



RDPG Student Member Spotlight: Andrea Lobene

1. Please list your research interests.

My research interests include sodium and potassium physiology, biomarkers of sodium and potassium intake, and the role these minerals play in chronic disease risk.

2. Please describe your path (i.e., education, work experience, etc.) that led you to pursue a degree in nutrition and/or nutrition research.

I started my first year at The University of Georgia not really knowing what I wanted to study. When a friend introduced me to the dietetics program, I knew right away that was the right major for me. I loved the idea of studying food and nutrition, the role it plays in our health, and how improving our diet now can have lasting impacts on future disease risk. In my junior year I got involved in undergraduate research. I had the opportunity to work directly with research participants and conduct my own research project. That was one of the best experiences I had as an undergrad, and at that point I knew that I wanted to pursue a career in research. After completing my undergraduate degree, I completed my master's degree in food and nutrition combined with my dietetic internship also at The University of Georgia. I continued to build my skills in human clinical research and further solidified my goal of pursuing a career in research. I also enjoyed my internship rotations which allowed me the chance to see firsthand how nutrition research can be applied in clinical practice. I decided to continue on for a PhD, and I applied to Purdue University because of its strong human clinical nutrition emphasis. I was accepted and now I'm beginning my third year of doctoral work at Purdue.

4. What is the focus of your graduate work? Please describe one or two highlights of your research career thus far.

The main project I have been part of is aimed at improving upon current methods for estimating sodium and potassium intake using a single urine sample. I've had the opportunity to present my preliminary findings at three national meetings so far, including FNCE®. I have also been involved in a pilot project aimed at validating methods for estimating tissue sodium distribution in vivo. Our goal is to apply these methods for estimating sodium storage in human tissues to gain additional insight into sodium physiology and potentially identify new risk factors for hypertension.

5. What are your plans for the future (e.g., academia, government, and/or industry)?

My goal is to become a professor in a nutrition department where my role would include both research and teaching. I love research, but I also love teaching and interacting with students. My dream job is a professor of nutrition and a DPD director which would allow me to shape the future generation of dietitians and nutrition professionals.

6. Do you have any advice or words of wisdom to share with students interested in the nutrition field?

My advice would be to pursue a career that you love but also know when to take a break from work. Pursuing a career that you love is important because it makes going to work enjoyable. However, especially in the research world, we tend to become so engrossed in our work that we don't take time to relax and enjoy ourselves. Having a healthy work-life balance is crucial for both a successful career and a happy life.

7. List any published work, if applicable.

Papers in Peer-Reviewed Journals:

Lobene AJ, Kindler JM, Jenkins NT, Pollock NK, Laing EM, Grider A, Lewis RD. Zinc supplementation does not alter indicators of insulin secretion and sensitivity in black and white female adolescents. *J Nutr* 2017; 147(3):1296-1300.

Book Chapters:

Lobene AJ, McCabe LD, Stone MS, Kindler JM, Bailey RL, Moshfegh AJ, Rhodes DG, Goldman JD, McCabe GP, Weaver CM. Dietary minerals, mineral ratios, and bone. In: *Nutritional Aspects of Osteoporosis*, 2017, Proceedings of the International Symposium on Nutritional Aspects of Osteoporosis, November 28-December 1, 2017, Hong Kong.

Presentations at National and Local Meetings:

- **Lobene AJ**, Martin BR, McCabe LD, McCabe GP, Weaver CM. Variability in Urinary Sodium Excretion in Timed Spot Urine Samples. Nutrition, Boston, MA, June 2018.
- **Lobene AJ**, