



## **COGA Mission**

COGA MIG exists to foster inclusive connections between nutrition and dietetic professionals and students at different stages of their careers and promote the exchange of perspectives and learnings across gender, age and lived experience.

COGA focuses on providing programming, education, collaboration and networking within three primary sub communities: **Fifty Plus, Men** and **Thirty and Under**.

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# Meet Your New '21-'22 COGA Executive Committee!



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# Meet Your New '21-'22 COGA Executive Committee!



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# Message from the Chair



COGA Members,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Year. My name is Matthew Landry, and I am the current Chair of the Cultures of Gender and Age Member Interest Group. As I transition from the Chair-Elect to Chair position, I join several other new Executive Committee members. Our Leadership Team is already making many positive changes building on the foundation established by our previous COGA leadership. Our group is not afraid to embrace change as we strive to ensure that we are meeting the needs of members. I want to thank outgoing Executive Committee members Kathryn Lawson (Past Chair); Sandra Carpenter (Professional Development Chair); and Luis Gonzalez (Nominating Chair) for all of their contributions to our MIG over their terms. I also want to thank Dylan Bailey for his outstanding service as Chair during a challenging year.

We continue to seek volunteers to serve on our committees and help us brainstorm new innovative member benefits. Additionally, this Fall, I encourage our members to consider putting their name forward for a leadership position on our Executive Committee. As always, we seek to prepare a diverse ballot from across our member sub-units and across gender, race/ethnicity, age, and background.

I am thrilled to highlight some recent accomplishments and exciting changes and initiatives to come for our group! Across all Academy DPGs and MIGs, COGA remains one of the most affordable for both students and active members. Our Executive Committee recently passed the 2021-2022 Plan of Work which expands the type and number of member benefits we provide. Knowing that continuing education webinars are one of our top member benefits, we expanded the number of CPEU opportunities we offer each year from 4 to 6. Additionally, beyond the 4 annual FNCE® stipends we provide for our student members through the Academy Foundation, we have budgeted for 6 additional FNCE® stipends (two stipends will be awarded to members in each of our sub-units). This Summer our Executive Committee plans on developing COGA's first Strategic Plan since the merger of our sub-units. If you have ideas that you would like to see incorporated into the Strategic Plan, please reach out.

# Message from the Chair

## (cont.)

Looking towards the year ahead, I'm happy to share that COGA was one of only four Academy groups to receive a 2021 Membership Outreach Grant. This effort was led by our Membership Chair, Suzi Baxter. Diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are underway across the Academy. Within COGA, our efforts will be supported by a 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Mini-Grant. This effort was led by our Diversity & Inclusion Liaison, Levin Dotimas.

Although FNCE® is months away, it will be here in no time. While we won't have the opportunity to meet in person, we look forward to maximizing the available virtual opportunities. I'm excited to share that COGA's Spotlight Session proposal was accepted for presentation. We have three excellent COGA members who will speak on the topic: "Leadership Zipline or Ladder: Is Going Horizontal the Best Direction for You?". Additionally, COGA partnered with 6 other MIGs to submit a joint session proposal that was also accepted for presentation "Nourishing Our Communities Through a Pandemic: Stories of Resilience from the Front Lines". We hope that you'll plan on attending both of these educational sessions. The COGA Executive Committee is hard at work brainstorming a fun networking event for our members. Stay tuned for more details.

I look forward to connecting and engaging with many of you over the course of the next Academy year.

Matthew J. Landry, PhD, RDN, LDN  
COGA Chair 2021-2022

### **About Matthew J. Landry, PhD, RDN, LDN**

Matthew is a nutrition and health promotion postdoctoral fellow and Registered Dietitian at the Stanford Prevention Research Center. His current research is focused on examining the overall dietary quality and composition of a healthful diet on obesity, metabolic syndrome, and risk factors for chronic diseases and the utilization of novel, dietary interventions as conduits to promote health at the population level. He has presented his research at national and international conferences.

