Teacher's College graduate Medea Benjamin is improving nutrition across the globe by targeting critical determinants of diets often overlooked: issues of human rights that affect how, what, and if a person eats. These so-called “upstream determinants” may be related to politics, an unjust food system, or the result of systemic corruption or economic failure, but they all produce the same outcome: increasing numbers of people around the world who are suffering from preventable diseases stemming from malnutrition.

I had the opportunity to chat with Ms. Benjamin about her background, motivation for her work, and her message of hope.

“I think it is important for people to have that sense of optimism and sense that they can be powerful and not feel hopeless that these institutions or governments are impervious to public opinion, or that things have always been like this [so they must continue]. I think it is
Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Staff,

The results of this year’s election have been a shock to many. Though our country may currently seem to be divided by diametrically opposing viewpoints, I think there is more common ground than people realize. Political parties aside, we should all take this election as a call to action. It is a civic mandate bestowed on us all to create research, editorials, and articles to promote nutrition and food justice by providing others with the information and tools necessary to lead healthy, just lives, and support candidates who encourage and promote the same ideals. It is more important than ever to find our common ground, while always standing up for what we believe in and working to make our country and world a better place for everyone—on both sides of the aisle. I hope that you find this issue informative, and that you consider writing for the next issue about topics that you find important, fun, or interesting that need a truthful and thoughtful voice.

In this issue we would like to give a warm welcome to the students who began the Program in Nutrition in the spring and fall of 2016. In New Student Notes (p. 14), our new students share a little bit about their interests, backgrounds, and aspirations. Our faculty and staff also share with us what they have been up to (p. 8).

In our cover story, Callie Troutman profiles TC alumna Madea Benjamin, who advocates for adequate nutrition around the world. Doctoral student Priya Khorana shares with us her research through the Tisch Food Center’s Wellness In The Schools (WITS) intervention evaluation (p. 5). For a look at a day in the life of a TC dietetic intern in a clinical rotation, check our Tyffanie Ammeter’s piece (p. 6). If you’ve ever wondered what working at a newspaper would be like, join Jen Cadenhead as she recounts her tour of The New York Times newsroom (p. 7). To check your form, read Sundus Malaikah’s article about the proper techniques for popular gym exercises (p. 16). Faith Aronowitz reviews How Not to Die by Dr. Michael Gregor, and shares a few interesting nutritional tips she picked up (p. 17); Sonal Agarwal discusses the debate about butter (p. 18); and Carly Wertheim shares research about and tips for mindful eating (p. 19). No issue is complete without delicious recipes—check out page 20 for Danielle Bertiger’s Pumpkin Pie Smoothie Bowl and Carly Wertheim’s Kale Salad with Roasted Delicata Squash and Chickpea Croutons.

The Grapevine is written by the students in the Teachers College Program in Nutrition. Thanks to all of the students who volunteered to write. I encourage all of you to get involved. Send your ideas to me at jmo2144@tc.columbia.edu. Thanks to all of the students who volunteered to write for this issue!

Enjoy the issue!

Julie O’Shea
Editor-In-Chief
Master’s Candidate, Nutrition Education
Fresh Off the Vine: Events and Announcements

• TC graduate Maggie Moon, MS, RDN, recently published a new book, The MIND Diet, about the Mediterranean and DASH diets and the evidence behind them, specifically focusing on brain health. Check our her bio at http://www.maggiemoon.com/about-2/.

• A new study in Appetite by Dr. Isobel Contento and the Tisch Food Center team investigates how students' beliefs and practices are linked to what they choose to eat. This research can make nutrition education more effective at moving students towards healthy habits. Read more at http://www.tc.columbia.edu/tisch/news-and-events/all-news/2016/isobel-study/.

• View and share this issue of The Grapevine in color online at: https://www.tc.columbia.edu/health-and-behavior-studies/nutrition/section-more/program-more/grapevine-get-involved/content/grapevine-archives/

TEACHERS COLLEGE FOOD DAY 2016

The TC dietetic internship class and the Tisch Food Center hosted a Food Day celebration on Monday, October 24. Here are a few snapshots from the event.
The deep belief and conviction that all people should have access to enough healthy food guides Ms. Benjamin's work as an activist and grassroots motivator. She describes this conviction as a lens through which she views all of the world's problems. Ms. Benjamin was first introduced to a world of true poverty in Mexico where she was vacationing as a teenager. During her early work as a nutritionist in Latin America and Africa working in rehydration camps, she pinpointed what she saw as the root cause of malnutrition: political negligence. Years later, she co-founded an organization called Global Exchange, whose mission it is to provide people with a vehicle for visiting other societies in a way that can reflect back on their own society via “Reality Tours”; to bring fair trade labels to the United States; and to fight issues of fair wages across the globe. Ms. Benjamin describes her time with Global Exchange as eye opening to the powerful, negative impact that U.S. corporations have on individuals all over the world.

After September 11, 2001, Ms. Benjamin focused her efforts on the U.S. reaction to invasion, founding Code Pink as a way to challenge the military budget and general militaristic response to international relations. She was motivated by how she saw war and violence abroad affecting women and children whose husbands and fathers had gone off to fight, leaving them to fend for themselves. She saw desperation in every sense of the word, without a reasonable purpose, and again, she acted. Code Pink still exists to promote peace and human rights initiatives, oppose militaristic solutions to global problems, and encourage a redirecting of tax dollars to support “life-affirming” programs such as healthcare, education, or green jobs.

My overall impression of Ms. Benjamin is that she is passionate, nimble, and always tuned in to the greater picture. Rather than simply complaining about the ways of the world, she seeks to impact priorities and push the conversation to recognize the needs of the poorest people of society. She even ran as a Green Party candidate for the United States Senate in California. According to Ms. Benjamin, being a nutritionist today requires an understanding of the system in which our clients or patients are operating. It requires us to act against barriers not only at the individual level (e.g., dislike of vegetables), but also at the societal, national, and global levels. We will never create solutions to individual problems without supporting them with policies and financial resources on a larger scale.

So, in summary, what does her work mean to us in the field of nutrition? Ms. Benjamin's message is that we can all be a powerful source of good just by joining in the national, or even global, conversation. We hold more power than we think, but we need to apply ourselves. Ms. Benjamin would encourage us to find a movement and donate our energies to a cause.

“It does take mass movements to make change. Writing books and educating people is critical, but I also think that we have to understand that throughout our history it has really been through mass movements... that major shifts in our ways of thinking and policies have changed.”

You can read more about Ms. Benjamin’s work at www.codepink.org and www.globalexchange.org.
As an exercise physiologist with a master’s in nutrition, it was integral for me to be able to unite my two areas of concentration for my doctoral dissertation. I am privileged to be a part of the Tisch Food Center, working on an evaluation study of the Wellness In The Schools (WITS) intervention.

WITS is a “non-profit organization that aims to inspire healthy eating, environmental awareness and fitness as a way of life for kids in public schools.” WITS encourages collaborative learning and attempts to improve students’ readiness and engagement in the classroom by providing nutrition and fitness education. The WITS intervention intends to integrate the cafeteria, recess, and classroom experiences for students in order to enhance their wellness behavior and academic performance.

WITS “Cook for Kids” provides healthy, scratch-cooked meals in the cafeteria, and “Coach for Kids” promotes physical activity on the recess yard and encourages pro-social behaviors among students.

The focus of my dissertation work was to collect physical activity data in 14 NYC public schools (seven intervention schools and seven matched control schools), focusing on second and third grade students during recess. We used two observational tools that our team modified from prior literature. My year-long data collection timeline started with an outdoor recess baseline measure (Coach for Kids was not yet implemented), indoor recess, and then a follow-up outdoor recess measure (with Coach for Kids).

With the System for Observing Play and Leisure Activity in Youth (SOPLAY) tool, I collected data on physical activity levels. WITS aims to increase the amount of time students are physically active. It also aims to increase physical activity from sedentary to more moderate/vigorous. When we compared baseline data to one-year post intervention, we found that in WITS schools children were more active during both indoor and outdoor recess.

With the System of Observing Play Engagement Episodes at Recess (SOPEER) we collected data on pro- and anti-social behaviors. After one year, both intervention and control schools’ behavior engagements were similar. However, in WITS schools verbal conflict decreased over the year, due to there being more organized activities. This finding can help encourage schools to have more organized games for students.

Being directly involved in observation, I was able to collect not only data that would help answer my research questions (Does WITS programming increase physical activity levels on the recess yard? Does WITS programming encourage more pro-social behaviors?), but also how such types of interventions impact the students, school staff and administration, and the entire school environment and atmosphere.

Working in schools is challenging and yet vital if we, community builders, want to see positive change. This experience not only opened my eyes to how much work needs to be done to help this country alleviate the problem of childhood obesity, but also how fortunate I was to be able to be a part of such a rewarding experience. Being able to witness firsthand the impact of such a program on young children was stimulating and has me wanting to be a part of this type of research more. My ultimate goal is to work in community settings providing children with wellness education, inspiring long-term change, shifting both the culture of schools and communities at large.
One of the major benefits of the TC dietetic internship is the wide variety of rotations we experience. This semester I am interning at a non-profit hospital in Brooklyn with 318 acute beds. Every three weeks I work with a new dietitian who covers a different unit in the hospital. I will also spend time in the dialysis center and on the behavioral health floors, and I’ll round out my semester doing staff relief in December. Here’s a snapshot of a typical day as a clinical intern:

• **5:00 a.m.** Wake up and get ready. I do meal prep on Sundays to minimize what needs to be done in the mornings.

• **6:15–7:45 a.m.** Take the train. I maximize my commute by reviewing study guides for the DI class quizzes or notes I took on previous days at the internship. Some days I just rest. (Note: I happen to have one of the longer commutes, but not everyone will travel so far.)

• **7:45–8:00 a.m.** Get to the hospital and eat breakfast. I usually pack overnight oats.

• **8:00–8:45 a.m.** Review the census (patient list) for the day with my preceptor to see who we need to visit. We usually have a mix of new patients and follow-ups to conduct.

• **8:45–10:00 a.m.** Round with my preceptor. We visit while patients have breakfast so we can see how much they eat. We assess their intake and inquire about food allergies, preferences, usual body weight, and GI issues (like nausea or vomiting). We also provide diet education and answer any questions, making note of which patients would like more information. For patients on tube feeds, we check the formula type, the rate it is being delivered, and the flush rate, in addition to physical changes such as edema and whether the patient is tolerating the tube feed.

• **10:00–1:00 p.m.** Begin writing nutritional assessments and completing charting. In our assessments, we discuss how well the patient is eating, possible reasons for abnormal nutrition-related lab values and any medications that may be contributing to or correcting those levels, whether the patient has pressure ulcers, and if the current diet order is appropriate for the patient’s needs. We end the note with our recommendation about which therapeutic diet and supplements (if any) would better suit the patient. We also mention what we will monitor going forward and provide any other recommendations we feel are important (such as obtaining an HbA1c level for a diabetic patient who is new to the hospital). My preceptor usually assigns me a handful patients to work on for the day and she reviews each assessment after I finish.

• **1:00–2:00 p.m.** Break for lunch.

• **2:00–3:00 p.m.** Continue charting. My preceptor writes a list of every diet change that needs to be discussed with the doctor so we can put in the diet orders all at once.

• **3:00–4:30 p.m.** Start visiting patients to give additional nutrition education and finish any remaining charting. We provide a number of handouts with information on following low-sodium diets, carbohydrate counting, chronic kidney disease and dialysis diets, etc. We also get a daily list of patients who are prescribed warfarin (Coumadin), and we educate them on maintaining their vitamin K intake while on that medication. The last thing we do is put in our diet orders with the doctors.

• **4:30–6:15 p.m.** Go back to the diet office, get my things, and head home.

• **6:15 p.m.** I try to squeeze in as much “regular life” activities as possible. My goal is to be in bed by 9:30 p.m., but that rarely happens, so I get to bed when I can and try to make up for lost sleep on the weekends.

