

NUTRI NEWS

The Department of Nutrition

May 2017

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NEW FACES IN NUTRITION



Marie Janiszewski, Research Assistant

Marie Janiszewski is interested in the wellbeing and balance of individuals, communities and the environment. She grew up on Maui, Hawai'i, and studied Fine Art at the University of Denver. Upon leaving college, Marie co-developed a non-profit artists collective that created social art projects utilizing participatory development methods. This work led her to collaborate on Public Coffee, a pay-what-you-can mobile café, that designed programming around developing conversations in contentious communities throughout the Denver area. Gardening throughout this time, Marie shifted gears to investigate sustainable farming

and ecological communities. This brought her through the Rocky Mountains to Missouri, California, and finally back to Maui, where she helped develop her childhood friends' subsistence homestead. Marie, "just off the farm", is now a Research Assistant at the T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and she arrives with great enthusiasm to study nutrition and its environmental impacts.

Claire Cadeau, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Claire Cadeau is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow from France. Her research interests focus on the effects of dietary supplements on health. Her mentors are **Professor Walter Willett** and **Dr. Heather Eliassen**. She studied nutrition at AgroParisTech and epidemiology at the University of Paris-Sud where she earned her doctoral degree. During her PhD, she worked on the associations between vitamin D and vitamin C supplement use and breast cancer risk in the French E3N cohort. While at Harvard, she will further investigate the relationship between dietary supplement use and cancer risk by using data from the Nurses' Health Studies.



MEET LAUREN DOUGHERTY, RESEARCH DIETITIAN!

By Hilary Farmer



Lauren (Wolfert) Dougherty, a Research Dietitian, has been with our Department for 17 years. Lauren not only works with various databases, such as those for the different nutrients in foods and cooking oils, but she also serves as her team's "mini-administrative department", processing invoices and ordering supplies. Although her job as a research dietitian is quite complex, Lauren also finds it very interesting and enjoys her job immensely. Lauren graduated at the Harvard Commencement on May 25th when she received her Master of Liberal Arts, Masters in Management degree from Harvard University Extension Studies.

NN: *Lauren, you've been with the Nutrition Department for a while. Can you please tell us some of the things you do as a Research Dietitian here?*

LD: My main focus is on updating and maintaining databases of 500+ foods and 50+ oils containing 350+ individual nutrients. I work with experts and research publications to help make the databases as accurate and sound as possible.

NN: *Have you always been doing this, or has your work evolved over the years? And in what ways?*

LD: I started in the department as an assistant to **Laura Kent**, working mostly in what is known today as the Nutrition Questionnaire Service Center (NQSC). My job as an assistant was to provide Harvard-developed questionnaires to investigators outside of Harvard and process those questionnaires for their studies, as well as help the dietitians on projects as needed. After completing my dietetic internship, a research dietitian position became available and I joined the team. Because of my crossover knowledge of NQSC and my role as a dietitian, I have assumed some administrative needs of our team and the NQSC, support the assistant to NQSC, and, over time, have taken more responsibility for the updates and maintenance of the foods and oils databases. In the last couple of years, I have become a member of the Institute of Food Technologists to better understand food manufacturing, trends, and ingredients. I have also worked more frequently with our IT team to automate and streamline our database systems.

NN: *I understand that you compare manufacturer labels of those foods in our database (while keeping an eye out for any changes in the industry, such as lower sodium content, changes in sugars, or changes in hydrogenation for ingredient fats) to USDA Standard Release data for the same time frame. Do you find it easy to obtain information from the food industry?*

LD: It is DEFINITELY not easy to obtain information from food manufacturers. The favorite response is "the information is proprietary", but we can sometimes work our way to someone willing to give a little information. Manufacturers are constantly changing formulations by adding or substituting ingredients. Legumes such as pea protein is showing up as an ingredient, replacing soy for example. Even though USDA is a useful source for our database, they do not keep up with the rapid changes in the market so it is a challenge.

NN: *How do you make up for this?*

LD: We constantly educate ourselves on new ingredients on manufacturer's labels and work on how we can use what we have in the database as a substitute. There are ingredients we can't capture in our database, but are usually insignificant in contributing any nutrient values.



We generally don't need to go to the food industry for information and instead preserve market information for the cohort time frame we are interested in by researching market share information, obtaining manufacturer labels, and communicating with experts for nutrients of interest.

NN: *I see that you are about to receive your Master's Degree in Management from Harvard. You must be very excited about this!*

LD: I am thrilled to have finally completed this chapter in my life!

