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**CEO'S REPORT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
FEBRUARY 27-28, 2020**

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Following are activity highlights since our September meeting.

### **March Is National Nutrition Month®**

In January the Academy announced the theme of National Nutrition Month®: “Eating Right Bite by Bite.” According to our press release: “[Choosing nutritious foods and getting enough physical activity can make a significant difference in your health. For National Nutrition Month® 2020, in March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages people to make informed food choices and develop sound eating and physical activity habits.](#)” Social media comments from members have praised this year’s theme and the sales are up by \$30,000.00 compared to this time last year.

### **Senior MNT Works Toolkit**

The Academy launched the [Medical Nutrition Therapy Works for Seniors toolkit](#) in January in partnership with the National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging. The toolkit helps RDNs and senior nutrition program administrators strengthen their ability to offer medical nutrition therapy services for coverage by Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans for older adults in community settings. This complimentary toolkit includes information, resources and tools that summarize nutrition-focused health care integration opportunities for senior nutrition programs; highlights the role and impact of RDNs; and features examples of promising practice and research-informed evidence regarding the clinical and cost-effectiveness of nutrition interventions.

### **Academy Wins PR Daily Awards**

The Academy received two PR Daily Nonprofit Awards in the Social Media Campaign and Print Publication categories. The awards recognize outstanding marketing and communications campaigns from philanthropic foundations, government agencies, professional associations, charitable organizations, academic institutions and agencies that represent them. The Academy was recognized for the 2019 National Nutrition Month® campaign and for *Food & Nutrition Magazine*®.

### **Membership Update**

- The Retired member category once again reached a record high in 2019-2020, growing 5% over 2018-2019. Increased participation by student liaisons in the Fall Student Liaison Recruitment Program recognized 29 new members
- In October, the Academy rolled out a new and improved online Mentor Match; users can enroll as mentor, mentee or both, are matched according to similarities in profile interests and communication styles, and can search for other participants by Academy DPG or MIG, geographic location and name
- A New Member Onboarding campaign was launched in December, with a successful 67 percent open rate and positive feedback from participants. This monthly email campaign takes new and rejoining members on a tour of Academy benefits and services with messaging tailored for members and student members
- Since October, more than 1,500 prospective members have been included in a new recruitment campaign targeting individuals who initiate an online application
- In spite of all this membership good news, we are anticipating the year end totals to be about 1% lower than last year. This is based on a continued drop in ACEND program enrollees, which is leading to a smaller base of students to recruit for membership. Additionally, the

upswing in Active members retiring continues, with many but not all transitioning to the Retired category.

### **Membership Core Team**

In November, I announced the creation of the Membership Core Team, an inter-team group of key Academy staff charged to use their collective knowledge, expertise and experience to enhance member recruitment, retention and customer service. The MCT consists of 10 Academy staff members, representing Clinical Content Strategy; DPG/MIGs/Affiliate Relations; Fund Raising/ Foundation; Lifelong Learning and Professional Engagement; Marketing Operations; Membership Development; Policy Initiatives and Advocacy; Research, International and Scientific Affairs; and Strategic Communications teams. The MCT's program of work includes:

- Leverage social media channels to showcase member value proposition and increase visibility to non-members
- Brainstorm gaps in programs, products, and services and marketing strategies to enhance the value of Academy membership, as informed by survey data
- Develop and disseminate tips for superb member relations
- Brainstorm micro-targeted recruitment and retention campaigns
- Collaborate with the Academy's organizations units (affiliates, DPGs, MIGs and NDEP) to engage all member segments
- Enhance communication between the Academy, its members and non-members
- Substantive changes will be reported to the Board in the near future.

