coalition for Healthy Children, via the Ad Council, gives it a strong voice in fulfilling the mission of creating messaging for children and parents that is based on research and provides clear and consistent information about what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and how to achieve it.

- The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association Nutrition Curriculum for Junior High Students: With a grant from Pfizer Inc and funding from Beef Checkoff, the Foundation partnered to produce “Choose Well” information kits to help teachers educate students about choosing nutrient-rich foods and avoiding foods of minimal nutritional value.

- Parent Advocate Program: Action for Healthy Kids and the Academy Foundation teamed up to equip RDs to transform parents into advocates for more healthful eating and increased physical activity among children in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn, NY (where 45% of the resident children are considered overweight or obese).

- The Future of Food project is a collaborative partnership with the Academy and Foundation, Feeding America, and National Dairy Council. The aim of the partnership is to increase Americans’ access to adequate amounts of healthy foods and reduce food insecurity in the United States. Two Kids Eat Right presentations have been developed—one targeted to teens and one for adults—has been developed, to raise awareness of food insecurity and to promote community action. To date, 80 mini-grants were awarded to Kids Eat Right members to use the toolkit presentation. Six Kids Eat Right continuing education credit-granting monthly webinars on topics related to food insecurity were launched in February 2013. Presentations on the topic are accepted for educational sessions at the annual meetings of the School Nutrition Association and at Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo 2013.

FUNDING THE BASIS FOR AN APPLIED SCIENCE

While research is the cornerstone to any health care discipline, the particular interest in emphasizing inquiry and analysis within dietetics has been building at rapid pace since the last decade of the 20th century. The early 1990s represented a time of moderate interest in research in dietetics. The Foundation provided earmarked funds to the Academy’s Council on Research (dissolved in 2000) in some research efforts such as the development of workshops on conducting research studies on lipid metabolism and in drafting a research agenda for improving the nation’s nutrition. The Foundation also worked with the Council on Professional Issues (which absorbed the Council on Research) to review and approve proposals for dietetics research.

As Academy leaders were diving headfirst into challenges to assert MNT as crucial in the treatment of disease and attain Medicare coverage and reimbursement for dietetics practitioners, the calls for more research got louder and louder. In 2001, the House of Delegates put its stamp on the research needs of the profession by passing a motion that called for bolstering “critical evaluation of research in preparation of evidence-based practice guides,” “integration of research findings into daily practice,” and “dietitians participating in research in the practice setting.”

But with only approximately half of RDs holding advanced degrees, and even fewer engaged in research, the Academy needed to generate more resources to spark a stronger research ef-