As you can see, my days are packed. The internship is quite a shift from having class a few times per week. I really enjoy being on site and learning how to do nutritional assessments. Each time they get a little easier, although every patient brings new challenges. It is a very dynamic environment and so far it has been a great experience!
This past spring I was part of a group of 10 students from Dr. Randi Wolf’s Analysis of Current Literature and Research in Nutrition class that toured the very modern newsroom of The New York Times Building with Anahad O’Connor, a top health writer for The New York Times. How to best communicate nutrition news to the public is an important part of Dr. Wolf’s Analysis class. Mr. O’Connor told us that the 52-story glass tower at 8th Avenue and 40th Street was designed for effective collaboration and ecological friendliness, starting with the multi-storied, Zen-like garden atrium that visitors first approach. He reminded us of the history of the Times, noting that Times Square takes its name from the headquarters of the paper formerly being located there. He also mentioned that the Times keeps careful track of what trends are doing well for the paper.

On the second floor, where the actual work gets done, it was a calm, quiet affair, reminiscent of the first floor of the Gottesman library, but with modern decor and coloring. Along with clippings from the Times posted on the walls, there were piles of books throughout—gifts of publishers hoping for a favorable mention in the paper—free to any curious soul! Libraries were also scattered throughout the premises. We peppered Mr. O’Connor with questions throughout. He was very gracious with his answers. Mr. O’Connor also introduced us to some of his (famous!) colleagues.

Mr. O’Connor pointed out how the reporters sit in clusters, with the content and copy editors seated nearby in the same open seating. The closed offices that rim the outside and corners are reserved for the managing and senior editors. Conference rooms are used to collaborate across departments. However, because most reporters work on laptops. Mr. O’Connor often works first thing in the morning or late at night in bed, to the dismay of his wife. Most of his collaboration is done with his editor by email, who sits on a different floor. (In fact, because his working location arrangement is so flexible, he has decided to move to the San Francisco office.) This arrangement allows for a free flow of information. The editorial heads of each section gather in the late morning to decide which stories will be featured on the front page or elsewhere and when. However, the editors are constantly collaborating on story placement within both the print and digital editions to ensure appropriate and adequate coverage of news. Their first major daily deadline for the print edition hits around 4 p.m. each day, wrapping up before going to print around 9 p.m., baring an urgent major story.

On the fourth floor, we passed the video production set. Nearby, video editors were busily at work stitching together clips for the digital features for the online version of the paper. In the center of the fourth floor was a large squared balcony overlooking a drop of what appeared to be 50 feet to the second floor, the heart of the newsroom, which was like a beehive of activity. People were deep in conversation there. Many desks had large iMacs and laptops that likely allowed precision editing or the freedom to go at a moment’s notice. We finished up in the multi-storied cafeteria. It was quite spectacular, with made-to-order fish and other fresh offerings.

Mr. O’Connor shared many details with us, such as that he often gets study summaries a few days before they are released to the general public. If they interest him, he tries to contact the principal investigators and other experts to comment as he writes his story. This enables the story to be released around the same time as the study. In addition, his job is to be discerning, adhering to the standards of the Times, written for a more sophisticated, educated audience. So although he knows he may be writing for novices, he may also be writing for medical doctors. He tries to cultivate relationships with experts who can provide timely information in “ready-to-use sound bites.” This also means that he regularly interviews popular celebrities as well as top science researchers. As a staff reporter in the science and health area, he has the luxury of time to research topics that are family friendly, but higher quality, as with a series he recently did on supplement use. He may also be writing for medical doctors. He tries to cultivate relationships with experts who can provide timely information in “ready-to-use sound bites.” This also means that he regularly interviews popular celebrities as well as top science researchers. As a staff reporter in the science and health area, he has the luxury of time to research topics that are family friendly, but higher quality, as with a series he recently did on supplement use. He also generally writes pieces that he finds relevant and important to promoting understanding on public health.

It was an amazing opportunity to spend a few hours talking with O’Connor and learn about the venerable New York Times!
Ian Ang, MA, Doctoral Candidate, Instructor, Advanced Nutrition I

I am a fourth-year doctoral student in the Behavioral Nutrition program about to complete my PhD. I am very excited to be co-teaching Advanced Nutrition I with Dr. Evan Berk this fall. I am also currently working at the Tisch Food Center, primarily on the Wellness In The Schools (WITS) evaluation study. This past spring we completed year 1 data collection for all 14 schools in the study and we have been working hard processing and analyzing the data through summer and fall. For my dissertation, I will be focusing on the impact of the WITS programming on the school lunch food intake in second and third graders from baseline to year 1.

When I am not busy preparing for my classes or staring at data in SPSS, I enjoy going out to eat delicious foods, staying home binge-watching TV shows, playing tennis, or simply exploring and enjoying the many interesting aspects of NYC! Unintentionally, I also spend too much of my free time on Facebook reading up on world events, politics, and social injustices, or just simply watching cute animal videos.

Isobel Contento, MA, PhD Mary Swartz Rose Professor of Nutrition and Education

Each year for me is exciting because it is about living and learning. This year seems to have been more so! Teaching Food, Nutrition and Behavior provided the opportunity to explore new insights into why we eat what we do, as we added learning about the senses from experiments on taste and smelling numerous herbs. In the Strategies for Nutrition Education class, students learn just how difficult it is to plan and deliver group sessions that motivate and facilitate behavior change. I always learn a great deal when I attend sessions where students put their hard work into practice in many different kinds of sites, from middle school classrooms to workforce training sites to bariatric patients. It was amazing this year to see how a team of nutrition educators in Malaysia completed the same sort of training (designed by Pam Koch, Marissa Burgermaster, and myself) in three intense days to come up with actionable educational plans ready to implement in their situations. The world is becoming more similar in so many ways, and the systematic design procedure used in our course here seems to work in these other settings as well.

