

WINTER
2019

NUTRITION NEWSLETTER

THE GRAPEVINE

TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



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2019 Program in Nutrition Alumni Panel

By Rebecca Valdez

On the evening of January 30, 2018, a crowd of 40+ filed into Grace Dodge 177 for the 2019 Program in Nutrition Alumni Panel. Even with the last minute location change as the number of RSVP's exceeded the initial room reservation, all seats were occupied and some were left standing by the entrance and lining the back of the room, waiting to hear from the panelists.

Participating panelists included Chelsea Amengual, MS, RDN; Claire Haft, MS, RDN, Jade Lopez, Marissa May, MS, RDN;

Gail Watson, MS; Jessica Wilson, MS RDN; and Cindy Yang, MS, RDN. Many of the panelists were career changers with experiences that ranged from theater to fashion to marketing. As graduates of the TC Program in Nutrition, they volunteered to share their challenges, experiences, motivations, inspiration, and advice for the current students and dietetic interns.

The panelists graduated from TC between 2013 and 2018, and currently held positions in nonprofits and community

Continued on page 4

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni and Staff,

We've all heard about the problems with the food system and how it results in poor health outcomes, environmental degradation, hazardous work conditions, and the inhumane treatment of animals. Some believe technology is the solution. Care about animal welfare? Grow meat in a lab. Concerned about crop diseases? Use GMO seeds and pesticides.

What if we already have other technologies that would fix our climate crisis while simultaneously change our social structure and food system? No patents required. According to Dr. Raj Patel, agroecology and gender equality are the technological solutions.

On February 6th, I attended Mark Bittman's *Food Justice and Public Health: The World That Food Made* where Dr. Patel, writer, activist, and academic, was the guest speaker. He said patriarchal societies resulted from one invention: the plough. Historically, women did a lot of farm work, but because the plough required great upper body strength, men took over and the women moved inside. As the demand for food increased, so did the need for the plough. Raj presented a study that looked at the relationship between the use of the plough and sexism. Countries that adopted the plough had more gender inequality compared to those that did not.

"So who will undo the plough?", he asked. The private sector? The government? Dr. Patel doesn't think so. He then described a project in Northern Malawi where children were malnourished and funding for agriculture was limited. It started out as agroecological experiments to increase the diversity in food available. And it worked! The farmer research teams were growing more food to provide a diversified diet, but there was still another issue. Harvesting was a woman's job in addition to all of her other responsibilities (i.e. cooking, cleaning, childrearing). They didn't have time to harvest, so they turned to another technology – teaching men to cook and organizing for gender equality.

The result? Malnutrition in Northern Malawi declined drastically. By teaching men to cook, the community challenged the patriarchal society and "reinvented what it meant to be a man"¹. This change was driven by the people in the community. This is just one example of how community organizing has resulted in positive changes for multiple problems.

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1. The secret ingredient for ending world hunger. (n.d.). Retrieved February 20, 2019, from <https://www.tedmed.com/talks/show?id=529961>



Sincerely,
Jasmine Hormati

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JHormati', written over a light blue background.

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The Grapevine is written by the students in the Teachers College Program in Nutrition. I encourage all of you to get involved. Send your ideas to me at jh3856@tc.columbia.edu. Thanks to all of the students who volunteered to write for this issue!

Fresh Off the Vine: Events and Announcements

Do you find yourself rolling your eyes at people's grammar mistakes? Are you looking for an exciting opportunity to be more involved with the Program in Nutrition's faculty and students? You're in luck! ***The Grapevine* is looking for its next Editor-in-Chief.** No prior experience is needed! This is a great opportunity for anyone interested in health writing and gaining experience in overseeing a quarterly publication. Please email me if interested!

jh3856@tc.columbia.edu

Celiac Disease Center Gala (11/9/18)

Carrie Russo, Mary Morawetz, Jen Cadenhead and Randi Wolf



Rally at City Hall (1/16/19)

Andrea Strong, Laura Raaen, and Claire Raffel in proper rally attire advocating for nutrition education.

NEW STUDENT NOTES - WELCOME TO TC!

