

New Historical Timeline for History Webpage on Research DPG Website: Behind the Scenes

¹Gomez-Perez, Sandra, PhD, RDN

¹Ewert, Kelsey, MS, RDN

¹Rush University, Department of Clinical Nutrition, Chicago, IL

Corresponding Author: Sandra Gomez-Perez, PhD, RDN, RDPG Historian



The History Webpage: what motivated the new RDPG Historical Timeline?

My charge as the new historian for the RDPG for Year 2019-2020 was to think of creative ways to update, upgrade, 'spruce up' the History webpage on the RDPG website. As I brainstormed about the possibilities during my first meeting with past chair Barbara Gordon, I mentioned adding an interactive history timeline that documents important historical events which can then be routinely updated by future historians as a living document as needed. Barbara really liked the idea, and so I recruited Kelsey Ewert, MS RD, a recent graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who started working with me as a volunteer at my home institution. I knew Kelsey would bring the mind of the new, much more tech savvy generation, and working together with other

members of the RDPG Executive Committee including Katie Gustafson (Academy Liaison) and Brooke Wickman (Website Coordinator), she embarked on this task. Although not as interactive as I initially envisioned, we have been able to assemble truly amazing information about the history of the RDPG, including the changes and members of years past, and have created a visual timeline similar to the History of the Academy timeline created for the 100-year Anniversary. We hope that this RDPG History Timeline will remind longtime members of wonderful memories and inspire newer members to create their own. I also hope that it encourages members to find out more about our past and to reach out to me (and future historians) with pictures, ideas, and important themes or events to add to this timeline for future members to learn about. I think it is important to think about this timeline as a living document that is updated and maintained so that it continues to track our history as it happens for future generations to see.

What has changed on the RDPG History webpage?

We started with a blank canvas. The original interface on the History of the Research DPG webpage appeared monochromatic and text heavy with bulleted list as well as lacking information about important historical events pertaining to the development, trajectory, accomplishments, and changes occurring within the RDPG over the years. In order to collect such information, we worked diligently to standardize a format using MS PowerPoint (Kelsey brilliantly thought of this) to match that of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' own 100th Anniversary Historical Timeline that was featured in FNCE® 2016 and is now available on the The Academy website (<https://www.eatrightpro.org/history-timeline>). The new RDPG History Timeline on our RDPG webpage will include photos, key events, links, and fun facts that are unique to our past as a DPG within the The Academy.

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How did we gather the history of the RDPG?

The information we gathered for the RDPG History Timeline came from various sources. First and foremost, communication with our fellow members was the cornerstone to our success in collecting information and content for the timeline. We sent out a questionnaire to past chairs, asking for three types of information: 1) any memorable or significant events, 2) any photos or videos about RDPG events or highlights, and 3) major accomplishments of the RDPG and/or its members. We also received collections of photos and other forms of information from these initial emails. Once the information was gathered, we added the content to a draft timeline document. This draft of the timeline was then sent to the RDPG Executive Committee members (voting and non-voting members) for additional feedback, comments, and information including pictures.

A second source of information for the timeline was the past issues of The Digest. The Digest was first published (as you can see on the RDPG History Timeline) in 1968 and converted to an electronic newsletter in 2009. We were not able to find hard copies from the years 1967-2009, but we scoured electronic newsletters available from 2009 to the present for tidbits of any pertinent information that might be important to include in our timeline. We also did our fair share of fact checking as we collected the information. Phone calls, emails, and meetings with key figures filled in the gaps we were not able to find in The Digest and also provided first-hand accounts of important events and leaders to include in the timeline; through these conversations we were also able to fact check the information we collected. Our newsletter, The Digest, is the main source of our archived past.

What should we expect when we follow the link to the RDPG History webpage?

As we transition to the new history webpage, we can anticipate a few key changes in the standardized layout and key highlights to our DPG lifespan as well as a piece of history we can all be proud to share. First, an implemented framework and design allows for flexibility in content creation for years to come. Future RDPG historians will be able to update the timeline easily with key events, information, and photos as needed. Overall, we can expect an insightful and historical webpage about one of the founding dietetic practice groups that we can be proud to share.

Fun Facts found on the RDPG History Timeline

- i. *The Digest* newsletter was published in 1968 for the first time.
 - ii. The *Digest* was published in an electronic format for the first time in 2009.
 - iii. The RDPG started as two separate practice groups (Nutrition Research DPG and Community Nutrition Research DPG) that merged in 1985 after the The Academy set a minimum 300-member requirement to be considered a DPG

What's next for the RDPG History webpage?

We would like to create more content and add more photos about important events in the future. As we pursue every opportunity to continue to make the RDPG History Timeline a living document, the input from our current and future members is key. Please consider thinking back and sharing some memories if you have been a part of the Research DPG for a few years. If you are new, take time to capture future memories at FNCE® or other events and share them with your historian (and future historians) at HISTORIAN@researchdpg.org. Check out the new history webpage and take a ride through RDPG history using the new RDPG History Timeline.



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