The 2002 Dietetics Practice Audit revealed that 2% of members served as principal investigators in research studies, 3% played a role in the design of research studies or writing research reports, and 2% had implemented research studies designed by other individuals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of grant</th>
<th>Research endeavors supported</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott Nutrition Award</td>
<td>Since 1993, this grant has provided a scholarship to a doctoral student planning to conduct research in renal disease and nutrition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allene Vaden Memorial</td>
<td>To enhance and encourage research in this area, this grant supports young academics in launching research endeavors in foodservice management, including improvements to operations and how they affect child and adult feeding programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Joyce Memorial Research Fund</td>
<td>Since 2007, to foster the scientific training of future leaders in nutrition, this fund assists individuals working with a mentor on obesity prevention/weight control, dietary assessment methodology in the interest of investigation or enhancing the accuracy of dietary reports, or fruit/vegetable gardens projects involving human research. Preference is given to individuals in South Carolina and Georgia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann A. Hertzler Research Grant</td>
<td>This grant finances research projects based on the Academy’s research agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colgate-Palmolive Fellowship in Nutrition, Oral Health/Dental Education</td>
<td>Since 2002, this grant has sought to further research conducted in the area of nutrition and oral health or dental education, especially in the focus areas of osteoporosis, calcium intake, and periodontal disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes Care and Education dietetic practice group (DPG) Karen Goldstein Memorial Grant for Diabetes Medical Nutrition Therapy Application</td>
<td>Since 2003, this grant finances members of this DPG who conduct medical nutrition therapy outcomes research for diabetes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietitians in Nutrition Support DPG Research Grant</td>
<td>Researchers who belong to this DPG are eligible for this grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Aging DPG Community-Based Applied Research/Best Practice Award</td>
<td>To encourage applied research endeavors that focus on improving the well-being, nutritional status, and independence of older adults in community residential facilities, this award (established in 2010) aims to identify and resolve problems related to dietetic practice, program administration, care coordination, and behavioral practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbert D. and Nylda Gemple Research Grant</td>
<td>Launched in 2001, this grant encourages innovative and unique models to study the correlation between diet and nutrition in treating neurological disorders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Hankin Nutritional Epidemiology Research Grant</td>
<td>Financial support is made available to doctoral students working on a dissertation that focuses on nutritional epidemiology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie O’Sullivan Mailet Research Grant</td>
<td>Research projects that seek to show how the role of dietetics practitioners has evolved or the value of dietetics practitioners in terms of public health are financed by this grant (available since 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCormick Science Institute Research Award</td>
<td>Funds from this award go toward financing research proposals that support the Academy’s research agenda for the profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PepsiCo Healthy Lifestyles Innovation Research Grant</td>
<td>This grant—which comes with a specifically selected annual topic—brings recognition and encouragement to innovation in promoting physical activity and nutrition toward a healthy lifestyle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetarian Nutrition DPG Research Grant</td>
<td>Members of this DPG who conduct innovative research in vegetarian nutrition are eligible for this award.</td>
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Figure 6. Named research grants proffered via the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation.

fort within the profession. The Foundation took an early lead in this endeavor, for example, using donations to fund Evidence Analysis Library sections—namely, childhood overweight and spinal cord injury and nutrition.

Just as the Academy was crafting its research philosophy in 2002—that "dietetics is the integration and application of principles derived from the sciences of nutrition, biochemistry, physiology, food management and behavioral and social sciences to achieve and maintain people's health; therefore, dietetics research is a dynamic collaborative and assimilative endeavor"—generating funds for the Foundation’s Research Endowment and Annual Research Fund soon commenced.

The Annual Research Fund

By providing funding on a yearly basis to the research efforts of the Academy
and members, the Annual Research Fund, created in 2009, is intended to bring RDs to the forefront of evidence-based investigations and thus make an indelible mark on the food and nutrition knowledge of consumers. The Annual Research Fund partially finances the Academy’s and Foundation’s research priorities as well as the Dietetics Practice-Based Research Networks (which had been financed previously via Foundation operations funds), which encompass a multitude of important projects, including the Nutrition Quality of Life tool and the Family Nutrition and Physical Activity screening tool.

**Named Research Grants**

In the years since the Academy and the Foundation placed a stronger emphasis on research, several named research grants were launched. See Figure 6 for the details on these grants.

**Research Endowment Fund**

“RDs have always been interested in research,” says Ken Wear, MS, RD, LD, who has served as Foundation Chair twice (1989-1990 and 2000-2001) and was a key figure in developing the Foundation’s research endowment. When serving on the Foundation board in the 1990s, when health professionals had begun to take note that obesity was coming onto the scene as an area to watch, Wear convened a meeting of practitioners with research backgrounds. The talk at this meeting was whether the Foundation should put its resources toward research in obesity initiatives. Not surprisingly, the unanimous consensus was “Yes,” but concerns about funding acquisition stalled any progress. With government funding for research subject to the priorities of each changing administration and the competition for private funding fierce, it was acknowledged that the funding had to come from within the Academy. However, as noted by Audrey Wright, RD, a longtime Foundation leader, in her comments in a 2002 Foundation donor report, there had never been enough money for research and development of the profession because of the Foundation’s funds’ restrictions. Still, making research a high priority was not a discussion that faded away.