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 2019 semester.

Daniela Hinojosa: Originally from Tamaulipas, Mexico, Daniela attended Barnard College where she earned an undergraduate degree in Neuroscience and Behavior and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons where she earned her masters degree in Human Nutrition . She is enrolled in the Community Nutrition Education program. Daniela works at the Migration and Nutrition Epidemiology (MaNE) Group at Mailman School of Public Health.

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Laura Smith: Originally from Brielle, NJ, Laura attended NYU where she earned an undergraduate degree in Nutrition and Dietetics and Teachers College where she earned her masters in Nutrition Education. She is enrolled in the Behavioral Nutrition doctoral program. Laura is a Program Innovation Manager at WW (formerly Weight Watchers) where she develops and pilots new food program concepts that are then launched globally. lrs2185@tc.columbia.edu

Amanda Wahlstedt: Originally from New York, NY, Amanda attended Cornell University, where she earned an undergraduate degree in Communication and Media Studies with a minor in Nutritional Sciences. She is enrolled in the Nutrition and Public Health program. Amanda has worked at a private nutritionist practice, Lara Metz Nutrition, for three years and had the privilege to work alongside three diverse RDNs. amw2268@tc.columbia.edu

2019 Program in Nutrition Alumni Panel (continued from cover)

organizations, clinical settings, food service management, nutrition startups, and private businesses. Their day-to-day varied considerably, from screening new hospital patients to content development, training and counseling, to recipe research and development. The commonalities shared, however, included the importance of time-management, especially with the challenge of wearing multiple hats and juggling tasks and responsibilities. The most rewarding and important aspect of every job was connecting with people to help facilitate healthy changes.

For example, Cindy, the Wellness Manager at Restaurant Associates, is responsible for managing culinary teams, but also motivating the people she supervises. Marissa, an outpatient oncology dietitian at Montefiore Medical Center, manages her patient's nutritional status, but equally important, listens to what they have to say. She said she uses many of the skills learned in the Nutrition Counseling course at TC.

The theme of connecting with people emerged again and again throughout the evening. When asked about their most

valuable experience at TC, panelists urged students to talk to one another and make connections with co-workers, friends, and TC staff and faculty to ensure they have a strong support network during and after the program. This is especially critical during the DI to learn the job itself and to learn about the people who work in different settings. "Lean on people," Claire said. Marissa added, "People are willing to help you if you ask questions and make yourself vulnerable. They understand when you want to learn." The way to success isn't in a silo was the sentiment many panelists echoed.

To end the night, the panelists offered words of encouragement for current students and interns. When students are feeling fatigued, they should remember to take care of their mental health and prioritize self-care to help rebalance, reset, and stay focused on why they chose this program in the first place. When students are stepping into a new semester or dietetic rotation, they should be open minded and flexible because "you don't know which skills you'll fall back on," said Gail Watson, an entrepreneur who surprised herself by often reaching for the research skills learned at TC for her current

business as a content creator and meal service provider.

Furthermore, when students are feeling discouraged or frustrated, they should remember that the challenges are temporary, build grit, and give them the foundation for successful careers in the future. Lastly, several panelists agreed that every class and DI rotation is an opportunity to get to know yourself, explore what you like or dislike, and build up knowledge, tools and confidence. "Just stay positive, enjoy the process as it goes by quick," said Claire, emphasizing that being "true to yourself is scary but you have to follow what feels right."

The Alumni Panel was supported by the Program in Nutrition faculty, organized by HealthNuts Club, and moderated by Lucille Tang. A special thanks to Francesca Castro and Viktoria Sekmov for their help with the event.

HEALTHNUTS MOVIE NIGHT: ICARUS

By Faith Aronowitz

Students, faculty, and friends gathered together at Dr. Wolf's home in Brooklyn on the last Friday in November for the semi-annual HealthNuts Movie Night. After greetings from Dr. Wolf's cat and spending some time socializing and feasting, we settled down for a viewing of the Academy Award-winning film, *Icarus*.

