KENTUCKY ACADEMY

of Nutrition and Dietetics

Happy Springtime, fellow KAND members,

As the season changes, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the considerable accomplishments of two of our committees over the past couple of months. In the public policy space, Whitney Duddey, Consumer Protection Coordinator, led the charge with Compact Licensure legislation. Although it wasn't heard in the Senate, due to other pressing priorities during this short legislative session, your efforts to connect with your legislators and advocate for HB70 are commendable. Many of you responded to the call to reach out to your representatives and senators for a final push. Boy, did you respond! I would like to sincerely thank each of you for 1) recognizing the value in public policy work and advocacy, and 2) supporting your fellow dietetics professionals as we worked together to achieve a common goal. At the April Board meeting, Whitney

articulated that we are well-prepared to see this through next year. We have learned a lot about best practices and are well-positioned for success. Thank you to Whitney and all members of the Public Policy Panel for your dedication and commitment.

There are now 9 states that have passed Dietitian Licensure Compact

- Nebraska (April 2024)
- Alabama (May 2024)
- Tennessee (May 2024)
- Ohio (January 2025)
- South Dakota (March 2025)
- North Dakota (March 2025)
- Mississippi (March 2025)
- Utah (March 2025)
- Kansas (April 2025)

Meaning the Compact Commission can form, and work will begin to determine the regulations and how they will be implemented. Stay tuned for more updates.

Next, I would like to reflect on the work of our nominating committee, led by Nasreen Oman as Chair, and supported by Kat Buchanan and Katie Landon. Kat will lead the committee for the next fiscal year. They worked valiantly to compile a strong slate of candidates for the 2025-2026 Board of Directors election. All spots were filled! While we work to find additional volunteers for some appointed positions, I wanted to take the opportunity to announce the winners of this election:

- President-Elect - Beth Cecil, RDN, LD
- Treasurer - Nasreen Omran, MS, RDN, LD
- Secretary - Lora Parks, RDN, LD
- Membership Chair - Caitlin Tennyson, RDN, LD
- Nominating Committee - Liz Combs, EdD, MS, RDN, LD
- Nominating Committee - Lois Hill, MS, RDN, LD, FAND

Not picture below: Lora Parks

Congratulations to each of you on winning your respective positions in the election! I know the board will be in good hands with this driven, intelligent, creative group of women!

Stay tuned for more announcements in the coming months on the Academy's Strategic Plan. KAND will work on updating ours to align with the Academy's.

Enjoy the sunshine, and keep showing up, Kentucky!
Lauren

Lauren Roberson, PhD, RD, LD

KAND President 2024-2025

Congratulations!

KAND Member Appointed by Governor Beshear to serve on the Kentucky Eating Disorder Council

Michelle Eckart, RDN, LD

Michelle Schuppe Eckhart, RDN, LD is the Clinical Dietitian at Norton Children's Hospital Eating Disorder Program. She has been a dietitian for over 30 years working in multiple areas of Dietetics throughout the city of Louisville. She previously worked at the Louisville Center for Eating Disorders for 7 years helping to establish their Intensive Outpatient Program and Partial Hospitalization Program for Eating Disorder Patients. She helped to open Southern Indiana Rehabilitation Hospital where she worked as the Clinical Dietitian for 5 years. She has also been the Clinical Nutrition Manager at Jewish Hospital, the Manager of the Jewish Hospital & St. Mary's Healthcare Diabetes Program, the Manager of the KentuckyOne Employee Wellness Program, and National Director of Health & Wellbeing for the Humana Fitness Centers. Michelle is passionate about Eating Disorders and helping her patients learn to have a healthy relationship with food. In her spare time, Michelle loves to cook and travel the world with her husband. She has also served as a Girl Scout Leader for many years (even though both of her girls are now in college) and loves being outdoors hiking, camping, biking, and just being in nature.

ANDY BESHEAR
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Secretary of State
Frankfort
Kentucky

2025 – 084
February 17, 2025

By virtue of the authority vested in me by Section 210.051 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes, I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, do hereby appoint Michelle Eckhart, Louisville, as a member of the Kentucky Eating Disorder Council, representing the Kentucky Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, to replace Emily Ashton, Lexington, whose term has expired, and to serve for a term expiring February 16, 2027.

