

# THE GRAPEVINE

## Newsletter

Spring | 2024

Issue 36



## Teachers College Program in Nutrition

Find out what's *fresh off the vine*

Seared Asparagus & Lemons:  
prepared by 2nd-year students  
Anneka Miller and Tiger Liu during  
the Health & Wellness Fair

# LETTER FROM THE *Editors*



Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Staff,

Welcome to the Grapevine's Spring Issue! As 2024 unfolds, Program in Nutrition students have been busier than ever. Second-year students interned at a variety of locations. Wency Xiang, Tiger Liu, & Ritu Day join our co-editor Alison Garbarini to reflect on their unique experiences. In addition, our co-editors report on the success of the 2024 Health & Wellness Fair.

First-year students have also been engaged in a variety of endeavors. Sally Liu discusses her experience volunteering with the West Side Campaign against Hunger, while Tyra Vanriel shares her work teaching NYC school students as a Zankel Fellow.

Through our study of food emerges a conduit for sharing. This is exemplified through An Vo's discussion of important cultural traditions and foods around Lunar New Year. Likewise, we hope you are inspired by Sarde Gumalo's writings of reclaiming cultural foods, an incredibly important area to note in practicing inclusive dietetics.

From all of us at the Grapevine, we wish you a wonderful season of growth and renewal!



*Jay Gendron*  
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



*Alison Garbarini*  
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# 2024 HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR

By Alison Garbarini & Jay Gendron

This semester, all second-year students had the opportunity to present at the Health and Wellness Fair. Projects aligned with the theme of the Academy's National Nutrition Month 2024: "Beyond the Table." Students explored a variety of the farm-to-fork aspects of nutrition through their projects. Topics covered included: "No More Rotten Tomatoes," "The Kitchen Edit," "HERB-an Health," "Plant-Based Protein: *Bean-Voyage Inflammation*," "EcoCuisine," "*Seasoning your Season*," and many more!

The health and wellness fair was a wonderful opportunity for first-year students, second-year students, and professors to gather and enjoy discussions about nutrition! The fair also had a large turn-out from the TC community, which demonstrated the high amount of public interest in food and nutrition. Students held recipe demos, offered food samples, created tea from food scraps, and supplied seeds and vegetable plants. They hoped to inspire the community to increase their consumption of whole foods and promote sustainable eating patterns. Overall, second-year students enjoyed the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills gained through their coursework to educate and engage with the TC community.



**Amanda Godman, Jay Gendron, Greg Geisel, & Alison Garbarini present posters at the fair**  
(Photo courtesy of Jennifer Hildner)



# RECLAIMING CULTURAL FOODS- A DAY IN THE LIFE

By Sarde Gumalo

Growing up as a second-generation Filipina came with challenges many immigrant families can relate to especially when it comes to food. As a kid, racial exclusion was outright whether it was friends questioning “What’s that smell?” as they entered my home or how they stared horrified at the meals on our dinner table. By contrast, as an adult and a nutrition student specifically, racism operated invisibly. During my undergraduate studies, I unknowingly viewed the nutrition of food through a White lens and thought healthy food only included salads, kale, avocados, and more. I judged Filipino cuisine for being high in sodium, high in fat, ultra-processed, and meat centric. It wasn’t until graduate school that I began to realize something felt off about my views on nutrition.

Through my studies at TC, the veil of whiteness around nutrition began to be lifted and I started to question how and why I excluded my cultural foods from my diet for many years in the pursuit of health. I began to explore the complex history of Filipino cuisine with its history of colonization by Spain, Japan, and the United States. I learned that the introduction of processed foods and meat-centric meals mainly came from the United States when American soldiers couldn’t stomach native Philippine foods and fruits during occupation. Canned and processed foods were then sought after by the Filipino people as a sign of status associated with the Americans.



**Ginisang Ampalaya (Sauteed Bitter Melon with Tomato and Egg)**

I felt the sad irony of judging the foods of my culture as unhealthy, when in reality, the state of the Philippine food supply had been completely transformed by American influence. Prior to American and Spanish occupation, Filipinos relied on native fruits and vegetables, fish, and small amounts of meat often only reserved for special occasions.

I’ve embarked on a journey of reclaiming my cultural foods to honor the heritage I had lost for many years and to highlight nutritious meals beyond our celebratory dishes like pancit, chicken adobo, lumpia, and lechon that many people already know and love.



