

SPRING
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THE GRAPEVINE

Teachers College, Columbia University

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2016 Just Food Conference: Lessons Learned

*By Tyffanie Ammeter**With contributions from Ian Ang, Emily Braaten, Jackie Cotton, Jenny Senecal, Jessica Wilson, Cindy Yang, Jera (@qianhui) Zhan, & Nancy Zong*

On Sunday, March 13th, the halls of Teachers College were filled once again with an array of local food advocates, community organizers and leaders, urban and rural farmers, and students from around NYC, including several from the Program in Nutrition. The 700+ attendees of the 2016 Just Food Conference were gathered to learn about and discuss the many challenges our communities face in the food movement, such as racial and economic inequities, and community-driven solutions to combat these issues. The Just Food Conference serves as a loudspeaker

for these concerns, which too often are tucked out of sight. This year a common theme emerged from the many conversations and presentations: It's not enough to only care about where our food comes from; we must also concern ourselves with the treatment and conditions of the workers who bring that food from the farm to our plates.

The conference started off with four Food Talks, which previewed the themes of the day and lit the first sparks of inspiration. Our own professor emerita and co-founder of Just Food, Joan Dye Gussow, gave a

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Staff,

Now that the spring semester has ended many of us will get a nice break from classes. This issue is packed with articles for feeding your nutrition information cravings in your downtime.

Tyffanie Ammeter kicks off the issue with an information-packed article about the 2016 Just Food Conference, sharing many lessons with those who could not attend. Ian Ang gives us an in-depth look at one of the Just Food workshops about school food (page 13). On a policy note, Ali Hard gives us the latest on the Child Nutrition Reauthorization bill (page 5), which Ian also touches upon in his article.

Two articles cover TC Health Nuts' events that you may have missed: our two newest contributors, Tanya Mezher and Isabelle Carren-Le Sauter, recap the spring book club (page 4) and the TC alumnae panel (page 11), respectively.

Gena Hamshaw shares her path to vegansim (page 9) and her Spring Soba Noodle Salad recipe (page 16). Lela Swartz also shares a recipe with us—Pesto-topped Salmon and Carrots (page 16), and the concept of root-to-stalk cooking (page 4).

There seems to be a theme of twos this issue, and Sandeep Dillion contributes to that with two articles: one about how to treat yourself right, with tips for rewarding yourself without using food (page 10), and the other about how to “savor the flavor of eating right” (page 15).

Jen Cadenhead updates us on MySmileBuddy, an app used in a pilot study at the Columbia Dental College to help families improve dental hygiene (page 11).

For a look at the new Nutrition Facts label for packaged food, check out the article on page 14.

For information about upcoming events and links to interesting nutrition-related articles, follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/TheGrapevineTeachersCollege](https://www.facebook.com/TheGrapevineTeachersCollege).

The Grapevine is written by the students in the Teachers College Program in Nutrition. I encourage all of you to get involved. Send your ideas to me at jmo2144@tc.columbia.edu. Thanks to all of the students who volunteered to write for this issue!

Enjoy the issue!

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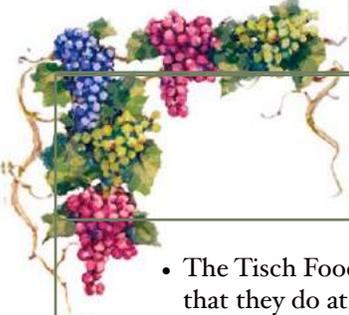
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Fresh Off the Vine: Events and Announcements

- The Tisch Food Center was recently profiled on the Teachers College website. Read about the important work that they do at <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/articles/2016/march/healthy-food-quality-education-add-policy-and-stir-the-tisch-food-centers-re/>.
- Check out the spring issue of The Tisch 'Dish: <http://us8.campaign-archive2.com/?>

***Congratulations
to Our Class of
2016 Graduates!***



WRITE FOR THE GRAPEVINE!

The Grapevine is always looking for new writers, and we encourage all students to contribute. Email your ideas to jmo2144@tc.columbia.edu. Below are a few topic ideas, but other ideas are welcome too.

Feature Story: Write an in-depth investigation of a pertinent topic or issue.

Hot Topic: Explore a topic in nutrition, physiology, and/or public health that is controversial and currently receiving public attention.

Out and About: Describe a food, nutrition, or exercise outing (a conference, meeting, trip to a farm, etc.).

Op-Ed: Share your opinion on a current nutrition topic.

On the Internship Front: Typically reserved for DI students. Describe where you interned, what you did on a daily basis, and how it felt to partake in the rotation.

Journal Watch: Summarize a scholarly journal article.

Book Review: Provide a description of a book, highlighting the main points discussed, why the book is important, and any other interesting facts from the book that might entice the reader.

Film Review: Review a nutrition-based film, stating its themes, an overview of the plot, and why the film is relevant to the field.

Restaurant Review: Review a restaurant with healthy, delicious food.

Traveling Tastes: An exploration of food through travel, describe the foods of another country's culture.

Work it Out: Investigate a current topic in exercise, physiology, or recreation, or share a favorite workout tip, move, or routine.

HEALTH NUTS SPRING BOOK CLUB: DO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT MINDSET?

BY TANYA MEZHER

The Health Nuts Events Committee, along with Isobel Contento, Randi Wolf, and Pam Koch, hosted a book club to discuss “Mindset: The New Psychology of Success” by world-renowned psychologist Carol Dweck. After a time of vibrant chatter and casual conversations over delicious appetizers, dinner, and drinks, the group gathered in the living room of Dr. Contento’s lovely home to discuss the mindsets described in



the book. The fixed mindset, characterized by the view that intelligence is static, leads to a desire to look smart, with a tendency to avoid challenges, give up easily, apply minimal effort, ignore constructive criticism, and feel threatened by the success of others. In contrast, the growth mindset embraces the view that intelligence can be developed, stimulates a desire to learn and a tendency to embrace challenges, and allows one to persist through setbacks, apply effort to gain mastery, learn from constructive criticism, and find encouragement and inspiration in the success of others. Those with a fixed mindset typically have a deterministic view of the world and rarely achieve their full potential, whereas those with a

growth mindset typically experience a greater sense of free will and achieve a higher level of achievement, often beyond their initial goals as they continue to evolve throughout life.

