JANUARY GUEST SPEAKER ASHLEY HOLMES ROTH, MS, RDN, LDN

Jacquelyn Klunk, CMD Yr 1, gSDA Vice President

At our first meeting of the semester, gSDA welcomed Ashley Holmes Roth, MS, RDN, LDN as our guest speaker. Ms. Roth is the Program Manager for Common Threads, a nonprofit organization that offers nutrition education and cooking classes in K-12 schools, and is an adjunct faculty member at Seton Hill. She also serves as the PitAND co-chair for Community Involvement. From her time as an undergraduate student at Virginia Tech all the way through receiving her master's degree, beginning a PhD program, and completing a policy-focused dietetic internship in Washington, DC, Ms. Roth shared her unique path to becoming a registered dietitian with gSDA members. She emphasized the importance of networking; for example, while applying for jobs in Pittsburgh, she began to volunteer her time as much as possible and also became more involved in PitAND. Another important point Ms. Roth focused on was the need to advocate for yourself and your value as a professional. As the only full-time RD in the Common Threads company, she constantly strives to show the skills that dietitians offer and advocate for the profession. She concluded by leaving gSDA members with a final word of advice: to carve our own paths, and to be nice to everyone we meet along the way. GSDA is grateful to Ms. Roth for taking time out of her busy schedule to share her interesting journey in the dietetics field!
MALNUTRITION IN HEALTHCARE

Christine Manta, CMD Year 1

I have a strong background in health services research, which broadly means exploring ways to optimize patient outcomes while reducing costs. Since beginning the CMD program, I have been searching for a unique issue or problem to which I could apply my research-oriented systems way of thinking to improve quality of patient care and reduce healthcare costs through a specific nutrition intervention. After Dr. Hutcheson’s physical assessment class and a speaker session I attended at FNCE last fall, I realized that malnutrition was where I should focus my attention.

I currently work as a research assistant for the UPMC Tobacco Treatment Service at the Center for Research on Healthcare. I proposed the idea of a malnutrition research project to the director, who is a general medicine physician, and she luckily saw the importance of the issue and agreed to serve as a mentor. Collaborating with Dr. Hutcheson and the inpatient clinical nutrition coordinator at UPMC Presbyterian, we have the opportunity to bring together physician and dietitian viewpoints which is very exciting and important to influence a true change in the malnutrition issue.

In November, I started the literature review and read every article I could find about malnutrition prevalence, why it is under-recognized and undertreated and how this results in missed opportunities for maximal reimbursement and poor coordination of nutritional care that are detrimental to patients’ health and hospital cost.

Based on my reading, we decided the first step need to be an evaluation of how different health care professionals understand and define malnutrition, as this is an underlying reason for missed diagnosis. If there is evidence to support that physicians routinely miss the clinical indicators for malnutrition or use the wrong indicators, then the study will highlight the need for targeted education programs and emphasize the importance for registered dietitians to be actively involved in patient care. The IRB for the project was just approved in mid-January so we can official move forward with the study! Overall, I am very excited about this project and looking forward to sharing the results in the future!

GSDA VP IS ALSO SHRS MVP!

Therezia Alchoufete, CMD Year 1, gSDA President

Not only is Jackie Klunk a fantastic gSDA Vice President, but she has also earned the title of University Scholar in SHRS! Jackie is in the top 2% of her Graduated Class, and has earned this award for her outstanding scholastic achievement. Check out my short interview with our VP below!

Q: What do you think is one of your strongest qualities that contributed to becoming a University Scholar?
A: Honestly, I don’t know if I have one! I try to do well not only for myself, but also because I don’t want to disappoint my professors, and that helps keep me motivated.

Q: What is your favorite activity to do in your free time?
A: It may seem silly, but I love coloring - it's actually really relaxing!

Q: What is your advice for other students who might find course work overwhelming?
A: Whenever I'm overwhelmed with too much to do, I make a to-do list of everything that needs to be done with due dates. It's simple, but having it written down in front of you can make all the tasks swimming around in your head seem much clearer and more manageable.
Name: Kayla Spridik
Home Town: Bentleyville, PA
Favorite Food: Sushi rolls

Did you make any New Year's resolutions? What are your goals for 2017? My New Year's resolution is to maintain a positive mindset as much as possible. My goals for 2017 include traveling to at least 2 new places and riding my bike more often.