As a self-proclaimed foodie, I'm replacing trying out the latest trending recipe on Instagram, TikTok, or the New York Times and leaning into asking my mother how to make the meals I remember as a child or flipping through my grandmother's weathered cookbook for inspiration. She was a home economics teacher and an elaborate cook. I hope to preserve and honor her expertise by learning her recipes and passing them down for generations to come. I'm also advocating for foods that are not necessarily "aesthetic" to widen the visual narrative of food that is considered nutritious. I welcome the healthy brown, beige, and white foods which are often overshadowed by the rainbow-colored salads and veggie bowls of the wellness world.

I've shared with you a day of plant-forward, nutrient-dense Filipino meals including *Ginisang Ampalaya (Sauteed Bitter Melon with Tomato and Egg)* for breakfast. Bitter melon is divisive for its bitter taste, but has been shown to lower blood pressure and blood sugar levels, therefore it's long been used for treatment of diabetes and heart diseases. The bitter melon makes a reprise during lunch in the Pinakbet which is a vegetable stew that also features kabocha squash, eggplant, and Chinese long beans. Finally, dinner is welcomed with a warm, comforting soup called Monggo made with mung beans, spinach, garlic, and tomatoes.

It can be enjoyed with any additional protein but I like it best with fish or shrimp. As a future RD, I hope to help others feel like they can include their cultural foods at the table and pursue their health goals. Take a seat, there's plenty of room.



**Pinakbet (Veggie Stew with Shrimp Paste)**



**Monggo (Mung Bean Soup with Spinach, Tomatoes, and Garlic)**

# Promoting Healthy Food Access: The West Side Campaign Against Hunger



By Sally Liu

This February, I was able to volunteer at the West Side Campaign Against Hunger (WSCAH) through my Community Nutrition Education Practicum course. This organization is dedicated to providing New Yorkers with access to healthy food as well as supportive services.<sup>1</sup> Volunteering at WSCAH's 86th street distribution site was a very rewarding experience for me.

During my time volunteering, I worked with the food distribution team to provide packages of fresh produce to community members. My station was one of four that handed out bags of fruits, vegetables, grains, and meat or fish. The long line of people waiting for food kept me very busy. I was constantly giving out food and setting up another pile of fresh produce—so time went by really fast. Community members were very friendly and appreciative of the services provided. They said “Thank you so much” as they left, and I felt very welcomed during my time volunteering at the site.

While I was there, I learned that many volunteers had been with WSCAH for more than one year, and that they enjoyed their time connecting with the community members. Another thing I noticed was that many community members did not recognize the fruits/vegetables that were provided at the station, so they decided not to take them. This reminded me of what I learned in my first semester course, Food, Nutrition & Behavior. Our food choices are influenced by our past experiences with food, our culture, and many other factors.

I feel that educational activities that get people excited about the fruits and vegetables being offered along with providing simple, culturally relevant recipes may increase how many people take the produce.



Bags of grains & nut butter also contained information about benefits access.



In addition, a lot of food was given out at once, so people had to carry multiple big bags or a cart when they left. When some people's bags were too heavy for them to carry, they decided not to take the fruits like watermelon or honeydew melons.

After volunteering at the West Side Campaign Against Hunger, I do feel very hopeful that there are a lot of people supporting non-profit organizations. Volunteers are trying to minimize the gap within the nutrition field and bring awareness of nutritional problems. This was an interesting experience for me, which allowed me to think about what we learned in the courses and to reconsider effective strategies for improving food accessibility.

1. West Side Campaign Against Hunger. Mission & History. West Side Campaign Against Hunger. Published 2023. Accessed April 7, 2024. <https://www.wscah.org/mission-and-history/>



Piles of produce for community members



Sally, Sarde, & Alison distributing food



## Zankel Fellowship: Nutrition Education in Action

**By Tyra Vanriel**

As a Zankel Fellow, I work with the Raising Educational Achievement Coalition of Harlem (REACH) program for the 2023-2024 academic year. This year the REACH program has nine Zankel fellows including myself, and the program topics we lead include art, dance, photography, yoga, gardening, college prep, and nutrition.



## Zankel Fellowship: Nutrition Education in Action (Cont.)

Many of the programs are classroom push-ins, which means I go in the classroom during a scheduled time when the students will have their lesson with me. Some Zankel fellows coordinate lunch and afterschool programs at our partner elementary, middle, and high schools. Each week, I spend five hours in person with the students at two elementary schools and five to six hours preparing lessons and projects. Before attending TC, I worked as a substitute teacher for one year with middle school and high school students, so I knew working with elementary school students during the fellowship would be a learning experience.