The documentary details the story of filmmaker and amateur cyclist Bryan Fogel, who sets out to examine the ease with which professional athletes are able to cheat anti-doping systems. What starts out as a social experiment with Fogel injecting himself with performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs), a la Morgan Spurlock in *Super Size Me*, becomes an accidental exposé of what might be the greatest international sports scandal of all time – complete with lies, deception, and maybe some foul play.

Fogel enlists the help of Dr. Grigory Rodchenkov, (former) director of the Moscow Anti-Doping Center, as a guide for his personal doping journey. Their Skype conversations provide some light-hearted humor, capturing the development of a relationship that surpasses adviser and advisee, quickly taking on serious undertones. What Fogel uncovers is just the tip of the iceberg – Dr. Rodchenkov was allegedly a significant player in a decades-long state-sponsored doping program in Russia. Here ends my synopsis, so you'll have to watch the film to fill in the gaps. I encourage you to do so - this film is most definitely worth two hours of your time.

At the end of the film, we enjoyed some dessert and had an informal discussion facilitated by Lucille Tang, who coordinated the event. On the surface, this film is about what happens when the integrity of sport is compromised. At its core, it's about systemic corruption. If the system endorses doping, what's so wrong if everyone's doing it?

Some people will do anything to win. Another sports example: former USA Gymnastics (USAG) doctor, Larry Nassar, did not sexually abuse hundreds of young gymnasts for decades alone. He had enablers. The Karolyis, the former national team coordinators,



created an environment of fear that allowed Nassar to flourish. He played good cop to their bad cop. Furthermore, he had free rein at the “Ranch,” the Olympic Team Training Center and the site of decades of abuse. Private gymnastics club coaches, officials at Michigan State University, where Nassar worked as a team physician and assistant professor, and USAG executives allegedly knew about Nassar's abuse, but said and did nothing. Protecting the institution's reputation was more important than protecting a child. Nassar hid behind this corrupt system, in which a gold medal was worth more than a child's safety.

I am, in no way, equating the emotional scars of sexual abuse with the consequences of taking PEDs. There are hierarchies of systemic corruption. The dismantling of any of these systems, however, will never be successful as long as the underlying institutions and individuals continue to enable it.

In the high stakes world of sport, prestige, power, and money often trump ethics and truth. In his Academy Award acceptance speech, Fogel said, “We hope *Icarus* is a wake-up call – yes about Russia, but more than that, about the importance of telling the truth, now more than ever.” We must continue to strive to tell the truth, especially as today's climate makes it more difficult to uncover.

PLANTING THE SEED FOR HEALTH WITH NYCEN

By Francesca Castro

NYCEN's fall meeting took place this past November and focused on all things Infant Nutrition. The event featured three dietitians in the field who shared their unique experiences. Here are some of the highlights:

Dispelling Common Myths and Current Recommendations

Pegah Jallai MS, RD, CNSC, CDN is a professor and clinical coordinator at NYU and a pediatric specialist at Middleberg Nutrition. She reconfirmed many of the recommendations we learned in Nutrition Health & Development, even noting that Ellyn Satter is an excellent resource to recommend to parents as they begin their food journey. The biggest take away? No judgement! Do not judge a parent on the way they feed their child, or their lack of knowledge. Instead, treat each infant on an individual basis, without making assumptions, and use resources and handouts while also communicating with your parent and creating concrete solutions and goals. The biggest victory in practicing pediatric nutrition is not parents following your recommendations to a tee, but coming back to you for a follow-up with new questions.



Prenatal and Infant Feeding: Recommendations in Action to Help Mom and Baby Bloom

Christina McGeough MPH, RD, CDN, CDE, CLC is a lactation coach and nutritionist who works at Forest Hills Wellness, as well as with the Maternal Fetal Medicine Associates. She emphasized that the most important time for optimal infant nutrition is during pregnancy. It is important to utilize visuals and even provide hands on care for your clients, such as going through their grocery lists or walking through a grocery store together. Most importantly make sure your recommendations are culturally appropriate, especially living in a city as diverse as New York. Try to understand your client before making recommendations.

