

Florida Dietetic Association  
President's Update: April 2009

**Leadership:** Congratulations to FDA officers for 2009-2010:

President- elect

Holly Adams, MPH, RD, LD/N  
Jacksonville Dietetic Association

Treasurer

Mandy Layman, MS, RD, LD/N, CDE  
Orlando Dietetic Association

Member at Large

Erin Loos, MHS, RD, LD/N,  
Jacksonville Dietetic Association

Nominating Committee

Jennifer Shoemaker, MS, RD, LD/N  
Tampa Dietetic Association

&

Brianna Liles, MS, RD, LD/N  
Gainesville District Dietetic Association



These individuals will take office on October 1 as Eunshil Shim-McKenna assumes the office of FDA president. Thank you to all of the nominees on this recent ballot. FDA cannot continue without members willing to serve in leadership positions of the association. And if you belong to one of our districts please remember to participate in these local elections as well.

**Member Recognition:**

Do you remember when we asked you to vote for Suzanne Laws for Wholesale Diabetes Educator of the Year? She was recently notified that she is one of the three finalists for the award. She and her husband, Neil, will be flown to Boca Raton April 30th, and the winner will be announced on May 1st.

Our recent ballot did more than just elect officers. Florida members have selected the following colleagues for our annual awards:

Ruth DeBusk PhD, RD, LD/N, (Tallahassee): Outstanding Dietitian

Amy Aponick MPH, RD, LD/N, CNSD, (Gainesville): Emerging Leader

Crystal Jackson MS, RD, LD/N, CNSC (Gainesville) **and** Gina Vrendenburg MS, RD, LD/N (Jacksonville): Recognized Young Dietitian

### **Public Policy and Advocacy:**

One by one reports are coming in as congressional and senate visits occur as a follow-up to PPW in February. Here are just 2 examples, both from Tallahassee in the past month:

Dear Colleagues,

I just wanted to share my legislative experience with you all.

This week I had the opportunity to visit with Representative Michelle Rehwinkel-Vasilinda at the Main Capital Building. Melissa Dancer-Brown, Dr. Maria Spicer, and myself (Heather Fisher) discussed the role of the dietitian in the healthcare setting.

We instructed Rep. Vasilinda on the difference between an unlicensed nutrition practitioner and a registered, licensed dietitian. We discussed the importance of licensure for the health and safety of Florida residents and urged her to support policies to maintain licensure for profession. We also encouraged her to contact us if she needed expert opinion regarding nutrition.

She asked our opinion about health reform and what we would like to see happen in this area. We told her that it is vitally important to include provisions and funding for disease prevention efforts. We provided specific examples of how dietitians are essential in these efforts.

It was very exciting being at the Capital! I urge you - if you haven't already - to visit with a legislator in your area to promote our profession...it is very important, it doesn't take too much time, and it is extremely easy to do.

Just wanted to give you, the board, and fellow FDA members a quick "shout-out" about a legislative visit that Heather Fisher, Melissa Dancer-Brown, and I (Rick Parks) completed yesterday with Jerry Smithwick, Florida Chief of Staff for Representative Allen Boyd from Monticello. Representative Boyd is the US House District 2 representative that covers 16 counties from Dixie County in west central Florida to Leon County and Tallahassee to Bay County in the Florida Panhandle.

Our meeting lasted about 40 minutes - longer than I had expected or planned for - but Mr. Smithwick was very gracious to listen to our concerns regarding the lack of reimbursement to registered dietitians for preventative MNT services. We also discussed Representative Boyd's 24 member Health Care Council made of an appointed county representative and 8 at-large members. He indicated that he would work with us in pursuing an at-large appointment for the Council the next time one should become available (some were just recently filled so no current positions available at the moment).

We finished our meeting with summarizing/reviewing our concerns about the lack of reimbursement for MNT, the cost benefits of preventative services, etc. Mr. Smithwick indicated

that the President has yet to reveal his plan for health care reform but should do so soon and that we should voice our concerns to congress prior to the unveiling to make sure our concerns are made know and presented.

What a great and empowering opportunity!

FDA will recognize every member who conducts a legislative visit at the Annual Meeting in July. Be sure to submit a report in writing to either Carole Mackey or Melissa Dancer-Brown so that we have your name. Forms are located on the FDA website. And send us a picture of your meeting for inclusion in our advocacy slide show (thanks to Heather Fisher!)

On April 1, in spite of threatening weather, 55 dietetic interns and students made their way to Tallahassee for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Legislative Day. After the morning program and lunch the interns, program directors, and RDs went to the Capitol for scheduled appointments and to observe legislative committees in action. Thanks to Toni Martin for organizing this event!

### **Annual Symposium:**

By now you have received a postcard in the mail reminding you about our upcoming symposium July 12-15, 2009 at the Naples Grande Resort & Beach Club. The registration form is up on our website and our room block at the resort is already nearly half full. In addition, the first 100 members to register for the meeting are eligible for a *drawing* for a free night during the meeting. With the advent of the professional portfolio you have many more options for obtaining your continuing education for dietetic registration. Thank you for your continued support and attendance at the FDA Annual Symposium.

We still have space available in our exhibit hall. If you know of a company or vendor that might be interested in exhibiting with us please let us know ([cstapell@eatrightflorida.org](mailto:cstapell@eatrightflorida.org)).

Darlene Moppert is looking for nominations for our special awards to be presented during the symposium. Categories include Business & Industry, Partnership, collegiate Leadership, Public Service, Grassroots Political Action, Media, and Legislation & Public Policy. Please send nominations to [darlene.moppert@browardschools.com](mailto:darlene.moppert@browardschools.com). The deadline is April 15.

### **Strategic Plan:**

The BOD has been tracking indicators on the FDA strategic plan and there are several to report on: (1a) Increase number of members by 2% each year. In April 2008 we had 3270 members and this year we have 3317 members, an increase of 1.3%; (5b) implement a minimum of one new technological communication tool each year: both the personal committee and the district presidents held a meeting utilizing “go to meeting”; (3a) by September 2009 develop an FDA leadership database: John Wills as Membership chair has been compiling information into a database to be used as a resource for our

nominating committee. If you have ever held an office, chaired a committee, attended ADA leadership Institute or won an award within your district, FDA or ADA you have been included in our leadership database. Our strategic Plan was updated during the January FDA board retreat and is located in the member-only section of the FDA website.

Until next time,

Nadine Pazder RD