### ***P.S 36 Margaret Douglas (Across from TC):***

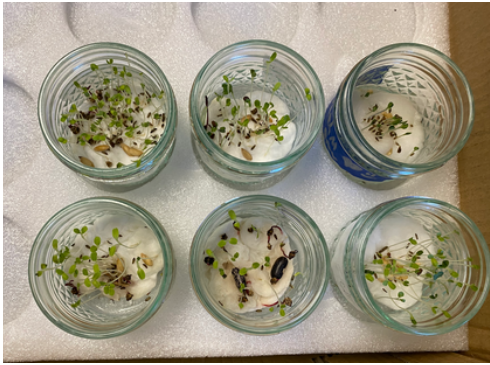
I lead the REACH nutrition program during classroom push-ins to teach two 4th grade classes about introductory nutrition at P.S 36 Margaret Douglas elementary school. During the Fall semester I utilized the GreenBeetz curriculum and I covered lessons on food literacy, the natural food cycle, and the history of food. I also incorporated a few of my own lessons, one of which included a blind taste test of Chum fruit bites to determine if the students would identify the 3 fruit ingredients. I wanted my students to learn more taste and sensory vocabulary to describe food, so I provided them with a vocabulary list to use during the blind taste test.

The fellowship was particularly challenging for me during the Fall semester because I wanted to find

ways to keep all of the students engaged throughout my lesson and discover strategies to manage classroom behavior. I was grateful to have the support of both Dr. Pam Koch and Dr. Randi Wolf throughout the Fall semester to help me with these challenges and develop strategies for a more successful experience. After some trial and error I was able to learn that group activities weren't the best option for the students I worked with, instead they perform better individually or in pairs. I also realized that the powerpoint, lecture style lessons from GreenBeetz were not keeping the attention of this age group either and they appreciated hands-on learning instead.

Throughout the Spring semester I have been using the strategies I learned last semester to make improvements in how I deliver lessons to my students. I gave my students an end of semester survey to get their feedback on what they liked and disliked about the nutrition program with me and what they were interested in learning. Based on the majority of the feedback I received, the students wanted the lessons to be "more fun." This semester I have focused my lessons around interactive activities. The students really enjoyed the seed germination activity which taught them how seeds grow by planting their own seeds and identifying the stages of growth. My students were most excited about the knife cutting lesson I taught them, which included understanding knife safety and how to properly cut with a child safe knife set. They were extremely excited to practice

the knife skills during the following week. They were able to cut up the bananas we needed for the smoothie recipe I demonstrated for the class. Overall, I have noticed a significant improvement in engagement and interest after making the lessons more interactive and incorporating more tasting activities.



P.S. 36 students' seed germination projects

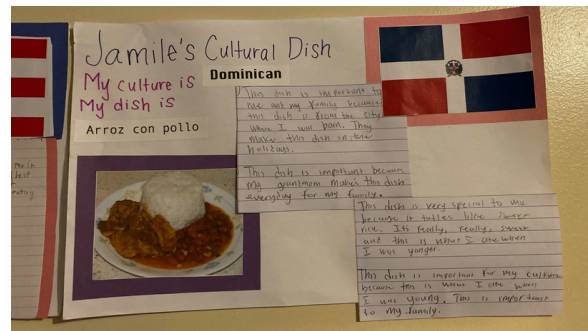
For the upcoming Spring showcase, I developed a cultural dish project in which all of my 4th graders from both classes will showcase a dish that is important to their culture. I instructed my students to take a picture of a cultural dish prepared at home that they would like to feature for this project. They will also write a short paragraph explaining why this dish is important to their culture and family. Once the project is completed, each student will share their dish along with the description to the class so they can learn more about each other's culture. The students will also be able to share their dish during the showcase to members of the school community. I have a diverse group of students and I am excited to see the dishes they choose to feature and how this project will come together.

### ***P.S. 154 Harriet Tubman:***

During the Fall semester I also supported the monthly Read-Alouds at P.S. 154 Harriet Tubman and I've enjoyed reading childrens' books to the 4th grade students. It was fantastic to engage with the students after reading the books to hear their thoughts on the significance of the story.

This semester, I also work at P.S. 154 once a week to support the Black Education Research Center (BERC) program. I collaborate with the amazing music teacher with her Pre-K and 1st grade classes to prepare for upcoming concerts. We used the children's book, *Change Sings* by Amanda Gorman, to develop ideas for the Black History month concert. The students recited lines from the book to create a storyline combined with singing, dancing, and playing instruments.

Working with Pre-K and 1st graders has been such a unique experience for me because the youngest group that I have worked with before were my 4th graders. It has been a great experience working with the music teacher because it has allowed me to challenge my creativity and understand all the effort required to organize a school music concert.



Jamile's project from the spring showcase

# LUNAR NEW YEAR: CHASING THE DRAGON

By An Vo

The streets were filled with Lion Dancers, food stalls, and drummers beating to a rhythm that shook my bones and I have never felt more out of place. Every year, I would be running through the halls of my home while trying to get my Ao Dai from three years ago to fit, finding my earrings that matched the animal of the year, and making sure I had no white or black on me because it was bad luck to ring in the New Year. But this year, I was simply trying to find a celebration happening somewhere in the entire state of New York.

I was on the hunt for anything that made me feel at home during the most important time of year for Vietnamese people. Luckily, I found some amazing events that I was able to check out during Lunar New Year. It was an unconventional way to celebrate, but I knew I needed to try and find a space where I connected with.

**Ăn Xôi** - Translates to “Eat Stick Rice”, is a Vietnamese Pop-Up that travels around New York City. They hosted a pop-up at LARRY’S CÀ PHÊ which had a full menu of different Vietnamese coffee and tea drinks. Of course, I had their Xôi and Vietnamese iced coffee. The sticky rice was salty and bursting with umami from the chicken. The part that made my heart feel heavy was being able to speak Vietnamese to order my meal. I haven’t been able to speak Vietnamese to anyone since moving to New York and it was just heartwarming to be able to slip into my mother tongue. The coffee was the perfect balance of bitterness and sweetness that is hard to replicate.



(Photo courtesy of @pikarar)



**Xôi** (from Ăn Xôi pop-up)





Lunar New Year cookie tin  
from Bạn Bè

**Bạn Bè** - Translate to “Friends”, is NYC’s first Vietnamese-American Bakery in Brooklyn. They had a special Lunar New Year cookie tin and jellies that I had to get my hands on! Vietnamese jelly is different because of the emphasis on aesthetics and a firmer texture compared to American jelly. I could not get enough of the desserts because the subtle sweetness was the perfect pair to my savory lunch.

We talk about the importance of food with culture and Lunar New Year weekend was the perfect example of that for me. Although I was feeling alone in New York, engaging with the community gave me more than just the food and celebration. It gave me a way to start building a home for myself outside of California. It helped me recognize the intersectionality of cultural identities and the different representations of the culture I thought I’d always known. I am still chasing anything that can connect me to my Vietnamese culture but the journey has gotten a lot easier.



Jellies from Bạn Bè



## The 10 Principles of Intuitive Eating<sup>7</sup>

### Reject the Diet Mentality

Get rid of the mindset that diets can facilitate quick and permanent weight loss, and recognize that diet culture makes people feel like being unable to lose weight or become healthy is their own fault.

### Honor Your Hunger

Feed your body when you sense biological hunger cues because it can help prevent overeating, overcome restrictive eating, and regain trust in yourself and food.

### Make Peace with Food

Discard your ‘forbidden’ foods list, which includes items solely because you believe they’re not healthy enough, and try to embrace these foods with a peaceful mind.

### Challenge the Food Police

Reject the internal ‘food police’ voice that categorizes foods as good or bad or prescribes daily intake based on diet culture.

### Discover the Satisfaction Factor

Feel the pleasure and satisfaction when eat the foods you enjoy, as they can help you identify when you are full and satisfied.

### Feel Your Fullness

Trust the signals from your body indicating fullness and learn to identify them by stopping in the middle of eating and then ask yourself how the food tastes and how full you are.

### Cope with Your Emotions with Kindness

Recognize that using food as a means to vent emotions is not effective, and it does not contribute to better long-term emotional management or solving the actual problems we face.

### Respect Your Body

Stop criticizing your body shape or size, and love your body and love yourself.

### Movement—Feel the Difference

Focus on how you feel when you exercise, as the feelings differ from hitting the snooze buttons and engaging in morning exercise.

### Honor Your Health—Gentle Nutrition

Make food choices while honoring your health, but always be mindful that you don’t have to be a perfect eater. Remember, health is based on your long-term eating behaviors rather than a short period.