Politics & Policy of the 2020 Dietary Guidelines: Pregnancy & birth through 24 months

Ali Hard, MS, RD is a Teacher's College alumna and Professional Staff for the House Committee on Education and Labor. The 2020 Dietary Guidelines process is currently taking place. Ali talked about how the guidelines will include pregnancy and birth to 24 months in this new edition. She is hopeful that environmental exposures and contaminants will be addressed in the 2020 DGA, especially since American Academy of Pediatrics addressed it.

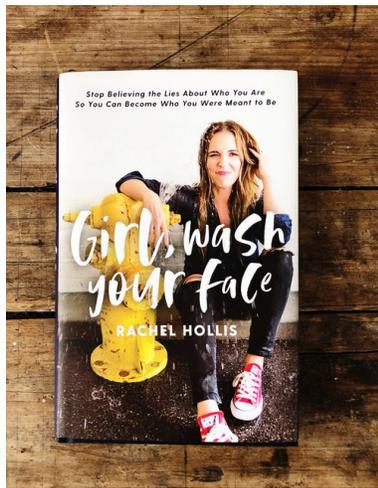
Kick Your Motivation Up a Notch

By Kyala Clegg

Don't let this article fool you, I really don't spend all of my free time reading self-help books, but I can appreciate their enthusiasm for life. We all get caught up in negative self-talk and question our path sometimes—these authors have taken the time to write out the words you need to hear in those moments to reignite your inspiration and realign your actions with your vision.

Here is a list of the 3 latest and greatest motivational audio books (because who has time to read anything but a textbook anymore) that have officially flipped my perspective of the self-help world.

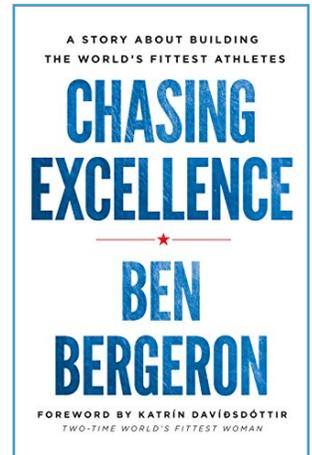
1. Rachel Hollis, founder of thechicsite.com and CEO of her own media company, developed a powerful online presence early in her career by sharing trendy and useful lifestyle tips while also unapologetically confessing to the world, the messiness of her own life. In *Girl, Wash Your Face*, Rachel exposes the twenty lies that too often hold us back from living a fulfilled and productive life.



With raw honesty and lighthearted humor, Hollis unpacks and examines the falsehoods that once left her feeling overwhelmed and unworthy, and shares the practical mindset and lifestyle alterations that helped her overcome them. In a world that is constantly telling us that we should have two degrees and be married by the age of 25, Hollis shakes you awake to the reality that is, we are all human and your story is vastly unique. So no matter what you think you “should” be doing at this stage in your life, Hollis reminds readers to be guided by their heart and to hustle for their passion and disregard anybody standing in the way.

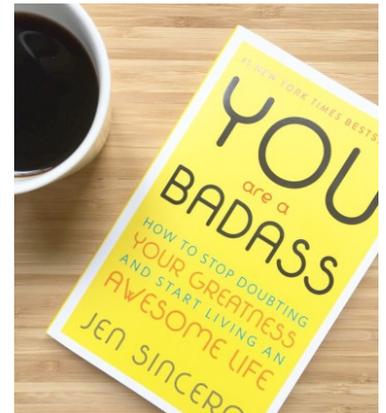
2. If there is a name you should know in the fitness world, Ben Bergeron is it. Ben has trained some of the world's fittest athletes. In *Chasing Excellence*, Ben recounts the dramatics of and build up to the 2016 Reebok CrossFit Games® competition. He explains his process of achieving excellence and the set of character traits he

believes are indispensable on the road to being world-class. The mindset and methodology that has shaped some of history's most profound leaders, athletes, and trainers alike, is explained here. *Chasing Excellence* will call into question your character, commitment, “mental toughness,” and passion. It's worth a read.



3. Admit it. Time and time again, we hold ourselves back from what we really want. Jen Sincero, authored *You Are a Badass* and *You Are a Badass at Making Money*, both of which are filled to the brim with humorable real-life stories, advice and exercises that she used to pull herself out of her self-pity cave years ago.