Please issue a commission to her.

ANDY BESHEAR, GOVERNOR
Commonwealth of Kentucky

MICHAEL G. ADAMS
Secretary of State

In 2020, KRS 210.051 established the Kentucky Eating Disorder Council (KEDC) within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Goals of the Council include:

- Overseeing the development and implementation of eating disorder awareness, education, and prevention programs.
- Identifying strategies for improving access to adequate diagnosis and treatment services.
- Assisting the Cabinet for Health and Family Services in identifying eating disorder research projects.
- Working with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and other appropriate entities to routinely examine existing surveillance systems, data collection systems, and administrative databases to determine the best strategies for implementing evidence-based eating disorder measures that provide data for program and policy planning purposes.
- As reasonably as possible, collaborating and coordinating on data research projects with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and other appropriate entities.

- Making recommendations regarding legislative and regulatory changes as appropriate.

Thanks for representing KAND in this important work, Michelle, congratulations!!!

Public Policy Updates

Every job in nutrition and dietetics is impacted by food and nutrition policy. Here are ways you can be part of change!

Thank you for advocating for the Dietitian Licensure Compact during the 2025 short session! We applaud our neighboring states that have helped the profession reach and exceed the minimum threshold needed to initiate the compact. Although House Bill 70 did not reach all the milestones necessary to be signed into law in Kentucky, the bill progressed further in the process than last year. Time was the limiting factor when considering the context of all the issues the Legislature took on this year. We received positive feedback about the bill and will continue to strategize with our bill sponsors about next year.

Save the date for an in-person Legislative Day early in 2026 (January or February). We plan to take advantage to advocate for the Dietitian Licensure Compact as well as any other pressing issues that arise between now and then.

Register Today: April 21 Member Webinar on Strategic Plan
Academy members are invited to join Academy President Livleen Gill at 1 p.m. Central time on April 21 for an informative, free webinar on the Academy's 2025-2030 strategic plan. Members will hear about the plan's five focus areas that will guide the organization's work and how they can add their support to the Academy's vision and objectives.
Learn More

April Celebrations

Passover takes place from April 12th to April 20th and is a major Jewish holiday celebrating the Israelites' liberation from slavery in Egypt. During Passover, Jewish families gather for a ritual meal known as the Seder, where they recount the story from the Biblical book of Exodus while sharing symbolic foods.

- Palm Sunday was on April 13th and marks the beginning of Holy Week, an important Christian observance. On this day, Christians commemorate Jesus Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem, often by receiving palm branches, engaging in worship and prayer, and reflecting on scripture.
- Easter is celebrated on April 20th and honors the resurrection of Jesus Christ three days after his crucifixion. Christians observe this sacred occasion by attending church services, gathering with family and friends, and sharing meals together.

- The Festival of Ridván takes place from April 20th to May 2nd and commemorates the moment when Bahá’u’lláh publicly declared his mission as God's messenger for this era. This festival is considered the holiest and most significant observance in the Bahá’í Faith.

April Board Member Spotlights

Meet Liz Choate, RD, LD, Western District President for KAND.

Liz is the Director of Clinical Nutrition at Jackson Purchase Medical Center in Mayfield, where she's proudly served patients for the past 37 years. A University of Kentucky graduate ('86), Liz brings decades of wisdom and heart to her work —especially when it comes to supporting individuals on their weight loss and weight management journeys. Helping people help themselves is what fuels her passion every day.

If Liz were a dish, she'd be anything Mexican —fun, flavorful, and always a favorite!

Meet Erin Casey, MS, RD, LD the KAND Nutrition Services Payment Specialist.

Erin is the owner of NuYOU Nutrition Counseling and an outpatient dietitian at the Lexington VA Medical Center. She's been in practice for 6 years and has been running her private practice since day one! As KAND's Nutrition Services Payment Specialist, she's passionate about advocating for appropriate reimbursement and empowering dietitians to confidently step into nontraditional clinical roles.

If Erin were a dish, she'd be an enchilada —bold, packed with flavor, and never afraid to bring a little spice! Erin is especially inspired by the growing role of dietitians in the online nutrition, fitness, and wellness space. With so much information out there, she believes it's more important than ever for RDs to show up, speak out, and shape the conversation.

Kentucky Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

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