## 4 Intuitive Eating Myths Debunked

By Wendy Xiang

Intuitive Eating is an evidence-based approach, created by RD’s Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch in 1995, delving into the connection between body and mind.<sup>1</sup> It includes 10 principles working by either cultivating or removing obstacles to body awareness.<sup>1</sup> Intuitive Eating has been examined in a lot of research, revealing health benefits and scientific validity, including but not limited to life satisfaction, positive body image, self-esteem, decreased eating disordered behaviors, and improved blood glucose management in Type 1 diabetes.<sup>2-6</sup>

Whether you’re new to Intuitive Eating or have just embarked on the journey of Intuitive Eating recently, you may have already come across some myths about this term. Before you start on Intuitive Eating or recommend this approach as part of your nutrition practice, it's essential to debunk these myths and gain a deeper insight so that you'll know if it's a good fit for you. In the following section, I'll walk you through four common myths about Intuitive Eating.





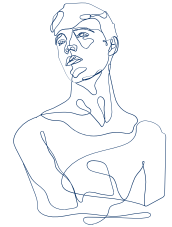
**Myth 1:** Intuitive Eating is eating whatever I want whenever I want, so it's not hard to learn and practice.

**Reality:** Viewing Intuitive Eating as merely consuming whatever you want, whenever you desire, is an oversimplified perspective. Rather, intuitive eating is connecting to and embracing the many triggers of hunger and fullness including physical and emotional triggers.

The perception of internal hunger and satiety cues is critical to Intuitive Eating, and the ability to perceive these signals are defined as interoceptive sensitivity which differs among people. People with eating disorders tend to have weaker interoceptive sensitivity and awareness than average healthy people, and it's not easy for them to learn and practice Intuitive Eating.<sup>8</sup> Most of them are affected more deeply by the fad diet culture and weight-centric societal norms.<sup>9</sup> It's particularly challenging for this population to differentiate whether the desire or aversion to foods arises from inside their body or the surroundings. In this context, explaining to an eating disorder client that Intuitive Eating is eating whatever you want anytime you like could be misleading and even dangerous.

Furthermore, some dietitians refer to the process of learning and practicing Intuitive Eating as 'a journey.' It is nuanced and personal, and the length varies from person to person. The shared characteristic is that it requires peeling the layers of our diet history and turning into the body.<sup>10</sup>

**Myth 2:** Intuitive eating means always following physical cues of when to eat and when to stop eating



**Reality:** Yes, Intuitive Eating encourages individuals to recognize internal hunger and satiety cues and minimize the negative effects of external influences. However, this doesn't imply ignoring our emotions and feelings. Intuition involves being attuned and aware of all aspects of our bodies, so there's no need to deny emotions or avoid certain foods associated with them.<sup>11</sup>

Someone may be concerned that if they're following Intuitive Eating, they are no longer allowed to eat ice cream or chocolate when they feel depressed. However, Intuitive Eating does not take a completely opposing stance to emotional eating. It is acceptable to find comfort in foods with intention, allowing you to savor your foods and eating experiences. However, caution is advised when emotional eating becomes impulsive and reactive, leading to a disconnection between your body and foods and a worsening of your emotional state.<sup>12</sup>



Another factor that could exacerbate emotional eating is relying solely on eating as your coping mechanism.<sup>12</sup> It's important to recognize that food can't solve our problems, though it may provide temporary comfort or distraction from pain. We should always be aware that we need to find the ultimate reason in order to address an issue. As one of the 10 Intuitive Eating principles mentioned above, 'Cope with Your Emotions with Kindness' suggests, "You'll ultimately have to deal with the source of the emotion."<sup>7</sup>

**Myth 3:** Intuitive Eating can lead to a loss of control and thus is dangerous for eating disorders.

**Reality:** I understand why some people might perceive Intuitive Eating as potentially leading to loss of control or bingeing, especially if they are attempting to recover from restrictive eating habits. The concept of granting oneself unconditional permission to eat does align with the principles of Intuitive Eating.

In their book *Intuitive Eating: A Revolutionary Anti-Diet Approach*, Tribole and Resch explicitly outline five stages on how to become an Intuitive Eater: Readiness, Exploration, Crystallization, The Intuitive Eater Awakens, and Treasure the Pleasure.<sup>13</sup> In the initial stage, individuals grapple with issues such as dieting, restrictive eating, negative body image, eating for comfort, or feeling guilty after overeating.