Coupled with the occasional swear word, these stories hope to aid readers in identifying and changing those falsehoods or not beneficial behaviors that keep you from thriving. The greatest message in this book lies in learning how to love what you can't change, how to change what you don't love and how to use “The Force” to kick some ass.



Maybe these vibe with you or maybe you still think that the self-help world is nonsense and only for the desperate. But the next time you find yourself questioning your ability, worth or path in life, throwing on your headphones and listening to the stories and advice from some successful people might just be the remedy to your problematic self-talk.

These books are all available for purchase or download at Amazon.com and are available on Audible. You can even get your first book free when you sign up for Audible - they offer a free month sign up too!

Shining a Light on Industry Efforts to Shape Public Health Policy: UCSF's Food Industry Documents Archive

By Lesley Kroupa

In modern high-profile corporate litigation cases, the litigants are not dueling in a courtroom with their lawyers trading Atticus Finch-esque soliloquies. Nor is the focus solely on the merits of each party's substantive claims. The real battle is fought with documents, that is, burying the opposing party in so many documents that the proverbial needle is nearly impossible to find. It takes teams of lawyers stuffed in conference rooms reviewing documents day and night to find that one

initial collection is focused on the sugar industry, but the archive is planning to expand to other food industries.

FIDA currently contains over 40,000 documents. At the end of January, over a hundred documents were added to their Coca-Cola collection that include correspondence between the CDC, governmental health organizations, and the Coca-Cola Company. The documents were obtained from a variety of

The screenshot shows the UCSF Food Industry Documents Archive search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'UCSF' on the left and 'ALL INDUSTRIES TOBACCO DRUG CHEMICAL FOOD' in the center. A 'Take a tour' button is on the right. Below this is a green header with 'FOOD INDUSTRY DOCUMENTS' and a search icon. To the right of the header are links for 'Blog', 'About', 'Bibliography', 'Research Tools', 'Help', and 'Collections'. Below the header is a descriptive sentence: 'An archive of documents from the food industry related to their manufacturing, operations, regulatory activities, and scientific research, hosted by the UCSF Library and Center for Knowledge Management.' The main search area has a 'SEARCH' button and a 'GUIDED SEARCH' button. Below these is a large search input field. To the right of the input field are 'CLEAR' and 'SEARCH' buttons. Below the input field are three checkboxes: 'Hide Restricted Documents' (unchecked), 'Hide Folders' (checked), and 'Hide Possible Duplicates' (checked). To the right of these checkboxes are two buttons: 'What can I search for?' and 'Tips for better results'. Below the checkboxes is a 'Search Options' section with a dropdown arrow. It contains 'Document Date Ranges (no dates selected)' with a right arrow and 'Food Collections (all food collections selected)' with a right arrow.

email or internal memo that can crack the case. But it is not just lawyers sifting through corporate documents looking for that “hot doc”.

Librarians have been busy creating digital archives of corporate documents, giving the public a first-hand account of industry practices that have significant impact on public health. The University of California San Francisco Library in collaboration with the Philip R. Lee Institute for Health Policy Studies recently launched the Food Industry Documents Archive (FIDA).

The archive is a searchable open-access repository of internal corporate memos, consulting notes, and public relations and research funding strategies from the food industry. The documents provide insight into the marketing, research, and policy strategies used by food companies and trade groups. The

sources, including individuals who donated their files to the archivists and Freedom of Information Act requests. Of particular note and intrigue are copies of some previously confidential documents were obtained only after they were published on DCLeaks, a site allegedly connected to Russian cyber-espionage groups. DCLeaks posted internal emails between Coca-Cola executives and a communications consultant that discuss strategies to defeat local and national public health policies regarding sugary drinks.

The archive provides insight into the food industries' efforts to shape public health policy, thus enabling public health advocates to better prepare in making their case for local, state, and federal policies that are truly in the interest of public health. For further information and access to the archives, go to: www.industrydocumentslibrary.ucsf.edu/food/.