The group shared their own personal experiences and transformations with each mindset, and discussed what surprised or stood out to them from the book and ways in which the growth mindset can be applied to our RD

careers, as well as the world of health and nutrition at large. Many CEOs of successful companies are learning to implement the growth mindset, including Satya Nadella of Microsoft, as Dr. Contento shared, contributing to a

better work environment, which often results in creativity and company profit.

A few anecdotes included the difficulty of working under a boss with a fixed mindset, as well as that of a mindset changer on a spring break airplane ride determined to overcome her fear of turbulence. The group reflected on life perspectives from each mindset, including personal, political, professional, academic, athletic, and relational experiences. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect over an insightful book and discuss ways to apply a growth mindset in our daily lives. Have you considered your mindset yet? If you did not get a chance to attend the event or read the book, it is highly recommended!

Root-To-Stalk Cooking

By Lela Swartz

Have you ever heard of root-to-stalk cooking? With the CSA and farmers’ market season here, you’ll want to learn about this! The idea behind root-to-stalk cooking is that all edible parts of a vegetable or fruit can and should be incorporated into cooking. Not only does root-to-stalk cooking encourage you to try yummy new recipes, it also reduces food waste and maximizes your food dollar. What’s not to love?

Need some ideas on how to get started? Trying sautéing the long green leaves of carrots with a little garlic or use them to make a pesto. If you’re a fan of beets you probably already know that the spherical red roots can be boiled and peeled to make a delicious addition to salads. But did you know that the stems and leaves of beets can be sautéed? They go great with red onion! If you tend to buy a lot of broccoli or cauliflower, try shaving the stalks to make a slaw, or try roasting the leaves to make a snack similar to kale chips.

Check out my root-to-stalk recipe that makes good use of carrots on page 16.

POLICY ACTION ALERT: CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION BILL

By Ali Hard

On May 18th, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce voted a dangerous child nutrition bill out of their committee along nearly party lines. In case you haven't been following this legislation, Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) is the process of changing the laws that govern federal nutrition programs for kids, including the National School Lunch Program, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Every five years, Congress has the opportunity to make changes in the law that have enormous impacts on the health and academic achievement of our nation's children, as well as the health of our local economies and environment. Registered dietitians are directly impacted by this legislation, as many serve as leaders in these programs or work with children and families who participate in the programs. In New York City, about 75% of children qualify to receive free or reduced-price lunch through the National School Lunch Program. It is critical for us to make our voices heard in this reauthorization process.

The Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act of 2016 (H.R. 5003) has been described by Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA) as "The Hunger Games Act of 2016," as the proposed legislation would represent significant cuts to child nutrition programs. It would also reverse progress in areas like science-based nutrition standards, and the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) that reduces stigma and administrative burden in child nutrition programs. Advocates and legislators on both sides of the aisle are most concerned about the bill's inclusion of block grants, also known as "opportunity grants," that would abolish the entitlement status of many child nutrition programs. As entitlement programs, child nutrition programs like the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) receive mandatory funding from Congress, and are protected from emergency budget cuts under sequestration. By

moving to a block grant model in three states, the House bill would provide states with a fixed budget to allocate as the state sees fit. States would be able to use the funds for activities that are only loosely related to child nutrition, and would have no obligation to follow science-based nutrition

standards set by the federal government. Most concerning of all, states would lose the ability to serve all children in need. In times of economic difficulty, when more children and families need help, the program budget would remain the same. Advocates from the anti-hunger, nutrition, environmental, and other movements have come together to tell the House to #StopTheBlock and oppose H.R. 5003.

On the Senate side, the Agriculture Committee passed a bipartisan, widely supported bill out of committee in January. The Improving Child Nutrition Integrity and Access Act of 2016 is now awaiting final scores from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), which will assess how much the bill will cost. After the scores are finalized, the next step is for the bill to come to a floor vote. Once both the House and Senate pass similar bills, the two will be reconciled through a conference committee process, which will produce a single bill for both chambers to vote on once more before the bill goes to the President for signature.

What can you do to help ensure strong child nutrition programs to support a healthy next generation? Write, email, or call your Members of Congress in both the House and Senate and tell them to oppose block grants in child nutrition programs. You can also join the New York City Alliance for Child Nutrition Reauthorization (NYC4CNR), a local alliance of nutritionists, anti-hunger advocates, government agencies, environmental groups, and others working for a CNR that helps New York City children. Visit www.nyc4cnr.org for more information and to get involved.



2016 Just Food Conference: Lessons Learned (cont'd from front cover)

quick and witty historical recap of the organization, sharing many insights that proved that humble beginnings and small groups can have major impacts. For example, in 2014, Just Food, with a staff of only 10, helped nearly 250,000 New Yorkers access fresh, locally grown food through the programs that it supports. Sometimes we may be discouraged by the many and large changes our food system needs, but Joan and Just Food show us that every bit of work counts.

Sean Basinski of the Street Vendor Project followed by encouraging us to advocate for the 15,000 street vendors of New York City who play an important role in providing daily food access to residents. Only 4,000 food-vending permits are available, and the waitlist to obtain one can be 15-20 years. Vendors without permits have poor working conditions and are at risk of being shut down, which further contributes to the cycle of poverty. To remove the limit on permits, Sean urged everyone to support the [Lift the Caps campaign](#).



Sean Basinski of Street Vendor Project. Photo by Juan Valentin

The last two Food Talks were equally inspiring with their messages about the community-building effects of agriculture. Khaleel Anderson of the Rockaway Youth Task Force reminded us why food justice matters: All people need to have access to healthy and affordable food options, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or where they live. Leah Penniman, of Soul Fire Farm, described how growing food can serve as a restorative justice and healing tool for those who have been repeatedly oppressed.

The Food Talks were just the tip of the iceberg. As in past years, the conference offered more than 40 workshops, panel discussions, and campaign action sessions, from which participants could select three to attend. It was not an easy decision to make, although I suspect there were



Joan Gussow. Photo by Faye Nwafor

no wrong selections. Many stories and eye-opening discussions were had in each session. Key messages from several workshops are included at the end of this article. Hopefully even those who could not attend the 2016 Just Food Conference can take something away from it.

The day ended with an empowering keynote speech from the founding women of Rise & Root Farm: Maggie Cheney, Lorrie Clevenger, Michaela Hayes, Jane Hodge, D. Rooney, and Karen Washington. Their wrap-up gave us important food for thought as we prepared to return to our daily lives, motivated to continue fighting for food justice:

- Be intentional with your actions and words. This can help us grow profound roots, making us stronger and better able to survive—much like a plant.
- In everything we do, everyone needs to be at the table. We must stop leaving out the voices of those most affected by injustices in the food system and beyond. It is not enough to say they are welcome; it requires actually extending an invitation and creating space for their voices to be heard.
- As a White person, it can feel difficult to find a place in the movement for food and racial justice. As someone who has had extensive experience with the issue, Maggie argued that we must be “White racial justice activists,” not just “White allies.” Being an ally implies you support a cause, but it does not mean you are taking actions to further the cause. Being an activist means you are putting in the work alongside those who are fighting for their rights. It means learning about the history of slavery and food production in the U.S., and having conversations about race, and, more specifically, how race relates to food. It also means that White

Continued on next page

2016 Just Food Conference: Lessons Learned (cont'd)

White people need to be okay with being uncomfortable in those discussions. It is through the conversations and uncomfortable times that we can grow and better support those who currently face racial and socioeconomic injustices.

These lessons were not just words crafted to please an audience. It was clear the co-founders of Rise & Root Farm live the words they preach. Six women, all from very different backgrounds, invited each other to the table as collaborators, taking the time to actually listen and sow intention with every seed pushed into the soil.



Rise & Root Farm Founders. Photo by Faye Nwafor

There is a lot of work that needs to be done in order to achieve true food justice, but the Just Food Conference reminds us that working together is the only way to overcome the challenges that we face.

*"Whoever controls your bread basket, controls your destiny."
– Abu Talib*

Key Messages from Select Workshops and Campaign Action Sessions

Breaking the Chains: Food as a Tool to End Mass Incarceration

People of color are disproportionately jailed and have less access to fresh, healthy food. The panelists were all involved in programs that teach agriculture to prison inmates, former inmates, and/or at-risk youth. Despite the current lack of political will, the speakers favored measures that would protect inmates' health, such as offering gardening programs for adult offenders or allowing prisoners to buy fruits and vegetables through the commissary. Agriculture as a tool helps change prison from a punitive justice approach to one of restorative justice because it is a means of providing nutritious food

to an at-risk population, it serves as therapy, and it may even offer a potential benefit to the larger community, depending on the scale of food production.

Building City Support for Small Food Businesses

A diverse panel of city and government agencies discussed their roles in supporting small business entrepreneurs, particularly in the food sector in NYC. Small food businesses face many challenges, such as lack of local government support, resources, and training, as well as unfamiliarity with policies that can affect their businesses. Entrepreneurs in communities that have racial and economic injustices face these problems more often. Some of the initiatives described to support small businesses were Food Business Pathways, a free business training program to help NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents grow small businesses, and Food Incubators, which help small food businesses transition from their home kitchens to professional facilities. It was clear that investing in small food entrepreneurs can benefit the community by empowering local economies and promoting local foods, but it is necessary to provide adequate support for education, technological adaptability, and fostering connections among stakeholders.

People Power: Successful Strategies to Avoid Burnout and Build Sustainable Projects

The workshop leaders and participants discussed the challenges of using volunteers in the food movement and coming up with solutions to help avoid burnout and maintain engagement. The most important ways to achieve these goals boiled down to: 1) making sure that volunteer job descriptions are thorough and include an estimated time commitment; 2) tapping into the skills, strengths, and preferences of the volunteer to help increase her buy-in; 3) giving volunteers the opportunity to work on projects that they are interested in (in addition to what *needs* to be done); and 4) valuing the work of volunteers, as well as communicating that value to the volunteer in a variety of ways.

The GREEN Tool: Dig Into School Garden Integration

The GREEN (Garden Resource, Education, and Environment Nexus) Tool is a theoretical framework, created by Teachers College doctoral graduate Kate Gardner, that highlights four domains that schools can work on to achieve a well-integrated school garden: 1) resource and support—form a solid organizational structure; 2) physical garden—maintain a planning schedule and shared calendar for success; 3) student experience—analyze whether the garden is best included within the curriculum or as an after-school program; and 4) school community—hold social events in the garden to

Continued on next page

2016 Just Food Conference: Lessons Learned (cont'd)

help draw in both parents and students. Achieving the basic components within each domain leads to an operational school garden, but expanding past the basics allows the garden to become well integrated with the school and community.

Just Food, Just Cities: Building a Local Food Economy

The panelists discussed various approaches to achieving more equitable local economies using food as a lever and neighborhoods as the units of change. Affording good food requires two strategies: 1) people need more livable incomes; and 2) good, healthy food needs to be more affordable. The cornerstones of community trust and sustainability come from considering the source of capital for new food businesses, as well as ensuring that initiatives are "for the community and by the community." Any outsiders coming in to open a food business should seek to collaborate with community members to ensure that the venture benefits and is accessible to existing community members.

