

- 1) ASK QUESTIONS to gather enough information about the possible career steps you could take. Most people love to talk about themselves. Ask for an informational interview; the worst someone can do is not respond or say “no.”
- 2) Don't choose a career path because it is easiest or expected. At the end of the day, you are the one who has to be satisfied by your decisions, not your advisors, mentors, or friends.

**6. What are your career goals?**

- 1) To love my job and love my non-work life; this is a never ending balancing trick where the focus slips in one direction or the other sometimes, and that is okay.
- 2) To mentor the next generation; I would not be where I am if there weren't a generation before me willing to answer *many* questions.
- 3) To look back on my career and see where my work has improved public health.

**7. How has your affiliation with the Academy impacted your career progression?**

I have been able to demonstrate early, and often, that I am a leader and capable of leadership by pointing to my volunteer work at the Academy. This has been an advantage when competing for promotions and new positions that many peers with the same years of experience could not point to. I also have this outside network to which I can ask questions (you are probably sensing a theme here) which has been vital to designing the career I wanted. Also, I have had the opportunity to do fun things like lead the systematic review of evidence on nutrigenomics.

**8. If someone were to ask you to explain why research is important to the field of dietetics, what would you say?**

Humans are constantly and necessarily exposed to foods and beverages. Diet is the leading risk factor for death in the U.S. We can and must do better at providing medical nutrition therapy to support the health of our nation; the only way we can do that is through better research.



## A Letter from the RDPG Chair

Barbara Gordon, MBA, RDN, LD, FAND

*Assistant Professor and Chair, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Idaho State University*

### Message from the Outgoing Chair

It has been an honor to serve as Chair of the Research DPG. As I hand the baton to Dr. Nancy J. Emenaker, I want you to know that you are in good hands. Nancy has been with the National Cancer Institute, one of the National Institutes of Health, for more than a decade. She offers a valuable perspective into the science of nutrition and the importance of evidence-based nutrition interventions.

During the past year, thanks to all of you, I leave with an expanded understanding of the tremendous range of nutrition research efforts that RDNs engage in and their essential role in pursuing new discoveries and establishing scientific foundations for preventive dietary choices and disease-based modifications.

I am pleased to be continuing in the role as Past Chair and look forward to another year of learning and contributing to the successes of this vital DPG.

Best,

Barbara Gordon  
*Outgoing Chair, 2019-2020*