The most intense living and learning experience this year came from a Trans-Siberian Railway adventure when my husband and I traveled 5,500 miles by rail from Beijing, through Mongolia, Siberia, and European Russia to Moscow and St. Petersburg, across six time zones. We had our own compartment and a bathroom with a great shower even! We stopped at many towns along the way for extensive tours. Being “banished” to cold and stark Siberia was a practice that seems to have started early. Though Siberia is still sparsely populated and seen as remote, the people in the towns there are fully wired into the modern internet and commercial world.

The most important learning experience was about the Russian revolution of 1917 and the profound realization that understanding it helped me think through our election and the
question: what kind of government do we want?

In brief, after many decades of unrest among the 99% for the abuses of the 1%, the 1% was overthrown, with the tsar (Nicholas II) abdicating and a government elected with all sectors represented. But the 99%, led by Vladimir Lenin, believed that the 1% could not be trusted—ever! Only the 99% (the proletariat) should be in the government. His resulting government was idealistic in many ways—“From each according to her/his abilities and to each according to his/her needs.” Estate lands of the 1% were redistributed so that every household had some land, factories became run by workers, and agriculture modernized. While here in the U.S. we can only advocate for social and economic justice and food equity piecemeal, the Russian revolutionaries believed it had to happen all at once: they instituted free education, free medical care, a guaranteed job, a free apartment, a free plot of land to grow vegetables for all families, and the status of women made equal to men. Lenin died in 1924 and Stalin was leader till 1953 but lack of freedoms, abuses, and fear were also ever-present. The approach of the U.S. has been the absolute opposite, with freedom of choice paramount: people are to be self-reliant and businesses unfettered with little or no government regulatory action. Europe has chosen the in-between route: extensive government services for all, combined with personal freedoms and entrepreneurship.

The centenary of the Russian revolution is coming up in 2017 and while free education and medical care remain, massive changes occurred in the early 1990s, dismantling much of the system. One young Russian women said to us rather wistfully: “I don’t think we know what direction to take for the future.” It seems to me we are in a similar situation here in the U.S. The coming year is likely to become a great learning experience for all of us.

Karen Dolins, EdD, RDN, CSSD, CDN

I continue to enjoy working with our Nutrition and Exercise Physiology (NEP) students, as well as non-majors taking my course in Sports Nutrition. In addition to my work at the college, I maintain a private practice in White Plains, where I help competitive athletes, collegiate and high school athletes, casual athletes, and non-athletes of all ages achieve health and performance goals. My areas of expertise are sports nutrition, weight management, disordered eating, and medical nutrition therapy. My research areas of interest include nutrition knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors of athletes and the impact of nutrition intake on performance in ultra-endurance sports. I am a past Chairperson of the AND Sports, Cardiovascular, and Wellness Nutrition (SCAN) practice group, and remain active in the Academy by serving on expert committees. I serve as a board member of the Maple Syrup Urine Disease (MSUD) Family Support Group, providing support to families affected by this rare genetic disease, and am also editor of the group’s biannual newsletter. I sit on the board of Meals on Wheels White Plains, where my nutrition expertise helps guide policies and procedures. I stay fit with running, cycling, swimming, and strength training, and have recently rekindled my passion for scuba diving. My three children are now in college. Thankfully they stay in close touch!

Joan Gussow, MEd, EdD

Last year I complained about being alive for New York’s coldest February on record, cut off from my garden by snow so deep and hard-frozen that I couldn’t even walk out to the river. Little did I know what was coming—this
year’s February, “the most unusually warm month ever recorded,” a month in which the ground thawed so completely that well before the vernal equinox, I could dig 18 inches deep to plant a new blueberry bush and even open up the ground for some new asparagus plants. We all know what’s coming in the long run, but the short run sure does have some weird deviations! And of course, once the year progressed, we found out what that early warm weather followed by a hard frost could do: No peaches in the Hudson Valley.

Since I am saying “no” to most invitations to come and give speeches—and since I have decided I should not be driving out of New York after dark—I happily spend much more of my time at home. But I did fly to Georgia at the end of February to give a talk to Georgia’s organic farming association. I’ve been told that I’ve influenced many people over time, but there’s only one whom I lured directly into farming, a woman named Relinda Walker who heard me give a talk about my book, This Organic Life, and decided on the spot to go back, take over her father’s Georgia farm, and turn it organic! She did that, became a leader in Georgia Organics, and invited me to keynote their conference. How could I possibly say “no”?

Some of you may have noticed that I also spoke at the Just Food Conference in March here at TC—10 minutes to do 20 years of history was a challenge.

For me, one of the highlights of the fall semester is always the Saturday class session, when the Ecology students come out to my garden to learn about organic. Last year I had grown something called Garden Huckleberry, which grows like a giant pepper plant and has huge crops of large blueberry-shaped black berries that no bird or animal touches (unlike true blueberries). I had harvested some for freezing, but abandoned the rest, which I warned the students could not be eaten raw—though they make wonderful blueberry pie. So Katie Rabe asked if she could pick them and make a pie for the class. Of course she could, and did, and brought it in. It was delicious. What a way to end the year! So I’m growing them again. Take Ecology and bake a pie for us.

Pamela Koch, EdD, RD
Research Associate Professor and Executive Director,
Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy

This year my family life has been about new beginnings. My son Ben began at Ithaca College. Garrison, sophomore in high school, is taking on the only child role. Aaron, my husband, got a new job. I am coordinating an amazing roof garden at my building and turned 50.

My work at Teachers College is also all about new beginnings. As Joan Gussow and I teach Nutritional Ecology, we see students transform. First they take in the shocking realization of the state of our planet. Then they take in the reality of the entrenched policies, systems, and ways of thinking that are keeping us stuck. By the end of the semester, we see them gain a sense of hope. If more people can learn what they have learned, change can happen.

As I teach Community Nutrition I see students get excited about supporting government policies and programs as well as grassroots, community-based system changes that are creating a safety net where all Americans are food secure and have access to affordable, nutritious foods. I also find it deeply moving to witness students grappling with structural racism in our food system and planning for how they, as nutrition educators, can play a role in dismantling racism.

