



News Briefs

This monthly news bulletin is designed to keep Maine Dietetic Association members informed about issues affecting our profession. We hope you find this resource helpful in staying up-to-date and in touch. Please send comments to [MDA Communications Coordinator](#).

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2010 MDA Award Winners

The MDA Board is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2010 awards for outstanding service to our Association and to our profession. Congratulations!

Patricia Watson, MS, RD, LD, CDE - Outstanding Dietitian of the Year.

Pat is currently Director of Nutrition Services and Diabetes Educator at Stephens Memorial Hospital, an Instructor for the Nursing Department and Graduate and Professional Studies at Saint Joseph's College of Maine, a Consulting Dietitian for Norway Rehabilitation and Living Center --as well as being an active member of the MDA board. As the MDA Public Policy Coordinator, she has made significant contributions in public policy advocacy for securing the future of Maine RDs/DTRs. As a Certified Diabetes Educator and clinical dietitian, Pat is a leader and is recognized as both a nutrition expert and a diabetes expert. She has presented her extensive work in dietetics and diabetes on numerous occasions throughout the state. She generously shares her knowledge with her students at the university and with her colleagues. Pat works quietly and effectively behind the scenes volunteering many hours for our profession and is long overdue for recognition by MDA and ADA.

Suzanne Reid, RD, LD - Young Dietitian of the Year

Suzi has been the Director of Medical Nutrition at Goodall Hospital, where she oversees the nutrition care for Eldercare Services, was instrumental in developing the nutrition services at the Cancer Care Center of York County and has been involved with the Community Wellness Program and Partners for Healthy Community. Suzi oversees and provides education and cooking classes for the Cardiac Rehab and the Cardio-Pulmonary Rehab programs at the hospital and is well respected by her managers, peers, and those who work for her. Suzi demonstrates true leadership, values others, and brings wellness into the programs she is involved in. She has demonstrated leadership with physicians, other dietitians, peers, employees, and clients through her knowledge and personal strength. Through all the community programs she has helped implement and maintains along with her daily responsibilities, she has demonstrated promotion of optimal nutrition for the general population. One of her employees says this about her: "Suzi is one of the best managers I have worked for in and outside of dietetics. Suzi is a bundle of energy, good intentions, caring, and very humble."

Advocacy Training Workshop

Maine's State Policy Representative, Marcia Kyle, along with our Public Policy Coordinator, Pat Watson, attended ADA's Advocacy Training Workshop (ATW) in Washington, DC, on May 16- 18, which culminated in a meeting with Congresswomen Chellie Pingree's Legislative Director on Capitol Hill. After presenting ADA's recommendations on Child Nutrition Reauthorization, they were asked to attend a forum on June 1 in Maine during the Congressional break held by Congresswomen Pingree and the USDA Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumers, Kevin Concannon, on just this issue!

The purpose of the forum was to provide input from directors, advocates, and professionals on CNR to best represent Maine people and their family's specific needs. Mary Emerson, MS, RD/LD, Food Service Director at Saconee Valley School System MSAD #55 provided her personal experience for MDA's statement of the long-term rewards she observes in her school since she has introduced USDA's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. This was especially helpful in reinforcing the importance of reauthorization. An additional \$1 billion in funding is proposed by President Obama and supported by American Dietetic Association for expansion of these types of nutrition programs. Both Congresswomen Pingree and Secretary Concannon took notes and assured us they would take back to Washington our recommendations to:

- Extend nutrition standards to all foods and beverages sold on school campuses throughout the school day. We support the language included in H.R. 1324, the Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act, as well as the nutrition standards language included in the Senate's Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.
- Strengthen nutrition education and promotion, and local school wellness policies. We support the provisions in H.R. 5090, the NEW Schools Act.
- Establish professional standards for district-level school nutrition directors. We believe that Directors of the School Nutrition Program at the district level should be certified as Registered Dietitians, Dietetic Technicians, Registered, or School Nutrition Association School Nutrition Specialists. We support the language included in Section 306 of the Senate's Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.

Jennifer Weber, Nutrition Policy expert in the Washington office, helped in preparing our statement for the forum. This along with the training we received from attending ATW gave us the confidence (even with television cameras in place!) to represent our profession on the home front on the importance of CNR. Jeanne Blankenship, ADA's Legislative Public Policy Chair, states, "this is as an example of how state and federal (grassroots initiatives) truly do come together."

Be a Grassroots Leader

Nutrition is an increasingly important public policy issue for state and federal governments, and it is essential that nutrition professionals are involved. This November, Maine will elect a new Governor, all 186 members of the State Legislature, and both members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

One of the best ways for MDA to be heard on nutrition issues when these officials take office after the elections is to get to know them during the campaigns. Whether running for an office that serves one or two towns or the entire state, candidates will be participating in many public events between now and November. MDA needs grassroots leaders throughout our state. Attending campaign events, introducing yourself as a nutrition professional, asking questions and sharing your knowledge is a great way to become one.

The Maine Secretary of State's office has an outstanding Web site with lots of information about the coming elections. The [Voter Information Lookup](#) page is a great place to start. Just type in your address, and you will get a complete list of the candidates who will be on your ballot in November – from the people running for the State legislature from your town or county, to the U.S. Congress and Governor.

The candidates you meet during the campaign are the office holders who will remember you after the election – your knowledge and interest will make a lasting impression. Remember – you don't have to support a particular candidate to attend a campaign event. If you would like any further information or advice on becoming a grassroots leader, please email any one of the MDA Government Relations Contacts: Public Policy Coordinator Pat Watson pmw02@hotmail.com; State Policy Representative Marcia Kyle bkyle@roadrunner.com; State Regulatory Specialist Dona Forke dona@fairpoint.net