

2024 Noteworthy Practice Honorees

Noteworthy Practice Category: *Preceptor Recruitment and Recognition*

University of Saint Joseph Dietetic Internship
Michelle MacKenzie, MS, RDN, CDN

The University of Saint Joseph Dietetic Internship has implemented a Clinical Case Study Day. Interns select a patient from their clinical rotation that they would like to follow in provision of nutritional care, and then present to our faculty, staff, and preceptors via Blackboard Collaborate at the end of the fall semester. The patients are not identified, only with initials to preserve their anonymity. Interns collect all background data including medical and nutrition history, conduct research on their disease state, follow their progress and response to nutrition interventions, and with preceptor support, devise a nutrition care plan for the patient. Following the assignment outline, interns will devise a short PowerPoint and will present first to their assigned intern “mentor” who will provide written and verbal feedback to them for any needed revisions prior to presentation day. Mentoring each other has shown to be a very valuable experience for both the mentor and mentee. Interns will also complete an 8–10-page written paper on their case study, both of which need an 80% or more to meet project expectations. On the day of presentation, interns will present their case study anonymously, via slides live, on Collaborate to all registered preceptors that wish to attend to earn pre-approved continuing education credits through CDR. Participants have the opportunity to ask questions to the interns in real time and then fill out a brief attendance form with suggestions for program improvements for the following year. CEU forms are provided for all attendees by the director within 2 weeks of submission. This has been a well-attended event and a nice way to give back to our preceptors as well as recruit new preceptors.

The objectives of this noteworthy practice are:

1. To provide a free continuing education opportunity to our volunteer preceptors to show appreciation of their time and expertise in educating our dietetic interns.
2. To build upon intern research and presentation skills as well as confidence in contributing to a valuable continuing education project.
3. To create a valuable mentoring opportunity for interns in meeting CRDN 5.7.

Twenty preceptors participated in the continuing education session, and 80% of the total number of attendees watched all presentations. The total number of credits provided was 63 which is expected to be significantly more when we have an expected larger class this year. The feedback was very positive, and all 20 participants reported on a survey that the content was interesting and had no recommendations for the future sessions.

The outcome was met in that we had good preceptor participation in the case study live session and were able to provide free CEU’s to attendees as a way of giving back. Interns reported that they felt the mentoring was very valuable, both to provide the mentoring and to receive it. Interns had a great sense

of accomplishment following the presentations and built their confidence while building upon a number of ACEND competencies.

A goal of our program is to prepare graduates for successful entry into the field of dietetics. The processes the interns take in completion of this project, prepare them to present evidence-based nutrition to a group of peers, welcoming critique and questions and gaining confidence in their knowledge as well as their mentoring skills. Other CRDN's that the project support include the following: CRDNs: 1.2, 1.5, 2.4, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.7, 3.8, 3.12.

The outcomes of the noteworthy practice in terms of preceptor interest and participation was integral in preparing our interns in terms of having an educated audience, critique, mentoring and overall support in attendance. Knowing that they had to carefully prepare, research, and polish their presentation was a valuable experience for them in preparing for successful entry into the field of dietetics, where they will be identified as the nutrition experts and expected to provide and speak to their evidence-based nutrition interventions.