Name: Pei-Yi Lin
Home Town: Taiwan
Favorite Food: Hot Pot

Did you make any New Year's resolutions? What are your goals for 2017? Yes. I want to make more different American and French dishes at home and take good pictures. Hopefully, I can create a blog to share the recipe and some nutrition knowledge and make it fun.

Name: Rachel Duncan
Home Town: Beaver, PA
Favorite Food: Peanut Butter

Did you make any New Year's resolutions? What are your goals for 2017? My resolution for 2017 is to make the most of every day! Whether that means spending time with friends and family, working hard in school, or taking time to relax, I want to appreciate every moment to its fullest!

Name: Abbey Bartkowski
Hometown: Scranton, PA
Favorite Food: Pizza from a restaurant in Scranton called Roma’s Pizza

Did you make any New Year's resolutions? What are your goals for 2017? Get through grad school, explore Pittsburgh including eating at as many restaurants as I can find. Enjoy my last full year of being a college student before it is time to get a job.
**Name:** Tawnee Cunningham  
**Home Town:** Kane, PA  
**Favorite Food:** Panang curry with Tofu  
**Did you make any New Year's resolutions? What are your goals for 2017?** I didn't actually make a resolution, but my goal for 2017 is to create quality, sustainable programming for my community site, Vintage Senior Center. I hope that the programs I'm creating can be used in the future by other students.

**Name:** Erin Mahony  
**Home Town:** Monroe, CT  
**Favorite Food:** Chocolate or Thai curry  
**Did you make any New Year's resolutions? What are your goals for 2017?** My resolution is to journal more often. Sometimes you don't fully process situations or even just an average day until you write it down. I feel like if I wrote down my thoughts more often I might understand myself better and see solutions to problems I might not otherwise think of.

**Name:** Christine Manta  
**Home Town:** Downingtown, PA  
**Favorite Food:** Peanut Butter  
**Did you make any New Year's resolutions? What are your goals for 2017?** One of my goals for 2017 is to be consistent with getting to the gym in the morning 5 days a week. I love my sleep but I know I’ll be happier during the day if I get up and go! Another goal is to try one new recipe a month to switch up my usual food routine, which can be pretty boring at times.
This month we chose to do a highlight on our new department administrator, Corey Flynn. Corey is from Sacramento where she worked at University of California, Berkeley. She and her family moved to Pittsburgh just six years ago. She has a bachelor’s degree in journalism and photography from California State University, Sacramento. Last year she completed a dietetic technician, registered program at CCAC. She was working at WIC but she missed the university atmosphere and so she has found herself at SHRS since early December and we are so happy to have her!

Corey loves the outdoors! She enjoys backpacking, cycling, and kayaking. Just two years ago, Corey backpacked 230 miles on the John Muir Trail and this May she plans on tackling 125 miles of the California Coastal Trail. She is also passionate about the environment in a way that led her to start the composting program at Mt. Lebanon high school, which now composts around 500 pounds of food waste each week.

Corey, her husband, and her three kids have many pets: a beagle, 3 cats, 2 geckos, and a beta goldfish. Her favorite snack is carrots and hummus and she is an identical twin! She is very happy at SHRS, so thank you all for your kindness shown during her transition! If you haven’t already, be sure to stop in and say hello!
Lori Hovis, CMD Year 1

This month, I had the opportunity to give a Giant Eagle store tour with Judy Dodd and some other first year graduate students to a group of women from POWER. POWER is an acronym for Pennsylvania Organization for Women in Early Recovery. I had never given a store tour before, and this was a wonderful first time experience. After introducing ourselves and MyPlate, we began our hour long tour in the produce department, where we spent much of our time. We talked about the many benefits of fruits and vegetables, serving sizes, healthier preparation methods, and food safety. We also encouraged the women to “eat the rainbow.” The more color on your plate, the better! Recommending that they eat 5-7 servings of fruits and vegetables each day can seem like a daunting task. In order to give these women some confidence in eating the recommended amount, we put an apple on a scale to show that even eating one apple is equal to two servings of fruit. This was a great visual aid for them.

Next, we made our way over to the deli department. Here, we encouraged the women to pick out different prepackaged deli meats and compare the nutrition labels. We had them pay special attention to serving size, saturated fat, sodium, and protein content. They were especially shocked to see how small the serving size was and how high the sodium was in the items they chose.

Making our way around the perimeter of the store, we briefly stopped at the seafood department. We encouraged the women to make selections that have less fat in the deli department and more fat in the seafood department, in order to stress that there are good fats! We explained to them that they want to have less saturated and trans fat in their diet, and more unsaturated fat, which can be found in salmon.