Each project we do at the Tisch Food Center is also a new beginning. Our work conducting evaluations and creating curricula change how...
people learn about and experience food. Advocating for strong policies, especially child nutrition, sustainability in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and the Farm Bill, are new beginnings for our nation. Imagine a future where more and more schools have quality nutrition education in the classroom and in school gardens, and school meal programs have abundant fresh, scratch-cooked meals and students have ample time to eat in a calm environment. Schools can become places that model how we want children to learn about food and how and what we want them to eat. Today’s children can grow into tomorrow’s adults that care about creating a sustainable, just, delicious, and nutritious food system.

Shelley Mesznik, MA, RD, CDE, CDN

For over 20 years I have focused on counseling people of all ages who have prediabetes or diabetes, as well as individuals with hypertension or hypercholesterolemia, underweight or obese, to help them adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors. In summer 2015, I closed my private practice in Mount Kisco and moved to Connecticut, where I am still settling in to a new lifestyle.

Professionally, I am counseling a few patients but haven’t set up a practice yet; I do insulin pump and continuous glucose monitoring training; I teach the Nutrition Counseling course at Teachers College; and I run workshops or speak at conferences about counseling and behavior change. This year I presented at the NY State Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Annual Meeting and Expo in May, at the Columbia University Pediatric Dental Clinic in June, and at a special program sponsored by the NY Diabetes Educators of the Lower Hudson Valley in September. I also devote time to being an active volunteer for the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE), the

Coordinating Body of the NY State Association of Diabetes Educators, and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as a member of their expert panel for the development of nutrition guidelines for the prevention of type 2 diabetes for the Evidence Analysis Library.

When not working, I am getting to know my corner of Connecticut. Over the summer, I enjoyed working in our garden and kayaking, and I took a few hikes, including one with my young grandsons who came to visit. When I want to truly relax, I go to my kitchen and cook something new.

John Thomas Pinto, PhD
Professor, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

My adjunct teaching appointments include Teachers College (Advanced Nutrition II), The Institute of Human Nutrition (Columbia University), and the University of New Haven. I also serve as a reviewer for the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Nutrition and Cancer, the Journal of Nutrition, and Analytical Biochemistry. My current research focuses on identifying chemopreventive strategies for diminishing primary and secondary cancer risks. In particular, my investigations examine the effects of organosulfur, selenium and polyphenolic compounds on redox responsive metabolic pathways within human prostate, breast, and colon cancer cells. My research identifies epigenetic mechanisms by which these diet-derived constituents exert control over cell growth and proliferation through sulphydryl-disulfide regulation of signal proteins, affecting transcription factors of gene expression, and inhibition of histone deacetylation.

Outside of research and work, I am on the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission in

Continued on next page
Norwalk, Connecticut, which oversees planning and events ongoing in the Norwalk Harbor that involve mooring of vessels, commercial and recreational boating, construction of docks, and infrastructural concerns such as a dredging. I also enjoy making wine (reds, in particular) each year. My brother-in-law and I make a barrel of Montepulciano and Cabernet sauvignon. I have my second degree black belt in karate and enjoy teaching a traditional Korean-style Karate known as Soo Bahk Do. Lastly, I try to keep pace with my 11 grandchildren.

Debbie Rosenbaum, MA, RDN, CDN
Director, Dietetic Internship Program

My educational background consists of a Master of Arts in Health Education from Columbia University and a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics from New York University, where I graduated with Honors. I completed my dietetic internship at Westchester County Medical Center in Valhalla, New York. I have been a registered dietitian-nutritionist and a certified dietitian-nutritionist for over 20 years. My first job after my internship was as a staff dietitian at the Hebrew Home for the Aged in Riverdale, New York. I learned of my passion for geriatric nutrition there, which set the course for the next several years of my career. Next I worked at Florence Nightingale and the Rehab Institute of New York in Manhattan, where I honed my management skills while being mentored by an amazing supervisor. Initially, I was a Nutrition Services Coordinator and then advanced in my career as the Chief Clinical Dietitian. I was then presented with an amazing opportunity to further my career and oversee the nutrition staff in an 850-bed facility that consisted of long-term care, rehabilitation, acute care, adult daycare, pediatrics, dialysis, and outpatient specialty clinics including, but not limited to, bariatric surgery, diabetes, HIV+, and a burn center. I remained the Director of Nutrition Services at Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York, for over 12 years until I accepted my current position as Director of the Dietetic Internship Program at Teachers College in September 2014.

Prior to becoming the Dietetic Internship Director at TC, I had been teaching, precepting, and mentoring Teachers College dietetic interns for 15 years as well as dietetic interns from other programs. I also maintain membership with several speakers’ bureaus and have been speaking publicly on various nutrition topics for over 10 years. My passion and dedication to the field of nutrition and dietetics has always been evident. I have always felt it important to give back to a field that has brought me so much pleasure. I still remember the time and energy that each of my preceptors put into my experience as an intern, and I have always remained indebted. It is an honor to have joined the faculty within the Program in Nutrition within the Department of Health and Behavior Studies at Teachers College.

Atapon Savitz, Program in Nutrition Academic Secretary

I grew up in Danbury, CT. I completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, CT, with a bachelor’s degree in Fine Art. I worked as a graphic designer/art director at John Wiley and Sons for 12 years in Hoboken, NJ, before I came to Teachers College. I live in the Pelham Bay area of the Bronx with my husband and two children. I like to bake and I have a vegetable garden in the Bronx through the community garden program with the New York Restoration Project.

Lora A. Sporny, EdD, MEd, MA, RDN, Full-time Lecturer in Nutrition and Education

I continue to enjoy teaching Nutrition Care Process and Medical Nutrition Therapy I and II, Nutrition and Human Development, and Continued on next page
Introduction to Nutrition. In addition, I am the faculty supervisor of master’s students who complete Extended Fieldwork in Nutrition and Education, Nutrition and Public Health, and Nutrition and Exercise Physiology. I also communicate with and provide advisement to prospective graduate students who represent all corners of the globe. During the past year I’ve enjoyed working with our new Dietetic Internship Program director, Debbie Rosenbaum. Our goal has been to foster a cohesive learning experience from classroom through supervised practice. During nice weather in my spare time I enjoy gardening, tennis, swimming, and hiking the Mianus River Park trails in Connecticut.