Matthew received a bachelor's degree from Louisiana State University, a doctorate degree from The University of Texas at Austin, and completed his dietetic internship through the Coordinated Program in Dietetics at UT-Austin

# COGA Membership Benefits

- Low membership dues
- Webinars (4 or more per year)
- Online Certificate of Training Program Scholarships
- Quarterly E-newsletters & Monthly E-blasts
- Member discussion board
- Networking opportunities
- FNCE® stipends
- FNCE® showcase booth
- Leadership/volunteer opportunities (see below)
- Member spotlights
- Social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn



## Leadership/ Volunteer Opportunities

### Benefits of Volunteering

- Advocate for early career professionals, seasoned practitioners and men in nutrition
- Enhance your resume' and application details for internships and scholarships
  - Network and collaborate with new and existing colleagues
  - Use or build your program and event planning skills
- Contribute to the profession with your knowledge and expertise

### Volunteering Requirements

- Current member of COGA MIG
- Flexibility in your schedule  
(Dedicated hours/month vary by position)
- Able to work remotely



**Email [COGA@eatright.org](mailto:COGA@eatright.org) to inquire.**

# Member Spotlight

Debra Geary Hook, MPH, RDN, FAND, PhDc

All of us find ourselves on a career path where we attempt to have complete control while avoiding conditions which we find less than ideal. When I look back over my career, it was these less-than-ideal conditions that gave birth to growth and opportunities. My journey as a dietitian and now research dietitian has been anything but linear. I started university at a time when my family's life was chaotic due to my father's chronic health which led to numerous surgeries, serious medications, and finally the removal of a kidney and an early retirement. My father had been seriously ill since I was five years of age. Little did I know that understanding chronic illness and its impact upon family dynamics and finances would be the gift that I brought to my work and patients.



[READ FULL ARTICLE  
HERE.](#)

*"I have learned many important things during my 60 years on this earth. There will always be obstacles to overcome and plans to change. There are days filled with sunshine and others filled with rain. If one has the courage to keep riding, then the rain is simply the rain."*

*-Debra's advice to share*

The goal of "Member Spotlight" is to share and become acquainted with members of the COGA online community. We invite you to share information about food and nutrition activities in which you or a COGA colleague are participating. We also ask that you add a photo to your COGA profile so that we can post with your spotlight information. You may share your information by clicking [HERE](#).

# Fifty Plus Preceptor Appreciation

Internship match day was on April 6th, and that means preceptors are on the cusp of a new internship season and we need to take a minute to appreciate preceptors. It takes a lot of effort, time, patience, resources and skill to be a preceptor. Preceptors are the cornerstone of any successful internship as they guide, mentor and evaluate a student during the supervised practice experience.

To be a preceptor takes good interpersonal and time management skills but also experience. This is not only professional experience but also personal experience.

Qualities such as these can be found in our Fifty Plus subgroup.

**Fifty Plus members who are also preceptors, we want to say THANK YOU for all that you do for dietetic students and the profession as a whole.**

## Preceptor Roles

Pass on knowledge

Ensure ethical practices

Evaluate progress

Stimulate interest in the profession

Provide learning experiences

Be a role model

Mentorship

Foster student's personal development

Help incorporate theory into practice

## Tell us your story!

Over the last year, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented obstacles for food and nutrition practitioners, including preceptors. Preceptors have needed to create unique solutions to address the current situation and the evolving education needs of nutrition and dietetics students and interns. There are stories of uncertainty and worry, but also of adaptation and innovation. We want to hear yours.

**As a Fifty Plus member and preceptor, how has COVID-19 impacted your internship?**

**What challenges did you overcome during the last year?**

Requirements: <300 words and professional headshot

Email us your story: [COGA@eatright.org](mailto:COGA@eatright.org).

Looking for inspiration? Check out these [Preceptor Recognition Stories](#).