ON THE INTERNSHIP FRONT WITH MARGUERITE CROSBY

Whether you are just beginning your TC DI experience or are thinking about applying to the TC DI next year, it may be helpful to hear from a current intern. This semester we interviewed TC dietetic intern Marguerite Crosby who was thrilled to share her experiences in the program over the past year.

Why did you choose TC for your DI?

In deciding my future career path as a RDN, access to a variety of sites was very important to me. As a NEP major, I also wanted to ensure that I would be able to experience an athletic-focused rotation during the course of my internship. While doing my research on the various internship programs, I discovered the TC DI includes an elective rotation and many other programs do not. This was important to me because I wanted to have the ability to either gain additional experience in a particular practice area or to be exposed to something new.

What rotations have you've done so far?

During the fall, I completed all of my Community rotations. The first one was an online-based rotation which allowed me to see how the internet can be used to not only build an online business, but also to disseminate key information to increase website traffic and attract clients. Next, I rotated with Columbia University Athletics where I got an understanding of the role of an RDN in the Collegiate Athletics Department. Finally, I interned at a HIV center where I provided nutrition counseling and education sessions to clients, helped in the food pantry with food distribution, and developed recipes for clients based on the food items being offered.

During the spring, I'll be completing my Clinical rotations. I've just started at The New Jewish Home which is a long-term care facility. My next rotation will be in a hospital which will allow me the opportunity to experience an acute care setting. After both clinical and community rotations are complete, I'll finish my internship with a Food Service and elective rotations.

Briefly, what is a typical day like as an Intern?

Well the most important thing to know is that there is no "typical day". Each site that you are assigned will have different expectations in terms of work hours per day, tasks to be performed, dress code, level of independence, and communication. It is of utmost importance to discuss expectations with your preceptor so that you can be as successful as possible at that site. It also helps to periodically "check-in" with your preceptor to make sure that you're on the right-track. Be sure to be open-minded and willing to hear and put into practice all of the feedback that you receive in order to get the most out of your DI experience.

What should students applying to the DI know?

You'll get out of this experience what you put into it! The DI Internship Director, Deborah Rosenbaum, takes the time to place you at sites that are in line with your career interests and ones that will also provide you with a well-rounded experience. Take the time to carefully think through what your objectives are for your DI and be sure to communicate them during the orientation process. On a final note, professionalism is required throughout the internship both in class and at sites.

What are your future interests?

I am interested in becoming an outpatient clinical dietitian specializing in obesity and the various associated co-morbidities. I would also like to do some pro bono work with teenage female athletes to educate them on proper fueling for their training consistent with their goals and to help them to avoid the female athlete triad trap.

A Quick Introduction to ARFID

By Diana Ushay

The introduction of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 5th Edition (DSM-V) has markedly increased the relevance of eating disorders outside the realm of the familiar diagnoses of anorexia nervosa (AN) and bulimia nervosa (BN). Prior to publishing the new manual, the DSM-IV classified those outside of AN and BN as [having an] eating disorder not otherwise specified (EDNOS). Some of these patients did not endorse body image or weight gain fears, such as those congruent with AN and BN diagnoses.