**Randi Wolf, PhD, MPH**

The 2016 Provost Investment Fund grant has provided start-up resources to develop a partnership with the Celiac Center of Columbia University. This award is currently supporting three innovative projects that combine some of the interests of our Program in Nutrition faculty in nutritional epidemiology, dietary assessment, and behavioral nutrition education with the clinical expertise of Celiac Disease Center faculty in the diagnosis and management of celiac disease. These projects include describing eating patterns in children and adults with celiac disease (e.g., who eats naturally gluten-free foods versus processed packaged gluten-free products so common in today’s food environment; and who is incorporating alternative gluten-free grains, such as millet, teff, buckwheat, amaranth, or sorghum, in their diet), developing a series of theory-based and behaviorally focused workshops to promote a healthy gluten-free diet, and a family study examining how food traditions and family dynamics change when an individual in a family is diagnosed with celiac or a related disease. I’ve been incredibly grateful for the 15 (and counting!) passionate student volunteers helping with the data collection and analyses for these projects, which include hundreds of USDA multiple-pass 24-hour recalls, quality-of-life measures, and qualitative data on facilitators and barriers to eating a gluten-free diet.

I continue to be actively involved in three evaluation projects for Edible Schoolyard New York City (ESYNYC), Wellness in the Schools (WITS), and FoodCorps being conducted through the Tisch Food Center. We’ve been learning so much over the past few years about measuring school lunch consumption using a variety of methods, including observation, digital photography, and self-reported survey.

I also remain very involved with our colleagues at the Columbia School of Dental Medicine to evaluate the effects of MySmileBuddy on promoting a healthy diet to reduce oral childhood caries with funding we received from both the American Dental Association and NIH. We are awaiting news about a large NIH/U01 that, if funded, would be a five-year rigorous evaluation of MySmileBuddy’s efficacy in reducing early childhood caries and understanding why it works in an underserved Hispanic population in NYC.

Life at home is busy too with my boys—Eli (6 years) and Spencer (10 years). The last few months have been filled with dinner conversations about the presidential candidates, campaign, and now President-elect. I’ve been glad to see they have so many questions as they grapple with issues they’ve been hearing about in the news and at school. It’s been a great opportunity for my husband and me to talk to them about the complicated democratic process, respect for different opinions, and to value what matters to them most.
New Student Notes

On behalf of The Grapevine and the Program in Nutrition, we would like to extend a warm welcome to the new students who began the program in the spring 2016 and fall 2016 semesters.

Faith Aronowitz: From Rego Park, NY, Faith attended Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Theatre with a double minor in Business Administration and Music. Faith is enrolled in the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology program. She is a former gymnast and likes to end her gym sessions with a few handstands. Professionally, she is interested in working with amateur and professional female athletes struggling with the female athlete triad. Faith is also interested in nutrigenomics and how food can potentially interact with gene expression to help prevent and treat disease.

Danielle Bertiger: From Marlboro, NJ, Danielle attended Vanderbilt University, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Medicine, Health, and Society and Communication Studies. Danielle is enrolled in the Nutrition and Education program. Danielle used to work in public relations for the Tennessee Titans cheerleaders. On game days, she organized the cheerleaders' fan and tailgate appearances and halftime promotions (i.e., contests for the fans).

Maitreyi Bokil: From Pune, Maharashtra, India, Maitreyi attended Florida International University, Miami, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Nutrition and Dietetics. Maitreyi is enrolled in the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology program. She is a personal trainer and is teaching group classes at Dodge Fitness Center and Barnard College this semester.

Aderet (Dana) Hoch: From Westchester, NY, Dana attended NYU Steinhardt, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Nutrition and Dietetics. Dana is enrolled in the Nutrition and Education program. She currently works full time for New York Cares as a Children's Education Program Manager. She previously worked as the Assistant Store Manager at the Chobani SoHo Cafe.

Catherine Hu: From Saratoga, CA, Catherine attended the University of California, Los Angeles, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Psychobiology. Catherine is enrolled in the Nutrition and Education program. She is a food science enthusiast and is interested in community nutrition.

Carmine Ingenito: From Valhalla, NY, Carmine attended Manhattan College, where he earned an undergraduate degree in Exercise Science. Carmine is enrolled in the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology program. His parents are Italian immigrants from Italy’s Naples region. They used to own a restaurant in which his father was the executive chef and mother was the manager. That is where his passion for food began. His passion for exercise came from playing soccer his whole life and was strengthened by the influential professors he had while at Manhattan College.

Julian Kao: From California, Julian attended UC Irvine, where he earned an undergraduate degree in Biology. Julian is enrolled in the Nutrition and Education program. Julian originally went to nursing school but decided to switch to nutrition because it seemed more interesting and more of a passion for him. He wants to either work in a hospital or a school setting in the future.
New Student Notes

Nicole Lindel: From Stony Brook, NY, Nicole attended SUNY Cortland, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Exercise Science. Nicole is enrolled in the Nutrition and Education program. She is interested in how mental health ties into nutrition, specifically anxiety, depression, and eating disorders.

Sundus S. Malaikah: From Saudi Arabia, Sundus attended King Abdulaziz University, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Clinical Nutrition. Sundus is enrolled in the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology program. Her last name means “angels” in English. Sundus has worked as a teaching assistant for a course called “Health and Fitness Nutrition” and she absolutely loved teaching.

Cat Martin: From Aron, CT, Cat attended the University of Connecticut, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Nutrition. Cat is enrolled in the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology program. She used to be in school to become a pastry chef.

Vijayshree (Shonu) Pande: From Greenwich, CT, Vijayshree attended Teachers College, where she earned a Master of Science degree. Currently, Vijayshree is enrolled in the doctoral program. She is coming back to school after 13 years. Both Vijayshree and her daughter are studying at Columbia University—her daughter just started her undergraduate degree at Columbia Collage.