NN: *How long did it take you to finish this degree? You also work full-time, right?*

LD: The degree has taken a total of 6 years to complete, taking one course a time, working approximately 31 hours a week, taking care of pre-tweens (now 1 teen, 1 tween), and commuting to/from Rhode Island for 4 required on-campus courses. I could NEVER have completed this without the support of my family and Laura Kent's willingness to be flexible and understanding in allowing me to take vacation time to complete two January terms and an occasional personal day to study for an exam or finish a paper!

NN: *How do you plan to tie your new degree in with your role as dietitian? I understand your original background was in catering!*

LD: Catering was so much fun, but the work hours were horrendous. I love working with food and turned to dietetics for a normal work life. As a dietitian, I always planned on working in a non-traditional role, continuing to build my knowledge of food.

I have been incorporating knowledge from my classes right from the start. It is more than the content of each course that contributes to my role as a dietitian. It's the exposure and confidence of interacting with different personalities to form a cohesive team which helped me to work with the IT team to streamline the way the food updates are completed. I have gained project management experience that has helped me to suggest more efficient approaches to updating our databases. I have general business knowledge which is helpful in working with finance or outside vendors. The overall experience has just given me more business maturity in the way I approach my job I guess you could say.



NN: *Lauren, you've been working very hard lately. What do you like to do for fun?*

LD: I like to do activities that involve enjoying the outdoors and right now it is watching my daughter on her crew team and my son playing baseball. I have also tried my hand at gardening vegetables although I wasn't very successful last year (my first year). I like to take hikes and bike with my family as well.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE DEPARTMENT

Katrina Soriano, Director of Administration and Finance, was one of the 2017 staff nominees for the **Sarah K. Wood Award for Outstanding Staff Performance**. This award was established in 2015 by friends and admirers of Sarah K. Wood in tribute to her many years of exceptional service to Harvard University and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The Sarah K. Wood Award for Outstanding Staff Performance recognizes a staff member who demonstrates the qualities of dedication, competence, positive attitude, initiative, and ability to mentor, encourage, and inspire others, in addition to a demonstrated commitment to the School and its mission.

STUDENT NEWS

Katie Cueva, ScD '17, is the winner of this year's **Dr. Fang Ching Sun Award**, which is given to an outstanding graduating Harvard Chan student who has demonstrated a commitment to promoting the health of vulnerable people. The award is named for Dr. Sun, an alumnus of the School, who had a brief but exemplary career working to improve health among rural people in his native Taiwan. His family created the award in his memory. **Dr. Teresa Fung** has been her advisor.



Hannah Cory was the recipient of the 2017 **Simon and Arpi Simonian Research Excellence in Nutrition Prize**. This prize is awarded to a student in the Department of Nutrition who displays excellence in the field of nutrition. Hannah was recognized for her achievements in a luncheon in April along with her advisor, **Dr. Josiemer Mattei**.

Edward Yu, MSc, ScD Candidate, Departments of Epidemiology and Nutrition, has received an **Individual National Research Service Award (NRSA)**, from the National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases, National Institutes of Health.

MONDAY NUTRITION SEMINARS

There will be no Monday Nutrition Seminars during the summer months. Our regular **Monday Nutrition Seminar Series** will resume in the fall, beginning August 28, 2017. In the meantime, we will still be holding an occasional **Special Nutrition Seminar**, and our first special seminar of the summer will be:

Associate Professor Rob van Dam
Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health
National University of Singapore
Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Nutrition, HSPH
June 13, 2017
Kresge 502
12:30-1:30 pm

NEW APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS

The following Research Scientists in the Department of Nutrition have been reappointed:

Yanping Li, MD, PhD

Anne Lusk, PhD

Kassandra L. Munger, ScD

POSTDOC NEWS

Rebecca L. Franckle, Postdoctoral Fellow in Department of Nutrition, was one of 4 winners of the 2017 PDA Spring Travel Award. There were 28 applications for this award. Applicants were matched with faculty judges that best match their research statement.

NUTRITION IN THE NEWS—BRIEF UPDATES

Majken K. Jensen, an assistant professor of genetic epidemiology and nutrition in the Department of Nutrition, has submitted a short video on her project to develop a simple blood test to predict future risk of Alzheimer's disease to Project 2:58, an electronic marketplace of ideas. Participants submit research project proposals that offer the promise of expanding the frontiers of scientific knowledge for the benefit of society. Viewers who are inspired by the videos and the dedicated researchers will then choose a project or two to fund. Dr. Jensen's project goal: \$99,000.

Dr. Jensen joined the Harvard faculty in 2012. Her research is focused on the identification and evaluation of biological markers that can be used to understand the underlying pathologies of chronic lifestyle diseases (diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and dementia).