From Field to Fork: Food & Farmworkers Organizing for Justice

This session delved into the importance of supporting workers all along the food chain. Panelists included farmworkers and representatives of restaurant, food service, and food manufacturing worker organizations. The speakers described the injustices workers face on a daily basis and the ways that they are working to make worker voices heard. There are numerous approaches to support food chain workers. Two specific ways mentioned in this session include 1) taking part in the [#WhoMakesAmysBread campaign](#) to help Amy's Bread workers achieve affordable health care, fair pay, and respectful treatment; and 2) joining the [March for Farmerworker Justice](#) on May 21st as it crosses the Brooklyn Bridge and heads to Union Square. This was just one leg of a two-week, 200-mile march from Long Island to Albany to fight for basic rights of farmer workers, such as collective organization, overtime pay, and days off. Check out the [Food Chain Workers Alliance](#) for more information about supporting food chain workers.

Labeling GMO Foods in New York

At the time of the conference, the main concern of this campaign action session was getting individuals to reach out to state legislators to ask them to vote "no" against the DARK Act, which would have prohibited all bills related to GMO labeling in the U.S. The rest of the session described state-level efforts underway to get the NY GMO Food Labeling Bill passed, and organizers described the need for more grassroots support. Find more information at <http://www.gmofreeny.net>.

Plate of the Union

Plate of the Union is a joint-effort campaign that aims to mobilize multiple, intersecting stakeholders—farmers, scientists, community activists, chefs, and ordinary citizens—to amplify the public demand to fix our broken food system. (See the YouTube video "[Our Broken Food System \(And How to Fix It\)](#)" by the Union of Concerned Scientists.) The short-term objective is to get the 2016 presidential candidates to acknowledge the imbalance in our food system and to commit to reforming it. The ultimate goal is for the next president to take meaningful steps to ensure that our food is healthy and affordable, fair to our workers, and protective of our farmland. Get involved at plateoftheunion.com.

Fresh Healthy Food for All Students: Challenges, Opportunities, and What We Can Do to Make It Happen

For an in-depth look into this workshop, please see Ian Ang's article on page 13.

To view videos of some of the speeches from the Just Food Conference see: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKwJKP7vDDOK5HmijPrE5jS9SQciqvWnf>



Food Chain Workers Alliance session. Photo by Enid Farber

Thank you to the many contributors to this article. Your input was invaluable and greatly appreciated.

WHY I'M A VEGAN

By Gena Hamsbarw

I have been vegan for nearly a decade. When people learn this, they're quick to ask me why. Is it for my health? The planet? Animal welfare? I'm vegan for all of those reasons, though even in the aggregate they fail to capture the animating force behind my lifestyle.

The roots of my veganism date back to watching *Bambi* as an eight-year-old, being horrified at Bambi's mother's demise at the hands of hunters, and staring down at my dinner plate that same evening: a hunk of steak, swimming in a bloody red sea of *jus*. I stopped eating red meat on the spot. While I'd hesitate to say that I was consciously identifying with animal rights, I was drawing a connection—as children sometimes can, before they become desensitized to animal consumption through habit—between culinary consumption of animal flesh and the violence that makes it possible.

I had a somewhat uneasy relationship with animal flesh after that; I dutifully ate chicken and fish to appease my mother's concerns about my getting adequate protein, and because, like many young women, I deemed them “lean”—and therefore virtuous—foods.

In my early twenties, a gastroenterologist suggested that I eliminate dairy as an experiment, to see whether it might help allay some digestive complaints. A month later, my symptoms had improved dramatically, and I was struck by how little I missed dairy. I'd read Francis Moore Lappe's *Diet for a Small Planet* and John Robbins' *Diet for a New America*, so I knew what veganism was and that it afforded some health and environmental benefits. I figured my current diet

(dairy free by necessity, meat, poultry, and egg free by preference) was close enough to veganism for me to give it an honest try.

My transition to veganism was strikingly painless; on the contrary, it was curious, exciting, and enjoyable. This is not every new vegan's experience, but it was mine, perhaps because I had little attachment to animal flesh, perhaps because I was willing to try new things. Veganism actually served to expand, rather than diminish, the scope of my diet, because it introduced me to new dishes, ingredients, and spices.

A year or two after “going vegan,” I spent a weekend volunteering at a farm animal sanctuary. Having grown up in New York City, I'd spent little time around farm animals, and the experience of interacting with rescued cows, pigs, chickens, and goats—all escapees from upstate farms and live kill markets—was profoundly moving. I recommitted to the empathetic perspective that made me stop eating animal flesh as a child, and I've been committed ever since. Today, “vegan” is not only a description of my diet, but also a means of summing up my lifestyle. I don't consume animals or their excretions, and I also abstain from purchasing clothing or personal care products that come at the expense of animal suffering.

I don't believe that veganism is a miracle diet, nor would I make the claim that it is the healthiest diet (as my nutrition studies continue to teach me, there are many ways to eat healthfully). I believe, though, that the diet can help to reduce the likelihood of numerous chronic

diseases, and this is powerful evidence when taken in concert with the environmental benefits of reducing meat and dairy consumption.

But what compels me to remain vegan can't be measured in a carbon footprint; it's deeper and more profound than that, which may be why it's so difficult for me to even bring up in my classes here at TC. The word that comes to mind is *ahimsa*—the Sanskrit term that can be translated as “compassion” or “non-harming.” None of us can move through life without harming, of course, but for me, it's the effort to cause as little suffering and harm as possible that matters. When I can cause less harm, rather than more, I will.

For me, there is no necessity to consume animal flesh or excretions. A B-12 supplement and a well-planned diet ensure that I thrive as a vegan. Culinary creativity and passion allow me to satisfy my love of food with plant-based dishes. And—while I believe firmly that veganism can be a highly accessible, economical way to live—I acknowledge that many degrees of privilege give me the freedom to make determinations about how I'd like to eat in the first place.

Because there is no need for me to participate in the captivity, suffering, or death of my animal neighbors, and because I have an opportunity to tread a little more lightly on Mother Earth, I do. To say that this does not feel like a sacrifice would be an understatement; instead, it feels like a gift.

See the recipe for my vegan Spring Soba Noodle Salad on page 16.

I know only a small handful of people who haven't used food as a way to reward themselves. In many cases, using food as a reward doesn't pose a problem at all! Who doesn't enjoy a delicious meal after a particularly stressful week or a treat after a hard workout? The reality is, though, that using food as a reward becomes a problem when it interferes with your weight loss goals or makes it difficult to maintain a healthy weight in general. But we are a reward-driven species, and we need to engage in behaviors that are in line with our inherent tendencies if we want to experience the most lasting change. This means, essentially, that we need to find ways to reward ourselves for good behavior without eating extra calories, sugar, or unhealthy fats. Here are the things I've been doing that have helped me tremendously in my journey to good health:

- **Buy new workout gear.** When I've completed projects early, achieved gains in the gym, or been successful with my meal plan, I get a huge thrill out of buying something cute to work out in. Even a new pair of exercise shoes or something as simple as a cute headband to stop the sweat from dripping into my eyes makes me happy!
- **Pamper yourself.** Get a massage, go for a mani-pedi, get a new haircut, or indulge in a hot bath at home—anything to make you feel like you're taking care of yourself. Something as simple as spending a few extra dollars on a luxury body lotion or a more expensive face cream can make you feel like a million bucks.
- **Build a sanctuary.** Every time you hit a goal, get a good grade, or get feedback on a project at work and feel like you need to reward yourself, buy something to make your living space a little more awesome. Whether it's a fun pillow, new bed sheets, or something decorative, invest in something that you feel indulgent buying.
- **Take yourself to a movie in the middle of the day or on a weeknight.** I love seeing movies in the middle of the day or late on a weeknight on my own. It's a secret pleasure of mine, and I only do it when I feel like I deserve it. Just be sure to not see a movie you've already promised your friends you'll see with them!
- **Buy yourself flowers at the farmers' market.** This is hands down one of my favorite rewards! The day I finally developed the endurance to run 6.2 miles without stopping, I bought myself a beautiful bouquet from the local farmers' market.
- **Save up for something you want.** Every time you want to spend money on a food reward, put that money in a special jar and consider it "spent." Put it toward something you really want, but can't quite afford right now. Examples are sessions with a personal trainer, a small vacation, a facial, a cooking class, or the beginnings of a new wardrobe.
- **Buy a new book or magazine (or check one out at the library) and take an afternoon off to read it!** This is a second favorite. I love getting a (usually mindless) book or magazine and snuggling in and reading it, phone off, tea brewing.
- **Buy a bauble you wouldn't ordinarily buy.** So many times, I want to buy something and opt not to in order to save money. But if I really feel like treating myself for doing something well, I let myself splurge.
- **Sleep in!** This is one of my top rewards. If I've woken up early every single day for weeks, even on the weekends, to get work done, I'll reward myself with a weekend of sleeping in, and it's quite the beautiful experience.
- **Make yourself a book of "coupons."** Create a little list of things you want to buy when you go grocery shopping but usually don't (like gourmet marmalade, specialty cheese, or a pricey ice cream). Every time you feel the need for a food reward, open your little book, pick something, and take it with you as a promise to indulge yourself on your next shopping trip!
- **Take a day off. But really take it off.** Only allow yourself to do things that you *truly* want to do—and say no to everything else.
- **Make time for a long phone chat with a distant loved one.** Living in the city and being on the run all the time makes it easy to stay in touch with friends and loved ones with very brief texts and quick chats. But reward yourself with a scheduled phone date with someone you love. Or, better yet, have a "coffee date" by video chatting while drinking a hot beverage!

MySmileBuddy: An App to Help Improve Children's Dental Hygiene

By Jen Cadenhead

Dental caries, the formal name for dental decay, cause more than just inconvenience. Some children have to undergo extensive operations using anesthesia in which metal plates are installed to cope with extensive rot. It is painful, expensive, and causes parents time away from work and children to miss school. Many think that because baby teeth will fall out they don't really matter anyway. The problem is that dental caries are often a sign of a potentially debilitating infection, and tooth problems that start early can lead to a lifetime of problems—from having a poor diet, impaired development, and poorer school achievement to poorer life achievement.

Although oral hygiene plays a large role, an equally important role is dietary behavior. TC Program in Nutrition alum Christie Custodio-Lumsen, PhD, MS, RD, CDN, has been working on understanding how to modify those behaviors using the skills she honed through her courses at TC. One of the current pilot studies that she is conducting along with our own Drs. Wolf and Koch, and sponsored by the American Dental Association, involves reaching out to perinatal moms with young children at risk of caries. Dr. Custodio-Lumsen trains bilingual counselors to interview new moms with older children at the Columbia University Head Start center. They use a combination of an iPad-based app, MySmileBuddy, along with a series of 50 targeted text messages over six weeks to support families. MySmileBuddy helps identify which diet and oral-health-related behaviors to focus on, among six targeted behaviors, to most impact dental health.

"MySmileBuddy was developed as a cross-disciplinary collaboration between the Columbia Dental School, the TC nutrition department, the pediatrics department, the nursing school, and the school of social work, among others," Dr. Custodio-Lumsen said. Dr. Wolf, Dr. Isobel Contento, and

Pam Koch all worked on it. Each component, including nutrition, is grounded in behavior theory.