### **Policy Initiative and Advocacy Update**

- History was made in December when the New Jersey Senate and the Assembly passed the strongest, most comprehensive dietetics licensure bill in a generation. This bill, which was the result of 30 years of efforts by the New Jersey Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, represents the first time in more than a decade in which we have closed a state's gap in consumer protections by enacting a new practice exclusivity clause ensuring that only highly qualified individuals are able to provide medical nutrition therapy
- President Trump signed the bipartisan [FY20 spending package](#) into law in December. The Academy was particularly pleased to see \$90 million to support the WIC Peer Breastfeeding Counselor Program, \$30 million to support school kitchen equipment grants, \$35 million for the Summer EBT program and \$425 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, as well as \$50 million for public health data modernization and \$937 million for Older Americans Act nutrition programs
- Sens. Gary Peters (Mich.) and Shelley Moore Capito (W.Va.) introduced the Preventing Diabetes in Medicare Act of 2019, which would authorize Medicare to reimburse RDNs for medical nutrition therapy provided to patients with pre-diabetes. [Support](#) from the Academy was featured prominently in Sen. Peters' press release on the reintroduction. The Academy has long been a champion of this legislation and looks forward to working with our members and our colleagues in the Diabetes Advocacy Alliance to push for its enactment into law.
- Sens. Maggie Hassan (N.H.) and Lisa Murkowski (Alaska) introduced the Nutrition CARE Act (S. 2907), which would instruct Medicare to reimburse RDNs for medical nutrition therapy provided to patients with diagnosed eating disorders. The bill's companion, H.R. 3711, was introduced by Reps. Judy Chu (Cali.) and Jackie Walorski (Ind.). The Academy looks forward to advocating for this legislation with our members and our colleagues in the Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action.

## DPG Advisory Committee to the CEO



The first meeting of the Dietetic Practice Group Advisory Council to the Chief Executive Officer was held in Chicago. The group met for dinner on Sunday, January 19, followed by a meeting at Academy Headquarters on Monday. The DPGs selected to serve on the Advisory Council the first year have external directors. The topics discussed included DPG Management Services Model, DPG Sponsorships, and DPG

Membership and Member Satisfaction and Engagement. The next meeting will take place via WebEx in late spring. The following Academy members were in attendance: Mary Abbott Hess (FCP), Deanne Brandstetter (DBC), Lynn Brann (PN), Susan Brantley (DNS), Kim Brenkus (MFNS), Dana Elia (DIFM), Margery Gann (HA), Lisa Jones (NE), Gisele Leger (CNM), Tracy Oliver (WM), Lindzi Torres (SCAN), Cynthia Wolfram (DHCC) and Doris Acosta joined me to ensure appropriate follow-up strategic communications. All agreed it was a very productive and successful three-hour meeting as you can see and the outcomes (attached to this report) were shared with all DPG chairs, chairs-elect and past chairs. A few highlights of some of the feedback received from participants follow.

“Thank you for the meeting and opportunity to participate. It was a great start and look forward to future calls.” Regards, Cynthia A. Wolfram

“Thank you for the wonderful and productive meeting, Pat. I look forward to our future discussions as well.” Best, Lisa Jones

“Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the CEO DPG Advisory Council. You have assembled a very talented and dedicated group. I am honored to be a part of. Thank you for being willing to listen and to make compromises when needed ... It was my first time to visit AND headquarters. I enjoyed my time.” Sincerely, Kim Brenkus

“Thank you for taking the time to listen and your willingness to compromise. I think it was a good start in the process of rebuilding trust as you mentioned. Looking forward to continued conversations.”  
Deanne Brandstetter

“I would also like to genuinely thank you for the opportunity to engage in open dialogue in a very welcoming and collegial environment. I believe this DPG Advisory Council was a benefit to all of us involved and the Academy as a whole.” Best! Tracy Oliver

“Thank you for your hospitality and for a very productive meeting. I look forward to further engagement with the DPG Advisory Council this year.” Best, Lynn Brann

“You were perfect. Diffused difficult situation. All seemed to leave satisfied. If I can help in follow up, just let me know.” Mary Abbott Hess

... It was clear to me that the DPG volunteer leadership has incredible passion for our groups and the services that we bring to our members ... Once again, thank you for hosting and giving me an opportunity to be a part of this conversation. Margery Gann

... Appreciate your support in discussing potential courses of action to best help SCAN move into the future. Lindzi S. Torres