Once they recognize that sticking to a diet won't resolve these challenges, they move on to the next stage, Exploration. The Exploration stage, which might be a source of concern for individuals with eating disorders, involves realizing that eating disorders may lead to a loss of control. According to Tribole and Resch, during this phase, you may find yourself eating more than your body needs, and it can be challenging to respect your body's fullness as you experiment with the quantity required to satisfy your body.<sup>13</sup> Importantly, this eating pattern isn't set for life; rather, it involves rebuilding positive food experiences through exploration, compensating for "years of deprivation, negative self-talk, and guilt." For some individuals with eating disorders, starting with unconditional explorative eating might be overwhelming, so meal plans are suggested as a supportive approach. Ultimately, the core of this stage is exploration and discovery with conscious learning and the pursuit of pleasure.

Additionally, research suggests that individuals who eat in response to physical cues, which is adhering to Intuitive Eating principles, are less likely to experience loss of control during eating.<sup>14</sup> It's also okay if you find it hard to recognize physical cues; being kind and compassionate to yourself is also important to learn in Intuitive Eating.<sup>15</sup>



**Myth 4:** Intuitive Eating can be used as a weight loss diet.

**Reality:** Intuitive Eating might be inaccurately categorized as a weight-loss diet if one were to solely consider studies indicating a correlation between higher scores on Intuitive Eating assessments and lower BMI.<sup>16</sup> However, the reality is that Intuitive Eating is neither a diet nor geared towards weight loss.

The foundational principle of Intuitive Eating is to ‘Reject the Diet Mentality,’ necessitating individuals to dismantle and discard the diet mindset while fostering self-compassion.<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, Tribole highlights that fixating on weight can lead to body dissatisfaction and weight stigma, contributing to overall poor wellness.<sup>17</sup> As opposed to any weight-loss diet, Intuitive Eating doesn’t list specific foods as conducive to weight loss or label others as detrimental. It also doesn’t prescribe daily food quantities. Instead, a reduction in behaviors such as restrained and emotional eating may naturally result in weight loss for some individuals!<sup>18</sup> However, it’s crucial to recognize that weight loss is not the primary objective of Intuitive Eating; rather, it is a personal journey towards honoring health, responding to bodily cues, and cultivating appreciation for one’s body.<sup>1</sup>



Last but not least, eating disorders can vary from person to person, and what works for someone else may not necessarily work for you. Always remember to consult with your dietitian or other qualified healthcare provider before implementing any meal plans or approaches in your treatment for eating disorders.

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# SECOND YEAR STUDENTS

## INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES IN THEIR OWN WORDS:



**Tiger Liu**  
**ST. BARNABAS  
TEACHING KITCHEN**

“These short four weeks at the SBH Teaching Kitchen were a very fun experience. I was tasked with formulating recipes and leading cooking classes with nutrition education sprinkled throughout the duration for community members, medical residents, and hospital patients. As a passionate cook and eater, I was **C H U F F E D** to be granted this opportunity to simultaneously share my passions and hone my skills as an educator and presenter. My rotation culminated with a St. Patrick's Day-themed cooking class, starring Irish classics like Shepherd's pie, boxty, fried cabbage, and bread pudding.”



**Alison Garbarini**  
**MATERNAL FETAL  
MEDICINE ASSOCIATES**

“During my internship at MFMA, I was able to observe many nutrition counseling sessions for patients with high-risk pregnancies, including those with gestational diabetes or multiples. I practiced navigating electronic medical records, and assisted with monitoring patient blood sugar levels and correspondence with their health care providers. I also had the opportunity to create patient education handouts and put together a provider training presentation about nutrition during menopause.”



**Wency Xiang**  
**NOURISHED ROOTS  
NUTRITION**

“My work involves two projects, which are writing blog posts and updating the referral lists. I also got a chance to observe my preceptor's sessions, from which I learned a lot about eating disorders and intuitive eating. This experience was really thought-provoking and encouraged me to view what I've learned before from very different perspectives.”




**Ritu Dey**  
**NYCHH: HARLEM  
HOSPITAL WIC**

“Being at NYCHH Harlem WIC, I had the opportunity to experience their service focusing on nutritional well-being for women, children, and infants who experience food insecurity. I worked with excellent registered dietitians to support mothers by doing monthly follow-ups and providing relevant nutrition education to ensure they are adhering to dietary recommendations at their stage of pregnancy. In addition, I shadowed several orientations and assisted new participants enrolling in the program. One of my favorite experiences was taking leadership in communicating nutrition recommendations to mothers for themselves and their children. These responsibilities allowed me to improve my communication, leadership, and troubleshooting skills.”

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