



Awards & Honors



Outstanding Dietetic Student Award (DPD): Emma Pals

“Emma’s academic, volunteer, leadership, and work history show a commitment to hard work and a desire to learn, adapt, and thrive in a variety of different settings. Her experience, combined with her personality and tireless work ethic, make her a well-rounded candidate for this award. Emma possesses the grit, determination, knowledge, and skills that will no doubt benefit the dietetics profession.”

Outstanding Dietetic Student Award (DI): Lydia McNeal

“It is with great excitement that I am recommending Lydia McNeal for the KAND Outstanding Dietetic Student Award. She is a highly motivated intern, communicates well with staff, uses great critical thinking skills, maintains a high level of professionalism, and displays excellent patient interactions. Lydia shows a sincere desire to learn and grow as she prepares to become a future RD. I’m confident that she will be a great asset to our profession. Lydia is very deserving of this award and it is my honor to nominate her.”

Young Dietitian of the Year Award: Candice Tufano, RD, LD, CDCES

“Candice has made significant contributions to the field of dietetics in her short time as a dietitian. She works continuously to advocate for her patients at the national, state and local levels. She also works within her facility to advocate for better interdisciplinary coordination of care and utilization of best practices to optimize patient outcomes. She is truly dedicated to making the world a better place both for her patients as well as for her fellow RDs. We are lucky to call her a colleague.”

Emerging Dietetic Leader Award: Erica Rhorer, RDN, LD, IBCLC

“When I think of qualities of a successful leader, honesty, passion, good

at communication, approachable, and dynamic all come to mind, to name a few. Erica Rhorer possesses all of these and more. She exemplifies leadership in her role as President of the Kentuckiana Lactation Improvement Coalition and is also a part of the IBCLC Licensure Committee. Her involvement in advocacy for the field of lactation is second to none. Because of her passion and commitment to policy and advocacy, the health of babies and mothers in the state of Kentucky is going to improve.”

**Outstanding Dietitian of the Year Award:
Julie Plasencia, PhD, RDN, LD**

“Dr. Plasencia demonstrates enthusiasm and care for her students. As the DPD Director she works closely with students in providing career guidance, often being the last one to leave the office as she stays late meeting with students. I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Plasencia over the last 4 years. Her mentorship has been incredibly valuable. I do not know anyone more deserving of the Dietitian of the Year than Dr. Plasencia.”

**Iva Alexander Scholarship:
Allison Hicks**

“Allison is an outstanding student and a dedicated worker and volunteer. As demonstrated by her dedication to her studies and willingness to offer her time as a research assistant and volunteer, Allison would be an outstanding recipient of the Kentucky Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Scholarship. She has a bright future as a dietitian and member of the dietetics field.”

**Lyn Fleming Scholarship:
Johanna Poysti**

“Ms. Poysti demonstrates a strong commitment to her academic pursuits. Ms. Poysti's commitment to learning and willingness to take on new challenges have been key factors in her success in the classroom. She has all the necessary skills and qualities to excel as a registered dietitian.”

Survey for Insurance Billing

If you're an RD and you bill insurance- we want to hear from you! The Nutrition Services Payment Specialists (NSPS) are collecting data from RDs across the state to help us generate a "best practices" guide for RDs who are new to insurance. We also hope to use the data to lobby legislators to help create better transparency between providers and private insurance companies. But we need your input first! Please fill out the survey linked below.

[Take the Survey!](#)

Attention KAND members: Please join the KAND IDEA Book Club for a special in person meeting at Whole Foods Market outdoor patio on **Thursday, May 11th at 6:30** for our monthly meeting. We will be discussing Chapter 3 of the book, Diversity in the Workplace: Eye Opening Interviews to Jumpstart Conversations about Identity, Privilege, and Bias. This can be a great way to engage in some stimulating conversation around topics related to Diversity and Inclusion, and increase networking opportunities while connecting with fellow RD's, students, or other members of the dietetics community!

Can't join in person? You can also join via zoom @ uky.zoom.us/j/4877216345.

I am also looking for 2-3 individuals to join the KAND IDEA subcommittee. If you know anyone interested in volunteering with KAND and has a passion for increasing efforts related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within our profession and community please contact Jordan Ellis @ jordanellisky@gmail.com to find out more.

[Join Via Zoom](#)

Kentucky Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

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