Then, we ventured over to the dairy department where we compared different kinds of milk and yogurt. After teaching them how to properly read the nutrition label, they were able to use this skill throughout the remainder of the store tour. The women each picked up a different kind of milk and noticed on their own that the milks all had the...
same amount of Calcium and vitamin D, and only differed in amount of fat. They did the same with various types of yogurt and were able to identity which yogurt would be a better choice based on factors such as amount of added sugar and which items came first in the ingredient list.

Our tour ended in the cereal aisle. By the end of the tour, the women were experts at reading the nutrition label and understanding how to make smarter choices. As some women were discouraged to find out that their favorite cereal was not the best choice for them nutritionally, we informed them that there is no such thing as “bad food,” it really depends on how much and how often you are eating that particular food. It is all about balance and moderation.

It was amazing to see how interested these women were to learn about how food can impact their health, and hopefully they will continue to use this new knowledge in the future when they are grocery shopping. Store tours are a wonderful way for individuals to learn because we are in a natural setting where one would typically be when purchasing food, and we can immediately answer their questions and listen to their specific concerns. I can’t wait to give my next store tour!
Kaleigh Talbert, CMD Year 1, gSDA Business Manager

It was cold, it was early, and it smelled like Philadelphia. I shook hands with Linda Eck Mills, MBA, RDN, LDN, FADA, and I could tell right away that she was a serious professional. She asked me how my drive from Pittsburgh was, then dove right into our agenda.

“You’ll need your license, everything else must stay in the car.” Taking cell phones into a correctional facility was a big no-no. “When we get inside, just follow my lead,” she said as she led the way into Coleman Hall. Inside, my license was taken from me and I was given a visitor’s badge. We stepped through metal detectors. I stepped through again after removing my belt. A security guard waved wands over us, front and back, before guards behind thick windows buzzed a lock on the door, and inside we went. The floors and walls and ceilings were all white in this Orwellian hallway. Every five or six feet, very large framed posters shouted encouraging green words on a plain white background, “DO NOT LIE”, “WHEN LIFE HANDS YOU LEMONS, MAKE LEMONADE”, “TRUST IN GOD.”

“Coleman Hall is a community correctional facility that receives residents in several ways. Some are parole violators. Some are here after being transferred from DOC (dept. of corrections). All are here for substance abuse education and changing criminal behaviors,” she said. The high ceilings made it so even a whisper at the end of the hall came through loud and clear. It was around this time I noticed there were no guards, and the workers I saw were in plainclothes without weapons.

“We are heading to Unity house. I’m giving a lecture on food safety and grocery shopping. We were finding that the residents were being released, and many had no idea how to shop for healthy foods or make informed choices,” she said, not looking at me still, just leading the way past dozens of posters. “BELIEVE IN YOURSELF” “IF NOTHING CHANGES, YOU MUST CHANGE” “STOP MAKING EXCUSES”

“Uncomfortable yet?” She didn’t smile, but she must have sensed my rising dread as we started passing inmates. Linda didn’t look at them, but they turned and stared at us anyway. I kept my coat on. We entered Unity and began the task of setting up a projector and screen. From behind thick doors with tiny windows, resident men stood peering. I sat in the very back of the room when the presentation started. The residents really wanted nothing to do with this, but eventually, they quieted enough because they realized Linda was not to be intimidated. And she wasn’t. I’m not sure how many women could stand in front of a room of criminals and tell them, “I demand respect and I’m not moving on until you be quiet.” Whether they took anything away from it, they eventually played along and then it was done. We had another session later in the afternoon, but for now we headed to medical.

Linda’s job was split between foodservice and medical care. In foodservice she was to audit meal counts, approve menu substitutions, provide staff training, and assist with developing policies and procedures. Medically, she does nutrition analysis of 71 weeks’ worth of menus, approves medical diets and supplements, auditing special diets for compliance, reviewing medically necessary diets, and training for staff related to those diets. She oversaw operations at 38 locations, in 16 different states, and in 4 different time zones. Linda Mills, MBA, RDN, LDN, FADA, was a serious professional.

In medical, I followed along as she made corrections to data put in by staff. “This guy was faking an allergy because he didn’t like onions. This guy has HIV so he needs some supplements and a snack bag at night for his medication.