# What do people think of Registered Dietitians?

What do people think of Registered Dietitians? As winners of an Academy Diversity & Inclusion Mini Grant, COGA MIG, under the direction of Levin Dotimas, MS as Principal Investigator, will be focusing efforts on answering that question as part of a new study titled "Creating a National Media Campaign for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: A Pilot Program". Researchers in this pilot program will conduct focus groups to determine how a national media campaign by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics ("Academy") can be effective in recruiting diverse individuals into the dietetics profession. When completed, the results of this program will be presented to the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Then with their support, a proposal for a large scale media campaign will be presented to the Academy Board of Directors.

The pilot program aligns with the Academy's Diversity and Inclusion Statement because a national media campaign will aid in the recognition of diverse individuals in our dietetic profession and demonstrate how they are respected and included in our work. By doing so, the program could encourage diverse individuals outside the profession to consider starting the path to become a dietitian.

## Project Goals:

1. Determine the participants' view of the dietetic profession
2. Determine the participants' opinion on currently available videos that feature diverse dietitians
3. Determine elements to a promotional video that encourage diverse individuals to consider dietetics.



**Levin Dotimas, MS**  
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# Nutrition News

## Racism is a Serious Threat to the Public's Health

CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH, declared racism a serious public health threat on a new website. On this site Dr. Walensky explains how racism in all of its forms negatively affects the mental and physical health of people, preventing them from attaining their highest level of health. She goes on to explain statistical data shows that racial and ethnic groups, experience higher rates of illness and death across a wide range of health conditions when compared to their White counterparts. To learn more, [click here](#).



## Shelters to Receive Reimbursement for Young Adults Participating in CACFP

In April 2021, USDA announced that emergency centers that participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) that serve young adults, aged 18 to 24, will now be reimbursed for those snacks and meals. In 2020, it was estimated that over 34,000 unaccompanied youth were counted as homeless and 90% were between the ages of 18 to 24. The remaining 10 percent were under the age of 18 (1). One of the purposes of the CACFP is to provide snacks and meals to children residing in homeless shelters. Reimbursement is authorized from the date of enactment of [PL 117-2](#) until the date the COVID-19 public health emergency is lifted. To learn more, [click here](#).

### References:

1. Youth and Young Adults. National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2021, April). <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/who-experiences-homelessness/youth/>.

# More Nutrition News

## Men's Health Month

There are 151.8 million men in America, estimated to be 49.2% of the country's population. Data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention shows that the first and second leading causes of death for men are heart disease and cancer, respectively. This year for men's health month, help men in your life improve their quality of life through good nutrition and physical activity.

[Click here](#) for more resources.



## Make the Pledge to Support Professional Civility.

In the digital age, more and more Americans turn to the internet and specifically social media for nutrition and health information. It is Registered Dietitians (RD) and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (DTR) that are on the frontlines of a misinformation war. It is the duty of RDs and DTRs to follow the [Academy's Code of Ethics](#) to ensure that the American people have access to a body of professionals they know they can trust.

In addition, to the Academy Code of Ethics, there is a supplemental set of standards, developed by Food & Nutrition Magazine, that specifically pertains to professionalism in public communications and online communities called the [Pledge of Professional Civility](#). Those who take the voluntary pledge of professional civility take a public stand for respect, productive dialogue, positive encouragement, professional conduct and stand against belittling of others, even when faced with disagreements.

## **Take the Pledge of Professional Civility.**

## **See who has taken the Pledge of Professional Civility!**

# Science Corner

## Ontario Public Does Not Understand the Difference Between Registered Dietitians and Unregulated "Nutritionists"

Veloce and colleagues attempted to identify whether the Ontario general public understands the difference between a registered dietitian (RD) and an unregulated "nutritionist", among other objectives. After surveying 402 participants, the results showed 72.9% of the participants (n = 293) either did not understand that there is a difference, stated that they were not sure if there is a difference between RDs and "nutritionists" in Ontario, or stated that there was a difference but did not correctly identify it. That means only 16.2% (of the entire sample of 402 respondents) correctly understood the difference(s). Does the American public also have such a poor understanding of who Registered Dietitians are and what we do? To read the study, [click here](#).