**SUBMITTED BY:** Patricia M. Babjak

<b>Location:</b>	Academy Headquarters, Chicago, Illinois
<b>DPG Representatives in Attendance:</b>	Mary Abbott Hess (FCP), Deanne Brandstetter (DBC), Lynn Brann (PN), Susan Brantley (DNS), Kim Brenkus (MFNS), Dana Elia (DIFM), Margery Gann (HA), Lisa Jones (NE), Gisele Leger (CNM), Tracy Oliver (WM), Lindzi Torres (SCAN), Cynthia Wolfram (DHCC)
<b>Academy Staff in Attendance:</b>	Chief Communications Officer Doris Acosta, Chief Executive Officer Patricia Babjak, Chief Operations Officer Mary Beth Whalen (for a Leadership Institute presentation)

### **The Academy's Strategic Plan**

- All DPGs are unique and vital to the Academy and to the advancement of the Strategic Plan, specifically in providing content expertise
- DPG missions, visions and/or goals are aligned with the Academy, while maintaining separate identities.

### **Organizational Structure**

- The Academy's organization chart will be updated to reflect the Affiliates and the Foundation as separate legal entities.

### **DPG Management Services Model**

- The model was communicated to the DPGs in spring 2019 after changes were made in staffing, upgrading needed skill sets
- Current staff hold expertise in strategic planning, association management and business law
- It was acknowledged that some aspects of the management model, particularly as to Executive Director positions, were miscommunicated to DPG Chairs. A revised model is being developed and will be shared with DPGs
- Some external DPG full-time and part-time executive directors and executive administrators are signing contracts as nonlegal entities, which are not legally binding and are in violation of policy
- Security challenges posed by advances in technology have created the need to maintain the integrity and security of member information in Academy databases. The Academy is responsible and liable for data breaches and must manage all risks
- The model becomes effective June 2022, allowing for staggered implementation
- The goal is to allow DPG member leaders to spend less time on administrative and operational tasks and more time for strategic thinking and supporting professional development efforts that highlight specialized practice expertise.

### **DPG Membership and Member Satisfaction and Engagement**

- Per the most recent Academy Needs and Satisfaction Survey, members who join the Academy for the first time say the #1 reason is the Academy is a leading professional organization; #2 is professional and career development; #3 the opportunity to join a DPG. When renewing membership, the #1 reason is professional and career development; #2 is the Academy is a leading professional organization and the opportunity to join a DPG drops to #6

- DPGs contributions to professional and career development were acknowledged
- The group discussed targeting DPG education and materials to members who are at early-, mid-, and late-career to enhance reach and retention
- Several DPGs are experiencing declines in membership and fewer than 50% of Academy members join practice groups
- Membership data show no correlation between DPG membership drops to dropping Academy membership; instead members join another DPG(s)
- Feedback from members on DPG declines includes lack of focus (mission, vision, strategic program of work); outdated content; lack of engagement with their members.

### **Sponsorship**

- DPGs and the Academy compete for sponsorship and CPE revenue
- Communication between DPGs and the Academy's Corporate Relations team would help in identifying requests for sponsorship and eliminating duplication efforts
- Some DPGs have negotiated sponsorships without Academy knowledge
- DPGs should confer with the Academy's Corporate Relations team before approaching sponsors or negotiating sponsorships because some companies may not be natural partners aligned with the Academy vision and mission
- The Academy is responsible for all DPG contracts
- Based on volume of business, the Academy is in a better position to negotiate contracts for services than individual DPGs
- Some DPGs have unique contacts for sponsorship and the Academy respects and values those relationships
- The Academy reviews every sponsorship opportunity on a case-by-case basis and evaluates any potential sponsors using Academy Guidelines for Corporate Sponsors
- DPGs are encouraged to follow the Academy Guidelines for Corporate Sponsors  
[https://www.eatrightpro.org/about-us/advertising-and-sponsorship/about-sponsorship/academy-guidelines-for-corporate-sponsors.](https://www.eatrightpro.org/about-us/advertising-and-sponsorship/about-sponsorship/academy-guidelines-for-corporate-sponsors)

### **Executive Director Selection, Position Description and Evaluation**

- DPG leadership will continue to be part of the hiring process for the executive director, including developing position descriptions, identifying candidates, setting goals, conducting evaluations
- A scoping assessment with each group is needed to ensure the correct mix and number of staff
- Some DPGs would benefit from services provided by an Executive Director on Academy staff while other DPGs will have the option of collaborating with the Academy to select an external Executive Director. Budgets would be adjusted to compensate one or both, based on time and functions
- Concern was expressed about the uniqueness of DPG services and events and the need to maintain quality member benefits. Much DPG leadership work is done outside of traditional working hours
- Some external Executive Directors offer access 24/7 and cost-savings from shared services
- Academy staff to be hired will be carefully selected to have the experience and skills congruent with identified needs
- A new option will allow for continued engagement with external contractors from a project management perspective while shifting key operational and administrative responsibilities to Academy staff. Academy staff examples may include:

- ✓ Sponsorship; marketing; web services (tiered rollout as needed to support each group); legal review; enhanced direct member support and operations; day-to-day business of the DPG and support of the leadership
- Contract services could be utilized as needed to support the individualized needs of DPGs. External contractor services examples may include:
  - ✓ Newsletter (online, print) and publication services; management of programs, meetings and events; online symposia and/or webinar series; live symposia; FNCE event management; destination events; external event management at networks and alliance meetings; facilitator services for retreats, online events and live meetings; other services as needed
  - ✓ Areas that external contractors cannot provide services for, will be revisited under this new option after further legal review. The exclusion list will most likely include Data Protection items such as protected member information.

### **Improving Communications between DPG Leaders and Headquarters Staff**

- Communication with key DPG staff members has been problematic with specific episodes of miscommunication cited
- There was discussion about how best to communicate DPG concerns and issues to Academy senior staff. Pat Babjak suggested communicating directly to her; others suggested a DPG network of some kind to share concerns and issues and/or a specified person to bring DPG concerns to Academy executives
- The DPG Advisory Council is a step in the right direction to rebuild trust and confidence.

### **Monetary Payment/Compensation for Key EC/Volunteer Positions That Exceed Volunteer Threshold of 5 to 10 Hours Per Week**

- Per policy, an Academy representative (member) may not accept an honorarium or fee for time fulfilling a leadership role
- The consensus of the attendees is to maintain the policy
- The policy about not paying volunteers is sound. For a professional function, such as editing a newsletter, a DPG can have the Academy issue a contract, on behalf of the DPG, with the selected individual.

### **Leadership Institute (LI)**

- The new Leadership Institute is designed for high-potential members at any career level who are looking to advance their leadership skills and accelerate career growth
- It will be a 12-month program, from selection to completion, and will be limited to 150 participants. Eighty spots will be reserved for DPG, MIG and Affiliate-nominated candidates; 70 spots will be reserved for non-sponsored applicants.
- It will be a combination of self-directed study, in-person trainings, networking opportunities, small group projects and virtual learning – over the course of a year
- Participants will have the opportunity to put leadership theory into practice through a long-term, small group cohort project culminating in a group presentation at the final onsite meeting at a location to be determined
- Cohorts will focus on one of eight nutrition issues facing the profession, with two groups working on each topic for a total of 16 groups
- There will be two in-person meetings: before FNCE® 2020 in Indianapolis and in the spring or summer 2021
- The cost per person will be \$2,900. This includes LI registration, FNCE® 2020 registration, round trip airfare, and two nights, single room hotel stays at each location as well as meals

- DPGs will be asked to submit a person to attend and will support \$2,500 of the cost and \$400 will be paid by the member. Non-sponsored members who are selected will self-fund their entire fee
- The online application and nomination period and selection process for attendees will be announced soon.

### **Suggested Items for Development**

- Consider developing a Member Engagement Zone question relevant to DPGs
- Current DPG portal platform is not user-friendly
- Need a DPG portal with single sign-on and secure storage for documentation (contracts, historical documents, ensures continuity, helps leaders know the rationale for decisions made), easy search for policies and procedures
- DPG leader exchange: online digital platform where ideas and best practices can be shared.

### **Topics for Future Calls**

- Technology support, benefits and usage:
  - ✓ DPG Higher Logic community
  - ✓ Learning management system
  - ✓ Platforms for secure document sharing – Docuware
- Update of DPG policies in digital, searchable format
- Opportunity to talk with Membership Team to brainstorm solutions to grow membership
- Member retention and expansion
- Competencies: When members choose competency, a popup comes up with suggestions for joining related DPGs
- Access to CDR member codes to create materials that are in demand for DPGs to use for FNCE planning. Identify content gaps that need to be filled
- Protection of intellectual property of DPGs and the Academy.