"It's designed to be used and administered by a minimally trained health worker. The tool itself is rooted in science and aligned with recommendations to enable behavior change," said Dr. Custodio-Lumsen, whose dissertation project in 2011 was on validating the use of MySmileBuddy.

However, the app itself does not contain text messages. MySmileBuddy was designed to be used in meetings with families to identify areas in which families are doing well, along with concern areas. Dr. Custodio-Lumsen said, "The idea of texts came out of the work to make MySmileBuddy more robust."

This pilot study is testing whether it is feasible to continue following up without physically being with the patient. "We looked at other literature. There is a growing body of work with asthma [showing] that text messaging can be useful in health care," Dr. Custodio-Lumsen said. They send text messages like "You can help your child have a great smile by making better choices. Make sure you only give formula, milk, water or breast milk in bottles" and "Make a game out of brushing teeth. See who can make the most bubbles with brushing teeth for two minutes." Sending text messages through a third-party provider is proving to be an inexpensive method of supporting families in making changes that help them develop better oral hygiene and better nutrition, and prevent childhood caries. Formal analysis will be undertaken at the end of the study. "So far the feedback has been positive. Families really seem to like it," Dr. Custodio-Lumsen said.

Jen Cadenhead is earning a master's degree in Nutrition and Public Health. She is also a research assistant with the MySmileBuddy program and has seen firsthand the enthusiastic response of moms for the app and text messaging.



ANNUAL NUTRITION PROGRAM ALUMNAE PANEL

By Isabelle Carren-Le Sauter

Students in the Program in Nutrition at Teachers College have been drawn to the field of nutrition through a multitude of experiences, have varied interests, and are forging paths to a new life, a new career. Many of us haven't quite figured out what our paths will be. In January, we were given the opportunity to meet a group of amazing women who have all been in the exact spot we are in now.

This year's alumnae panel, put together by the Teachers College Health Nuts Events Committee and the Program in Nutrition faculty, featured six graduates of the TC master's program and dietetic internship:

- **Alyssa Cohen**, MS, RD (Nutrition Education), is a clinical dietitian working for Healthcare Services Group at Allaire Rehab and Nursing.
- **Margaret Cromwell**, MS, RDN (Nutrition Education), is a Clinical Coordinator-Ketogenic Dietitian in the Child Neurology Department at Columbia University Medical Center.
- **Debora Kupersmid-Stafford**, MS, RD, CDN (Nutrition and Exercise Physiology), does nutrition counseling at a community health center in the South Bronx and is an adjunct lecturer at Queens College.
- **Stephanie Lang**, MS, RD (Nutrition Education), is a clinical dietitian at Brookdale Hospital and Medical Center.
- **Therese Nadler**, MS, RD, CDN (Nutrition and Public Health), works in corporate wellness and provides nutrition counseling.
- **Rosanna Campitiello Robbins**, MS, MEd, RD (Community Nutrition), is the Associate Director

of Retail Partnerships at City Harvest.

After learning more about their positions and career paths since graduating from TC, the panelists allowed us to pick their brains for advice about how to be successful after graduation. Here are some insights we heard that evening:

During the master's:

- Take advantage of the stimulating environment you're in now. Go to conferences, school events, and social outings. The more you do, the more you realize what you want to do. Getting out there, volunteering, networking—it'll all help establish your career.
- Learn from working in teams. Group projects can seem frustrating, but get used to being in both a leading and a supporting role, because you'll need to be able to do both in the real world.

DI and licensing exam:

- Don't be afraid to do something that is out of the norm. One panelist reached out to Debbie Rosenbaum, the TC DI director, about interning with a guest lecturer who wasn't taking interns. Through that conversation, she was able to secure the lecturer as a preceptor for her community rotation, which then turned into an elective rotation, and finally a job offer.
- Facilitate your own networking. Reach out to someone involved with the organization that you are interested in and use it for your elective. Think about what you really want to learn about during your DI. You can drop in, learn everything you want about something, then move on after the

rotation ends, no strings attached.

- Don't take too much time after the internship before you sit for the exam. Things are fresh in your head right after you finish the internship.

Life after graduation:

- The job market can be stressful. If you are getting "we're not hiring now" responses, just keep in mind that it may not be a brush off; just because you're ready to start a new job, it doesn't mean they are ready for you. Tip: There is a lot of hiring going on in August.
- Managing people is not something you really learn in school. Over time, you figure out what people respond to. Often different management styles are required for different people, but being professional with people you manage as well as people who manage you is key.
- In your career, you'll come across challenging cases, but you can always go back to what you learned at TC. It's still in there! And if you really don't remember something, you can look it up. It is impossible to always know everything.
- Everyone starts in a place where they have no idea what they're doing. You're not going to pass the exam and feel like suddenly you get everything. You won't learn everything in the internship. You'll gain the ability to learn on the fly and adapt. That is what the internship gives you.
- Stay in touch with faculty, preceptors, and peers. It is amazing how interconnected everything is, and having many close contacts in a variety of areas of your field allows for help and guidance in all aspects of your career.

Just Food Conference 2016: NYC School Food

By Ian Ang

At the 2016 Just Food Conference, the workshop “Fresh Healthy Food for All Students: Challenges, Opportunities, and What We Can Do to Make It Happen” provided insights into the ongoing efforts to help provide healthier food options to students in New York City. The session featured speakers Barbara Turk, the Mayor’s Director of Food Policy, and Belinda DiGiambattista, Rhys Powell, and Nancy Easton, the founders of Butter Beans, Red Rabbit, and Wellness in the Schools, respectively, and was moderated by Anna Hammond, the Executive Director from the Sylvia Center.

Challenges

School meals in the New York City school district are under the direct jurisdiction of the New York City Department of Education Office of School Food (NYCDOE School Food). This is unlike other school districts, in which various governing bodies, such as local departments of agriculture and/or nutrition services, are involved. Second only to the US military, NYCDOE School Food is the largest provider of food in the US, feeding over 860,000 children two to three meals a day. With this size comes tremendous pressure to ensure secure procurement of food.