When Wear was close to rejoining the Foundation board in 2000, he says, he was reviewing the minutes of past years’ Academy board of directors meetings and his eyes fixed on something Polly Fitz, MA, RD, had said when she was president (1997-1998): as paraphrased by Wear, Fitz had commented that, “We have always been involved in raising money and awarding scholarships to the undergraduate level. But I think it’s time we think about endowing a fund that would give a nice research brand to our own members.”
Since the meeting during his first tenure as Foundation chair, the topic of obesity kept growing and growing. So when Wear resumed his chairmanship, he wanted obesity initiatives to be the main thrust of the Foundation's work and for research to feature prominently.

The Research Endowment Fund was launched as a means to keep dietetics practitioners on the frontline of food and nutrition science and to ensure that they are providing the public with the most up-to-date, accurate, evidence-based nutrition information. The endowment began with an intent to focus on research surrounding key issues, including complementary care, dietary supplements, human genomes/genetics, retail foodservice, biotechnology, and that emerging issue of the time: obesity.

To build these coffers, the Foundation got to work on its fundraising activities, an effort that included the 2001 launch of the 21st Century Club—a designation to honor donors who pledge $2,100, described by Wear in the Foundation’s 2001 annual report as “a special group of members and friends demonstrating their commitment to expanding dietetic knowledge through contributions to … [the] endowed research.
fund” —and the later launch of the Evergreen Society to honor donors who pledge $4,200.

Members picked up on [how important this was] right away,” says Wear, who marvels at how quickly the funds poured in. According to Foundation donor reports, in its first year, supporters had pledged $340,000; by 2006, the fund had $1.4 million in donations, and by 2011, this number had exceeded $2 million.

The HOT Project—with a goal of using MP3, web, and audio technologies to build an interactive treatment and self-care approach to teens at risk for or diagnosed with type 2 diabetes—was the first proposal to be awarded Research Endowment (Lifestyle Interventions for Childhood Overweight and Obesity Prevention) funds. Additional projects receiving funds under way at the time of publication include an individually tailored nutrition and physical activity intervention using a smartphone and a study to validate a questionnaire that investigates mindful eating among teens.

It’s so hard to prove anything nutritionally, because it takes so long to see the results from when you actually do the study, to see if the intervention has done what you want it to do,” says Wear, as he underscores the need for these investigations. “We need more and more of this research to put in the [Evidence Analysis Library] so that it’s known that what RDs are saying is truthful and based on scientific fact.”

Finn’s comments in a 2004-2005 Foundation donor report echo Wear’s assertion: “Research is at the heart of everything we do. We need a rigorous knowledge base in order to make sound clinical decisions and give credible nutrition advice.”

LOOKING FORWARD

Although Kids Eat Right, the research endeavors, and the other initiatives that are still going strong represent a sizable, focused portion of the Foundation’s future plans, they are by no means the end of the line on innovative programming. In 2012 the Foundation announced a new endeavor in partnership with Feeding America and the National Dairy Council to tackle food insecurity issues, including raising awareness of just how endemic this problem is and improving access to healthful foods to eliminate hunger. At the time of publication, Academy representatives were in the process of collaborating with representatives of agriculture and food production industries along with hunger-relief professionals to determine new ways to approach the challenges presented by this very important issue.

And with the Academy’s 2017 centennial getting ever closer, a new Foundation project is in the works. Finn and Judith L. Dodd, MS, RD, FADA, LDN—also a past Academy president (1991-1992) and Foundation chair (2009-2011)—are designing an ambitious program to look at what big issues will be part of the next 100 years of dietetics. “It’s an internal and external celebration,” says Finn, “and we will use it as an opportunity to position the RD as the authority in nutrition. We need to make our mark by continuing to focus on big, global issues of authority where we can differentiate who we are and what we do.”

It is only fitting that such a project would be administered via the Academy’s Foundation, given how much work this group has done since 1990 alone to set the stage to encourage, promote, honor, and celebrate dietetics practitioners.


References