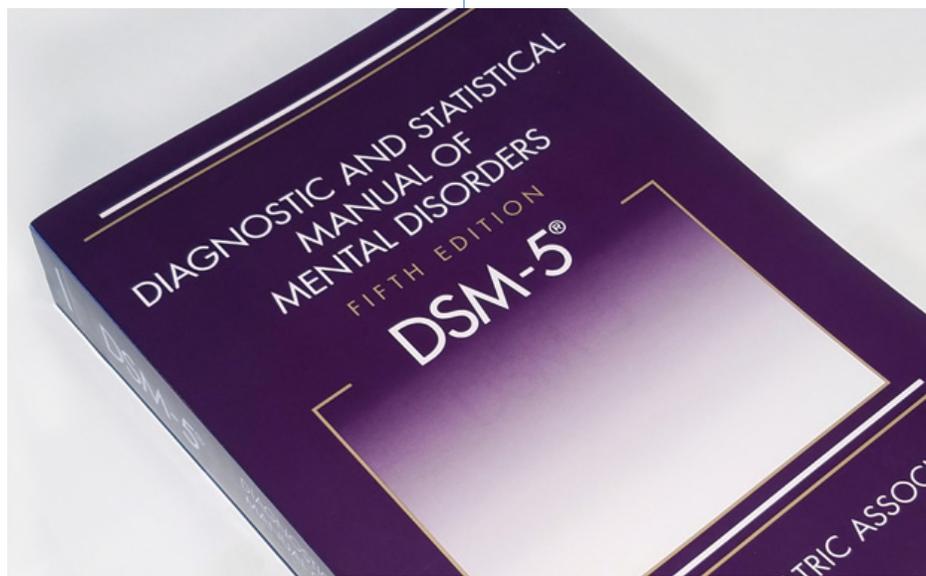
In the DSM-IV, EDNOS acted as a catch-all diagnosis for those with symptoms that did not meet criteria for an established disorder. However, with the introduction of the 5th edition, the development of the diagnosis of Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) has been able to describe the disordered patient demonstrating restrictive eating and malnutrition without the fear of weight gain or body image disturbance that are evident in AN and BN.

The DSM-V has four distinct criteria to meet for an ARFID diagnosis. Criteria A demonstrates an eating or feeding disturbance associated with at least one of the following: significant weight loss or failure to grow, significant nutritional deficiency, dependence on enteral feeding or oral supplements such as a nutritional formula and a marked change in functioning due to the inability to eat sufficiently. In this case, a feeding disturbance could be caused by the sensory characteristics of the food as well as a fear of consequences from eating.

Criteria B demonstrates that the interference with eating is not coming from a cultural or religious practice or due to availability of food. Criteria C demonstrates that the feeding disturbance is not due to another eating disorder such as AN or BN. This would be evident in the lack of preoccupation with body weight or appearance.

Similar to criteria B and C, criteria D demonstrates that the feeding disturbance is not due to another medical or psychiatric condition that may better

explain the symptoms. A diagnosis with ARFID has also been correlated with higher prevalence of neurocognitive disorders, specifically attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism spectrum disorder.



Since the diagnosis is so new, there have not been any definitive studies that have proven first-line treatments for ARFID. However, studies have shown that cognitive-behavioral therapy, family-based treatment, pharmacotherapy and nutrition therapy, including exposure therapy, are the most promising at this time. Research on this diagnosis is lacking but there is hope that this complex disorder will have solidified treatment options in the future.

This article was adapted from:

D.Ushay, P.J. Seibell. *Review of Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder*. Psychiatric Annals: 2018.

Rally at City Hall for Nutrition Education

By Lucille Tang

In March 2018, the Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education and Policy (Tisch Food Center) published a report, [A is for Apple: The State of Nutrition Education Programs in New York City \(NYC\) Schools](#), which examined **external** nutrition education programming from 40 organizations that run 101 nutrition education programs (NEP) across NYC¹. The key word here is external meaning we currently have limited information on the existence and the extent of nutrition education conducted by teachers, administrators, and/or principals. Without this knowledge, it is extremely difficult to target nutrition education interventions or understand which schools or districts need programs the most.

To combat this issue, City Council Education Committee Chairman, Mark Treyger, with Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer², developed a nutrition education reporting bill, [Int 1283](#), which “would require the Department of Education to annually submit to the NYC Council, and post to the Department’s website, a report on nutrition education in NYC schools”³.