NYCDOE School Food is also a very large organization, with many layers of bureaucracy, which adds to the difficulties in making changes quickly.

New York City currently has various non-profit organizations that have a mission of pushing for more scratch-cooked school meals, such as Wellness in the Schools. To make the switch from highly processed foods to fresh ingredients, these organizations have to work within the constraints of the federal school lunch reimbursement limit of only \$1.25 per meal, of which \$0.22 is allocated for milk. For-profit businesses that cater scratch-cooked meals, such as Butter Beans and Red Rabbit, work with a slightly bigger budget of \$4 and \$7 per meal (employment cost included) for charter and private schools, respectively.

The passing of the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) brought about new federal nutrition standards. However, such changes in nutrition guidelines on a federal, state, and/or city level can be burdensome for organizations that are pushing for more scratch-cooked school meals. Menus have to be redesigned to meet the new standards, and/or tedious analyses have to be conducted for their meals, particularly because fresh whole foods do not come with a nutrition label.

For those interested in changing school meals, here are some start-up lessons shared by the panel:

- 1) Make foods that children will eat.
- 2) Iron out the securing of ingredients and the distribution of meals not prepared onsite.
- 3) Be OK with kids wasting food, especially initially, as the aim is really to give kids exposure to healthier food options.
- 4) Tackle the stigma of “nutrition,” which many members of the public brush off, particularly as to whether nutrition matters for children and whether it will impact test scores.
- 5) Provide nutrition education that supports all aspects of school lunches.
- 6) Believe that we can make positive change happen.
- 7) Utilize the power of partnerships, for example, with the NYCDOE School Food that governs school meals in NYC.

Opportunities

The positive side of large sweeping policy changes is that real change can happen. With HHFKA, the new federal nutrition standards forced food supply companies to meet the demand for healthier food items, like whole wheat bread and pasta. With New York City’s mandated elimination of Styrofoam trays, the newfound demand for compostable trays helped drive prices down to become more competitive.

Coordinated efforts on the ground also push for large-scale changes, such as how School Food FOCUS and The Pew Charitable Trusts were able to get Tyson Foods to follow the USDA’s Certified Responsible Antibiotic Use (CRAU) standard for the chicken that they supply for school meals. These policies and coordinated demands help to shift power back to purchasers, away from food producers and supply companies that were formerly the ones dictating how children ate. Organizations working on improving school meals now have more merchant options, have more possibilities to make change happen, and are less alone in their efforts.

What You Can Do

All the progress on the ground can be lost, however, if there is no continued government support. The Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) bill is thus crucial for working towards securing more money to increase children’s year-round access to good food. CNR can also help increase funding for nutrition education, which is an integral component of helping children eat better. Without proper nutrition education, healthy changes to the foods served may go to waste if children do not have a chance to first be exposed to new healthier foods, to learn about their benefits, and to progressively become accepting of these foods. As members of the nutrition field, we also need to drive the message that children who eat better have a better chance to learn and do better in school, and push for parents, schools, and the government to make child nutrition a priority.

Major Revisions to the Nutrition Facts Label

By Julie O'Shea

On May 20, the FDA announced the first major revisions to the Nutrition Facts label since 1993. The updated label reflects the most recent research and is intended to make labels easier to read and understand so that consumers can make more informed food choices. The changes relate to the design, the serving size, and the listing of required nutrients.

Updated design

- The new design highlights the number of calories and the serving size by increasing the type size and using bold font to make this information easier to see at a glance. The type size is also increased for the number of servings per container.
- Two columns will be required on labels of certain food packages that have multiple servings but that might be eaten in one sitting (for example, a pint of ice cream). This allows consumers to easily see how many calories and nutrients they will consume should they eat or drink the entire package at once.

New serving size requirements

- There is a law, the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act, that states that serving sizes must reflect what people actually eat, not what they should eat. Typical portion sizes have increased over the past 20 years. The new requirements are intended to reflect what people typically eat in one sitting, and to reduce or eliminate the need to do calculations to determine how many calories and nutrients people are actually consuming. It is important to note, however, that a

NEW LABEL / WHAT'S DIFFERENT

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories 230	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 295mg	6%

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

serving size does not necessarily equal the recommended portion size.

- For food and beverage packages that are between one and two servings, but that are typically consumed in one sitting (for example, a 20-ounce soda), the calories and nutrients must be labeled as one serving.

Updates to the required nutrients listed

- Grams and percent daily value (%DV) of added sugars must now be listed. This is intended to help people meet the new recommendation of the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans to consume no more than 10 percent of daily calories from added sugars.
- There are updated percent daily values for certain nutrients (such as sodium, dietary fiber, and vitamin D) based on the Institute of Medicine recommendations and the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- In addition to the percent daily values, the actual amounts of

vitamin D and potassium, which some people are deficient in but that are necessary for bone and heart health, respectively, are to be listed. The percent daily values will still be required for calcium and iron, but will no longer be required for vitamins A and C. Gram amounts of other vitamins and minerals may be included voluntarily.

- The number of calories from fat is no longer required, though grams of total fat, saturated fat, and *trans* fat will still be required because research shows that the amount of fat is not as important as the type of fat.

Additionally, the footnote will more clearly explain what %DV means. It will be required to say: “*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.”

These new requirements do not apply to certain meat, poultry, and processed egg products, which are regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Minor changes will also be made to the Supplement Facts label on dietary supplements to make it consistent with the Nutrition Facts label.

The new label will be required by July 26, 2018, for food manufacturers with more than \$10 million in annual food sales. Food manufacturers with less than \$10 million in food sales have an extra year to comply with the new requirements.