...Continued on next page
Why is this other guy getting a snack bag at night if he doesn’t have medication? This guy was losing weight so he needs some meal supplements. This guy is allergic to grits? Bet he won’t be after he loses his cornbread.” The list went on and on. This was something Linda was used to. Residents and inmates often fake allergies to try and get something different to eat or special attention. Some try to pass off as Jewish or Muslim to get kosher or halal meals.

The next educational session in Tranquility house was not a good experience. When I thought it would get violent, Linda was unmoved. Despite their best efforts to shake her and get her to quit, Linda pressed on and finished the session. I was more than happy to leave and get lunch.

There are different meals to choose from… the 2800 calorie diabetic diet, the GERD diet, lacto-ovo-vegetarian… I opted for the 2800 calorie diet, and was greeted with a large pile of rice and beans, two tortillas, green beans, a small cup of hot sauce, salad with no dressing, an orange, and a slice of cake. I ate my first prison meal. I couldn’t finish all of it, but let me tell you how delicious prison cake is. It would make you question whether to do the crime.

The next day we went to George W. Hill Correctional Facility. This was not like Coleman Hall. This, my friends, was a full-on county prison. Linda had warned me to dress appropriately: no tight clothes, no heels, no jewelry, no skin, look like a professional potato if you could. I felt better in this setting, despite walking through armored bars. These guards were in uniform and armed. Prisoners here are color coded by their uniforms. Orange, you’re new. Brown, you’re a woman. Blue, you’re a man. Red, you’re maximum security and highly dangerous. White and green, you’re a juvenile. Striped, you’re a worker. I watched a very large, muscular, wild-haired man in red gesticulate angrily on the other side of the glass from Medical. I was glad to be surrounded by guards, dressed as a potato. We followed Linda as she performed the same duties here as she did at Coleman yesterday. She, the nurses, and the doctor were discussing the problem of Ensure supplements being used as currency.

The kitchen was one of the most diligently worked kitchens I have ever seen. Working in the kitchen is a coveted job. Prisoners start out making 15 cents a day washing trays. If you manage to make it to head cook you make a solid 35 dollars a week. These inmates don’t mess around here—they want their jobs and they are motivated to do it right. These men cooked and plated, in a regimented almost Ford-like production line, close to 2,000 meals. Silverware is forbidden, so inmates tear off the corner of their Styrofoam container to make a scoop. Their storage rooms, freezers, and refrigerators are neat and well kept. Men wear hairnets over their beards and mustaches. Cooking utensils must be signed out. Sugars and spices are locked up so that prisoners can’t make “hooch.” The worker on diet orders spoke to me about why it was important to carefully follow them, “because someone could end up seriously ill if they ate something they weren’t supposed to.” We talked a little more to the foodservice director there, and then it was time to go.

It was a sobering experience to walk through a prison. It’s not as horrible as TV makes it out to be, and not as funny as Orange is the New Black. Yes, they do refer to it as “on the inside,” and I was heading “to the free world.” We passed through the “mousetrap,” a room made of sliding bars, where only one direction could be open at a time. Gang violence inside prison exists and is a huge problem. So are drugs and contraband. However, their cake is also really moist and delicious. It was certainly a unique and educational job shadowing experience that helped to further my interest in corrections.
WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Thank you for a great fall semester! If you aren’t a member yet, email us at gSDAgh@gmail.com to join this spring. Current members, look out for emails from gSDA for volunteer opportunities.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

FEB 16………………………………………GSDA MEETING
  • CMD YEAR 1 HEADSHOTS
  • WHITE COAT MEASUREMENTS/ORDER

MAR 16 ………………………………………GSDA MEETING
  • 2017-2018 OFFICER NOMINATIONS

APR 13……………………………………GSDA MEETING
  • 2017-2018 ELECTIONS

APR 28…………………CMD WHITE COAT CEREMONY

KEEP A LOOK OUT IN YOUR EMAILS FOR DIFFERENT GSQA-RELATED ACTIVITIES FOR THE SPRING SEMESTER!

MEET THE GSQA

President
Therezia Alchoufete
Vice President
Jacquelyn Klunk
Business Manager
Kaleigh Talbert
Newsletter Editors
Therezia Alchoufete & Selena Hasircoglu

INTERESTED IN WRITING?

Contact us if you’d like to contribute an article to next month’s newsletter! Content can include activities you’ve participated in through gSDA, service projects you’re doing in the field of nutrition and dietetics, or informative blogs on current nutrition topics. We’d love to hear from you!

Keep a look out in your emails for different gSDA-related activities for the Spring Semester!