To learn more and to view her video: <http://alumni.harvard.edu/harvard-project-258/projects/simple-test-for-alzheimers-disease>

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Professors Frank Hu and **Walter Willett** were featured in a recent *Harvard Gazette* series on how Harvard researchers are tackling the problematic issues of aging. Although **Dr. Hu**, new chair of the Nutrition Department, himself practices what he preaches in terms of a healthy diet and lifestyle, he does not necessarily advocate a one-size-fits-all diet for everyone. Rather, he suggests that "People should adopt healthy dietary patterns according to their food and cultural preferences and health conditions. I don't have a rigid regimen, but I always emphasize healthy components in all my meals."

Dr. Willett, who often bicycles to work, strongly advocates for the pronounced benefits of the Mediterranean diet. "The picture that has emerged is that the traditional Mediterranean diet promotes health and well-being," said Willett, the Fredrick John Stare Professor of Nutrition and Epidemiology. "The elements of a healthy diet were readily available in the Mediterranean, where people had to eat local fruits, vegetables, and fish. Back then, most people didn't have much choice in what to eat."

Excerpted from: http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/05/much-of-life-is-beyond-our-control-but-dining-smartly-can-help-us-live-healthier-longer/?utm_source=SilverpopMailing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=05.04.2017%20%281%29

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Dr. David Eisenberg, Adjunct Associate Professor of Nutrition, and Director of Culinary Nutrition, was featured on a May 8, 2017 *PBS NewsHour* broadcast in a segment that featured the *Healthy Kitchens, Healthy Lives* program that he founded. This program, which provides doctors and other health professionals with instructions on how to incorporate both food and better nutrition into their own medical practices to improve their patients' health, was co-sponsored by Harvard Chan School and the Culinary Institute of America. Dr. Eisenberg is concerned that few US medical schools teach nutrition in their curriculum. To see his video from the PBS program: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/videos/#215295>

For more information about Dr. Eisenberg's work on using teaching kitchens as learning labs for life skills:

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/2015/03/30/qa-with-dr-david-eisenberg-on-self-care-skills-teaching-kitchens-thinking-outside-of-the-box/>

[https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/2017/05/23/more-than-cooking-teaching-kitchens-as-learning-labs-for-life-skills/?utm_source=SilverpopMailing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Nutrition%20Source%20-%20May%202017%20\(1\)&utm_content=](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/2017/05/23/more-than-cooking-teaching-kitchens-as-learning-labs-for-life-skills/?utm_source=SilverpopMailing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Nutrition%20Source%20-%20May%202017%20(1)&utm_content=)

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Dr. Anne Lusk, Research Scientist, was recently featured in the *Harvard Gazette* for her research on bicycle safety. She and others involved in biking proposed putting a level-with-sidewalk cycle track in Inman Square, Cambridge, on what was to be a peanut roundabout. Lusk has been working with the Boston Cyclists Union, the City of Cambridge, and the Cambridge Bicycle Plan.

To read more about her work: <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2017/5/3/bicycle-safety-lanes-feature/>

The Department of Nutrition is currently seeking candidates for the position of Assistant or Associate Professor in Public Health Nutrition. Please feel free to share this with your colleagues!

For more information: <http://academicpositions.harvard.edu/postings/7477>

SAVE THE DATE ANNOUNCEMENTS!

On November 1, 2017, the Nutrition Department at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health will be celebrating its **75th year!** At the same time we will also be having our **13th Annual Stare-Hegsted Lecture.** Dr Lawrence J Appel, of The Johns Hopkins University, will be this year's speaker. The two events will be combined that afternoon. The Department will be celebrating its 75 years with a symposium starting at 1:00 pm and the Stare-Hegsted Lecture will be at 4:30 pm, with a reception afterwards. Both events will take place at the NRB in the Rotunda Room. More details will follow later.

MORE NUTRITION ACTIVITIES IN LONGWOOD MEDICAL AREA

DIVISION OF NUTRITION AT HARVARD LONGWOOD NUTRITION SEMINAR 2016-2017

Medical Education Center, Harvard Medical School
260 Longwood Avenue, Cannon Room (Building C1) Boston, MA
12:00 – 1:00 PM 1st Tuesday of Month (Lunch will be served at 11:30 AM)

June 6, 2017

Lindsay Arnett, RD and Amy Turner, MD

Boston Children's Hospital

Case Study on refeeding syndrome in a severely malnourished child

**Supported by the Conrad Taff Educational Fund, Harvard Medical School
and Mead Johnson Nutrition**

For further information: contact Barbara Ainsley @ 617-667-2604

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Email Hilary Farmer (hfarmer@hsph.harvard.edu) with any comments, corrections, or suggestions for future issues of *NutriNews*.