Michelle Rubinstein: From Buffalo Grove, IL, Michelle attended the University of Michigan, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Organizational Studies. Michelle is enrolled in the Nutrition and Education program. She is mom to a mini Australian labradoodle puppy named Penelope.

Callie Troutman: From Kansas City, KS, Callie attended Baylor University, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Medical Humanities. She also earned an MPH in Health Communication from George Washington University. Callie is enrolled in the Nutrition and Education program. Though originally from Kansas City, Callie has spent the last decade (plus) in Texas, Washington, D.C., and NYC. She has worked in health/food/nutrition PR for the last few years and did her MPH thesis on healthy food availability, quality, and price in low-income wards of Washington, D.C.

Carly Wertheim: From Marin County, CA, Carly attended Barnard College of Columbia University, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Environmental Science. Carly is enrolled in the Nutrition and Education program. She is a health-supportive chef and culinary wellness educator passionate about empowering individuals to transform their lives through whole foods cooking. Fermented vegetables, freshly baked granola, and the farmer’s market in August are a few of her favorite food things.
Commitment to exercise is the best gift you can give yourself. Research has documented numerous health benefits gained from resistance training, such as increased metabolic rate, reduced weight, increased muscle mass, enhanced strength, improved balance, and improved self-esteem. While you hit the gym, keep in mind how to do these exercises the right way! Misunderstanding the purpose of the exercise, overestimating the weight your body can handle, or a lack of stability and control over the movement can lead to bad form. Being a frequent gym visitor myself, I have noticed a few exercises that many people tend to do incorrectly.

**Squats**
I’ve been seeing plenty of the 100 Squat Challenge on my Instagram feed and, while that makes me happy as fitness advocate, it makes me cringe when I see bad form! The proper technique is:
1. Tilt your head up, feet shoulder-width apart and slightly turned outward.
2. Keep your shoulders relaxed and your chest pushing outward.
3. Lower yourself as if sitting back on a chair with your back in a neutral position.
4. Focus on keeping your weight on your heels and not your toes all throughout the movement, and keep your knees aligned over your feet.
5. Raise yourself up, focusing on using your leg muscles, not your back.

**Bicep curls**
Most people fail to have a proper form because they’re trying to lift more weight than they can handle, which ends up working shoulders and back, but not so much the biceps. The proper technique is:
1. Stand with your shoulder blades back and down and abs contracted.
2. Keep your back and elbows still.
3. Curl your arms up until they are parallel to your shoulders.

**Abdominal crunches**
Tucking your head into your chest will hurt your neck and will not work out your abs. A lot of people complain that crunches hurt their neck, which means they’ve been doing this exercise in an incorrect form. The proper technique is:
1. Curl up until your shoulders are around two inches off the floor.
2. Don’t tuck your neck as you curl up. Look up at the ceiling to avoid tucking.
3. Keep your abs contracted throughout the exercise and maintain a controlled movement.

**References**


Michael Gregor, MD, internationally renowned physician and creator of nutritionfacts.org, a nonprofit, public service website that provides free updates on the latest nutrition research via short videos and articles, is the author of How Not to Die, a comprehensive compilation of all the nutrition research with which he has engaged throughout his career. He splits his book into two parts. Part I is divided into 15 chapters that discuss the 15 leading causes of premature death in the United States. He spans the gamut from heart disease to diabetes to suicidal depression, providing advice on what to eat, what spices and herbs to add to your diet, and what lifestyle changes to make in order to prevent or help treat these diseases. For example, did you know that sprinkling powdered mustard seed on cruciferous vegetables will significantly increase the formation of sulforaphane, the component in them that is thought to be responsible for all their beneficial effects, such as acting as an anticancer agent, protecting the body from pathogens and pollutants, and boosting the liver's detoxification enzymes? Did you know that curcumin, the yellow pigment in turmeric, may potentially prevent and stop cancer cell growth, help regulate apoptosis, and effectively treat conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, IBD, and other inflammatory conditions?

Part 2 is a discussion of Dr. Gregor’s Daily Dozen foods that he believes people should consume every day. Dr. Gregor explains that this list grew out of the question he would constantly be asked: “What do you eat every day, Dr. Gregor?” The list includes: beans (3), berries (1), other fruits (3), cruciferous vegetables (1), greens (2), other vegetables (2), flaxseeds (1), nuts (1), spices (1), whole grains (3), beverages (5), and exercise (1). Dr. Gregor provides practical advice on how to incorporate these foods into one’s daily diet, for example, making “collardritos,” a spin on burritos, in which collard green leaves replace tortillas, or making your own flax crackers by mixing flaxseed with water, herbs, and spices, and baking at 400°F for 20 minutes. His recommendations always come back to focusing on eating a whole-food, plant-based diet.

Although Dr. Gregor references many scientific studies to explain the reasons behind his food recommendations, the book is still accessible to the average reader, who may not necessarily have a background in nutrition, but may be interested in learning about how eating certain foods can potentially add years to one’s life. The fact that he organizes part 1 based on each disease allows readers to go right to the chapters that most interest them, whether that is how not to die from breast cancer, high blood pressure, or even iatrogenic (inadvertent harm due to medical interventions) causes.

I definitely recommend Dr. Gregor’s book. As a future registered dietitian, it may give you fun tidbits to share with clients. However, it is important to recognize that his recommendations, even though supported by scientific research, are just that: recommendations. Prior to making recommendations to clients, it is best to review the evidence yourself and form your own opinions on the topics. Everybody and every body is different, as are people’s tastes, cultures, perspectives, and values. While I do agree that a plant-based, whole-food diet can be beneficial for everyone, it is important not to get too wrapped up in eating every food, herb, and spice on the list, and following every recommendation to a tee, as doing so can become so overwhelming that it defeats the purpose of being able to make sustainable lifestyle changes.
Is Butter Better?
By Sonal Agarwal

Born in the exotic land of India, where cows are worshipped and food is festive, I have grown up with butter or ghee (clarified butter) as a prominent part of my diet. Butter has been in households for as long as 10,000 years, dating back to when our ancestors began domesticating animals. It was used to burn in lamps and to smear on skin to protect from the cold. It was and is still used in ceremonies in my culture and many others. It is believed to have several healing properties against infections and ailments. So one may ask why butter has (or had) such a bad rep. The answer may lie in the unconfirmed association of saturated fats to heart disease and mortality.

