

2021 Noteworthy Practice Honorees

Noteworthy Practice Category: Curriculum

Missouri State University Didactic Program in Nutrition and Dietetics and Dietetic Internship Sarah Murray, MS, RDN/LD and Hillary Roberts, MS, RDN/LD

The Didactic Program in Dietetics and Dietetic Internship programs at Missouri State University saw an opportunity to collaborate in a mentor/mentee experience for students enrolled in both programs. This experience was integrated into the curriculum for DTN 539, an undergraduate dietetics senior seminar course, and as part of the dietetic internship practicum. The interns mentored the undergraduate dietetic seniors in their DI application materials, completed a mock interview with the seniors providing feedback on their skills, and encouraged their mentees to attend an outside nutrition-related activity with them. The benefits of the mentor/mentee program were three-fold:

1. Provided the seniors an opportunity to experience the benefits of mentorship and exposure to a positive professional role model.
2. Created a valuable experience for dietetic interns in building professional relationships while learning the benefits of serving as a mentor.
3. Allowed both programs to meet student learning outcomes.

The interns reflected on their experience as mentors through an online discussion board. Discussion board posts were evaluated on to what extent interns described their strengths and areas of improvement as a mentor, in addition to how they described meeting or not meeting the "critical skills for successful mentors" as an outcome of this experience. Interns indicated their leadership and active listening skills increased due to learning how to offer constructive feedback in addition to learning how to "carefully walk the line between leader and friend." Furthermore, several interns stated they hope to become preceptors in the future. Through this activity, Missouri State University's DPD and DI programs are teaching the value of mentorship and motivating students to serve as preceptors when they transition to healthcare professionals.

Noteworthy Practice Category: Interprofessional Education

Bradley University's Dietetic Internship Master of Science Program Amanda Newell, PhD, RDN, LDN

Noteworthy Practice: Interprofessional Education

This project is innovative and noteworthy because it provided a unique opportunity for graduate dietetic interns to work directly and collaboratively with medical students on an authentic interprofessional education focused project that was designed to assist with multiple needs in the community during the pandemic. The mobile food pantry distribution sites were spearheaded by the dietetic and medical students, as well as with assistance from several local agencies (food bank, community clinic, health department, extension office). Dietetic students were tasked with creating culturally appropriate food bundles that met nutritional and financial parameters, as well as limited cooking skills and equipment. They also created recipe brochures and educational materials in both English and Spanish, which were

all distributed at a series of community-wide mobile food pantry events over the summer of 2021. As clients drove up to the site, the medical students collected data including the number of families and language preference, as well as blood pressure and glucose checks. This information was communicated to the dietetic students in real-time to ensure the dietetic students provided the most appropriate nutrition information to their clients during the drive through event. Translators were available on-site, as needed. In sum, this innovative project provided a real-life experience of working as an interdisciplinary team with constituents from multiple agencies, where graduate dietetic and medical students collaborated to lead all efforts. The project provided 500+ food bundles to nearly 150 families in our community.