SLOW DOWN AND “SAVOR THE FLAVOR OF EATING RIGHT”

By Sandeep Dhillon

This past March, the theme of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ National Nutrition Month was “Savor the Flavor of Eating Right.” In response to the Academy’s question to RDNs across the nation, “What’s the best way to help consumers ‘Savor the Flavor of Eating Right?’”, Annelies Newman, RDN, CD offered the following thoughts on how to make this year’s theme relevant:

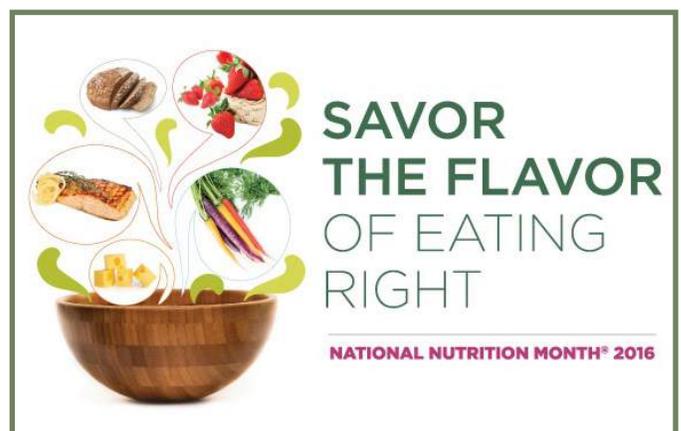
Imagine we are going to a beautiful National Park. But you are blindfolded and have earplugs... how much would you enjoy the drive? Not much? Well, now start engaging your senses. Stop the car, walk around, smell the air, feel the breeze, see the beauty. Savor and enjoy. The same is true of healthy eating. Choose your favorite recipes for fruits, veggies or a healthy meal. Now sit down, relax, breathe, turn off distractions and engage as many senses into the experience as you can. Take in the colors, textures, flavors and aroma. Slow down, use your senses and enjoy!

Her words are inspiring, and they motivated me to find ways in my own life that I could slow down and savor the process of eating. Read on and see which tips you think you can implement to make your eating experience more sensational!

- **Chew your food thoroughly.** This will not only help you distinguish new tastes, aromas, and consistencies, it will also help you digest your food better.
- **Eat without distractions.** Don’t watch TV, use your smartphone, or read while you eat, even if you’re alone. If you need background noise, try putting on music.
- **Eat regularly.** Letting yourself get too hungry will make you more likely to scarf down whatever food is in front of you, regardless of what it actually tastes like.

Avoid this situation by scheduling meals within four hours of each other. This way, you’ll be more likely to focus on your food and savor the flavors.

- **Sit down.** Try not to eat on the go, stand at the counter, or sit on your couch—this tends to make us eat too quickly. Sit down at the table and focus on the meal in front of you (this will also help you keep track of how much you have eaten). You can even set the table nicely, even if you’re dining solo.
- **Put your utensil down between each bite.** This will help you focus on the flavor of the food while chewing your food before taking another bite, giving your brain more time to signal that your body is full.
- **Eat on a smaller plate.** The bigger your plate, the more likely you are to eat everything on it. Next time you sit down for a meal, serve yourself on a smaller plate. You’ll get the satisfaction of finishing your food, but you’ll probably be eating less than you usually do.
- **Look at your food.** Spend at least a minute or two observing your plate before you take your first bite. The process of savoring our food includes using our eyes to take in how our meal looks.



RECIPE CORNER: SPRING FARE

Spring Soba Noodle Salad

Ingredients

1 cup cooked lima beans or shelled, steamed edamame
1½ cups asparagus, chopped into 1½-inch pieces
1½ cups chopped broccoli florets
6 Tbsp rice vinegar (not seasoned)
1 Tbsp maple syrup or agave nectar
1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 clove finely minced garlic
1 tsp crushed fresh ginger
1½ Tbsp tamari or soy sauce
1 Tbsp fresh lime juice
10 ounces buckwheat soba noodles
1 cup shredded carrot
2 scallions, sliced

Directions

Fit a pot of boiling water with a vegetable steamer. Steam the asparagus and broccoli till slightly tender and bright green (about 2 minutes). Quickly rinse under cool water to preserve color and crunch, and set aside.

Recipe by Gena Hamshaw. See Gena's story about becoming a vegan on page 9.

Whisk the vinegar, syrup, sesame and olive oils, garlic, ginger, tamari, and lime juice together to make the dressing. Set aside.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Cook soba noodles according to package instructions. When the noodles are ready, drain them and transfer them to a large bowl.

Mix the lima beans or edamame, steamed vegetables, raw carrots, and scallions with the noodles. Dress the noodles generously with the dressing (you may have a little dressing left over). Allow them to sit for 30 minutes before serving. You can add a few more tablespoons of dressing before you serve. *Serves 6.*

Photo by James Ransom



Pesto-Topped Salmon and Carrots

Ingredients

1 bundle carrots (6-8 carrots) with leaves
1 Tbsp canola oil
1 pound salmon
¼ cup olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
3 Tbsp pine nuts
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Thoroughly wash the carrots and their leaves and then separate the leaves from the carrots. Chop the carrots into 1-inch rounds. Mix the carrot rounds with

1 Tbsp of canola oil and then spread the carrots out on a baking sheet. Bake the carrots in the oven for 30-35 minutes. Next, season the salmon to your liking with salt and pepper and place it in a greased baking dish. Bake the salmon in the oven for 20-25 minutes. Next, remove and discard the stems from the carrot leaves. In a food processor, combine 2 cups of the carrot leaves with the olive oil, garlic, pine nuts, and Parmesan cheese. Pulse the ingredients until a paste is formed. If desired, season to taste with salt and pepper. Once the salmon and carrots are done cooking, top them with the pesto and enjoy!

Recipe by Lela Swartz. See Lela's article about root-to-stalk cooking on page 4.