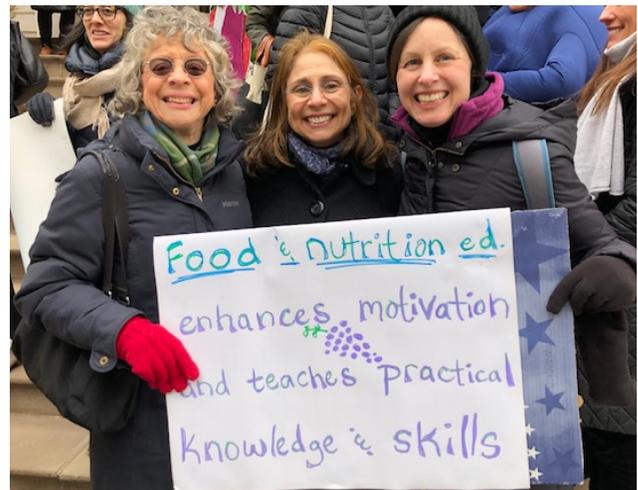
On January 16, 2019, Treyger held a public hearing with the Committee on Education to gain feedback from stakeholders such as students, teachers, and nutrition educators. There was a rally before the hearing and both members of the Food-Ed Coalition, lead by Tisch Food Center Deputy Director, Claire Raffel, and individuals from the Teachers College Program in Nutrition attended. During the hearing, coalition members advocated for [Int 1283](#).

Between the passionate testimonies and gripping scientific research, I was inspired by the dedication of all the audience members and Chairman Treyger. And even though this hearing was a whopping four hours long, I was impressed by Treyger’s active listening and attentive responses. When speaking to the SchoolFood representative, who was defending NYC school lunch by saying it met USDA standards, Treyger boldly declared that those standards were not enough. They act as a floor and not as a ceiling for SchoolFood practice. His grace and grounded responses throughout the hearing greatly contrasted with the stereotype of an aloof, artificial politician. There is hope for students knowing that there are leaders like him fighting for social justice and equity.

One particular testimony touched my heart. Andrea Strong, mother and writer, emphasized how she and her

daughter became food detectives by learning about food packages and making a delicious veggie chili recipe through the Beecher's Foundation, the Pure Food Kids workshop, one of the NEPs in NYC. This exciting and engaging workshop brought complex nutrition topics to life for them. And at the end of her statement, she pointed to me, the educator who taught the workshop. I didn’t know how to respond: joy, surprise, pride, tears, embarrassment, or a combination of all those emotions plus more! I made an impact in their lives, and Andrea shared her positive experience for public testimony to advocate for more nutrition education!

Both Chairman Treyger’s patience and Andrea’s enthusiasm give me hope in this process and in the future. All NYC school children deserve healthy, equitable, sustainable, and culturally appropriate food access and education. Understanding the nutrition education landscape is the first step to achieving that goal. If you would like to share your thoughts or advocate for this bill, contact your representative. If you live in New York, this link (<http://www.mygovnyc.org/>) will provide information at the local, state, and federal levels. Also, feel free to direct any questions directly to me, Lucille Tang at lt2659@tc.columbia.edu.



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- <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3763673&GUID=B1A79ADF-F241-454C-96BA-CC419CC6D602&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=nutrition>

RECIPE CORNER: WINTER FARE

We've all been there. It's the end of the week and you *really* need to make another trip to the grocery store. Since today is another busy day though and you don't have time to make a trip, you resort to living off whatever random food you have left in your fridge, freezer, and pantry. Making the best of leftovers and frozen veggies is truly an art. In all honesty, many of my scrappy meals lack real excitement, but every now and then I nail it. And this was one of those times. From my freezer I pulled out some pre-made frozen rice and frozen spinach. From the fridge I gathered the sausage, onion, and garlic, and from there I started creating. The result... a European inspired dish I can only best describe as a more Italian version of Spanish paella.

Brooke Marsal



Photo Source: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/spinach-rice/>

Spinach Rice with Italian Sausage

Ingredients

- 2 cups of cooked rice
- Half bag frozen spinach
- 2 Italian sausages (I used Trader Joes's Italian Sausage-less Sausage, but any kind should work)
- 1/2 sweet white onion
- 4 garlic cloves
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- Zest from 1 lemon
- Juice from 1/2 lemon
- Black pepper and red chili flakes to taste

Directions

1. Sauté garlic and onions in olive oil until onions are translucent
2. Slice 2 sausages and sauté with the onions and garlic until the sausage pieces start to turn brown
3. Add in the frozen spinach and sauté until warm
4. Add the rice and mustard. Sauté until everything is warm (3-5 minutes)
5. Add lemon juice, lemon zest, black pepper and red pepper. Sauté for 1 more minute
6. Serve warm