The federal government has long blamed butter and other saturated fats for the troubled health of Americans, as heart disease continues to be the leading cause of mortality. A recent analysis looked at several studies from the 1960s, and, in particular, a large Minnesota trial (The Minnesota Coronary Experiment) that showed that a dietary switch from saturated fats (such as butter) to oils lowered cholesterol levels. However, a problem indicated by new studies is that the old studies never actually showed that linoleic-acid-based oils reduced heart attacks or deaths. Scientists at the UNC School of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health discovered that the trial only reported partial results. Here’s the surprise: the recovered data confirmed that while the intervention group that consumed significant linoleic-acid-heavy oils in place of saturated fats lowered cholesterol levels, they also suffered from TWICE the number of heart attacks as the control group!

Although the researchers say that “it would be premature to conclude from [the recovered data] that replacing saturated fats with corn oil is actually harmful to heart health,” in a meta-analysis they did conclude that at least there is no significant difference in mortality or reduction in the risk of heart disease if one would make the switch from oils to butter. The question remains: which one to choose? While keeping in mind that the USDA Dietary Guidelines recommend consuming less than 10% of calories per day from saturated fat, any nutritionist will tell you, everything in moderation, along with exercise, is “butter” for you!

Check out Sonal’s blog: www.confrontedbyfood.com

References

Mindfulness, Eating, and Health: The Benefits of Using All Five Senses at the Dinner Table
By Carly Wertheim

What were you doing while you ate lunch this afternoon? Were you reading the news, composing an email, participating in a meeting, or watching television? Were you aware that the bag of tortilla chips was slowly disappearing or did you glance down after hitting “SEND” to find only crumbs remaining?

A growing body of research suggests that a slower, less distracted way of eating may help combat weight problems, increase enjoyment of meals, decrease consumption of processed foods, and aid in the rehabilitation of disordered eating. This approach, called “mindful eating,” asks an eater to become more aware of the food on her plate and the sensations it produces when it enters her body, to take in the entirety of the eating experience.

As nutrition professionals responsible for guiding patients towards proper nourishment, it is important for us to acknowledge that how we eat may be just as important at what we eat. Mindful eating is a tool that can benefit everyone from cancer patients with diminished taste buds to sufferers of digestive problems to the everyday eater who has just forgotten to taste, chew, and appreciate each bite.

How and why to practice mindful eating:

• **Get rid of distractions.** Because it is time to focus on eating, multitasking will be counter-productive to the practice. You’ll be better able to recognize the differences between emotional and physical hunger, appreciate the tastes in your mouth, and notice satiety when you’ve put your iPhone away and turned off the television.

• **Breathe.** Before you pick up your fork, stop and spend one minute taking deep breaths, noticing the rise and fall of your abdomen. By focusing on your breath, you are helping to turn down the “flight or fight” response of the sympathetic nervous system. This promotes optimal digestion and absorption.

• **Look and smell.** Notice the colors on your plate and the aromas in the air. Sights and smells are important indicators to the hypothalamus that it’s time to eat. See if this changes the amount of saliva released in your mouth.

• **Taste.** Placing less food on your fork than usual, take your first bite and allow the food to sit on your tongue for a few seconds before chewing. Take in all the flavors and textures. Regardless of what you perceive, remain neutral and non-judgmental.

• **Chew.** Paying attention to the movement of your jaw and tongue, chew each bite with integrity. Chewing is vital for proper digestion, stimulating the secretion of saliva and beginning the breakdown processes.

• **Take your time.** Maintain awareness with every bite and try not to rush through your meal. Because it can take up to 20 minutes for the brain to register satiety, eating slowly is important to prevent overeating. Throughout the meal, pay attention to what’s happening in your body, engage in active listening with those around you, and generate a feeling of gratitude for the nourishment and effort that it took for the food to reach your plate.

References


**Recipe Corner: Fall Fare**

### Pumpkin Pie Smoothie Bowl

**Ingredients**
- 1 cup cashew milk (or sub other liquid)
- ½ cup pumpkin puree (tip: freeze pumpkin puree in ice cube trays for a thicker smoothie)
- ½ apple
- 1–2 Tbsp almond butter
- Pumpkin pie spice (cinnamon/ginger/nutmeg/clove)

**Directions**
Blend all ingredients until smooth and top with dried fruit, granola, or more flaxseeds.

### Kale Salad with Roasted Delicata Squash and Chickpea Croutons

**Ingredients**

**For the chickpea croutons:**
- 1 15-oz can chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
- 2 tsp olive oil
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp sea salt

**For the dressing:**
- 1 lemon, juiced
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 clove garlic
- ¼ tsp maple syrup
- ¼ tsp Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp salt
- Pinch red pepper flakes

**For the salad:**
- 1 small delicata squash, halved lengthwise, seeds removed, and cut into ½-inch thick half moons
- 1 tsp olive oil
- Sea salt
- 1 bunch lacinato kale, de-stemmed
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- Parmigianino reggiano, shaved

**Directions**
1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Spread chickpeas out on a kitchen towel and dry as much as possible. Place on a large rimmed baking sheet and toss with oil, garlic powder, and salt. Roast for about 30 minutes, or until brown and crispy, gently rolling the chickpeas around on the baking sheet halfway through cooking.
3. Whisk together the dressing ingredients.
4. Spread the squash on another baking sheet. Coat with olive oil and a pinch of salt. Roast for 10 minutes.
5. Place the kale in a large bowl and coat with dressing. Using your hands, massage the dressing into the kale for a few minutes, until it wilts and becomes tender.
6. Add the roasted squash, dried cranberries, and some shaved Parmigianino reggiano to the dressed kale before serving.

Recipe by Carly Wertheim