## New Guidance for Safer Practices in Weight-Category Sports

ACSM recently released new guidelines, titled "American College of Sports Medicine Expert Consensus Statement on Weight Loss in Weight-Category Sports", that support safer practices and more equitable competitions for athletes in weight-category sports. This consensus statement provides a summary of factors that should be considered around body mass manipulation and replaces the 1996 ACSM Position stand on Weight Loss in Wrestlers. The sports covered include combat (e.g., boxing, martial and mixed martial arts [MMA], wrestling), weightlifting, powerlifting, sprint football, and rowing. To read the paper, [click here](#).



### Sources

1. Veloce, D., Fisher, M., O'connor, C., Hartman, B., & Horne, J. R. (2020). The Ontario Public Does Not Understand the Difference Between Registered Dietitians and Unregulated "Nutritionists": Results from a Cross-Sectional Mixed Methods Study. *Healthcare policy = Politiques de sante*, 16(2), 111–127. <https://doi.org/10.12927/hcpol.2020.26349>
2. Burke, Louise M. PhD, BSc (nut) G Dip Diet, FACSM1; Slater, Gary J. PhD, BSc, G Dip Nutr Diet MSc2; Matthews, Joseph J. MSc, BSc (Hons)3,4; Langan-Evans, Carl BA (Hons), MRes, PhD, FHEA, IIST, ASCC5; Horswill, Craig A. PhD6 ACSM Expert Consensus Statement on Weight Loss in Weight-Category Sports, *Current Sports Medicine Reports*: April 2021 - Volume 20 - Issue 4 - p 199-217 doi: 10.1249/JSR.0000000000000831

# From Capitol Hill

## "Soybeans" and "Sesame" added to FASTER Act of 2021

The Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education, and Research Act of 2021" or the "FASTER Act of 2021" (S.578) recently expanded the definition of major food allergen for purposes of certain food-labeling requirements to specifically include soybeans and sesame and requires HHS to report on certain information related to food allergy research and data collection activities to Congress by January 1, 2023. The Bill was passed by the Senate in March 2021, and it is now headed to the President where it is anticipated to be signed into law. To learn more, [click here](#).



## Funding for Diversity in Nutrition and Dietetics

On April 28th, U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly (Ill.) and 10 members of Congress have urged House Appropriations Committee leadership to include \$310 million in funding to address racial disparities in nutrition and access to health care in the next fiscal year budget. In the letter to Congress Rep. Kelly explains that \$300 million of the \$310 million requested would be invested in minority-based institutions to strengthen and grow their allied health education programs, including nutrition and dietetics.

[Read the letter.](#)

# Fuel for Foodies



## Berry Avocado Baked Oats

You have got to try these oat bars, they are only 150 kcal and 5g of fiber per serving. Since it is National Men's Health Month this is a reminder that men need 30-38g of fiber per day (based on age). So fire up the oven and get baking!

Check out the [full recipe](#).

## Mediterranean Vegetable Rose Tart

Having people for a backyard bash but want to keep the appetizers healthy? Skip the high-fat pigs in a blanket and the high-sodium quiches. Serving your guests these delicious vegetable tart squares will make the hit of the town. And who doesn't love some fresh squash and zucchini in the summer?

Check out the [full recipe](#).



# Key Industry Dates

## **American Diabetes Association 35th Annual Clinical Conference on Diabetes**

June 10-13, 2021 (Virtual)

## **School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference**

July 12-15, 2021 (Virtual)

## **The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Annual Conference**

August 8-10, 2021 (Virtual)

## **Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists Annual Conference**

August 12-15, 2021 (Virtual)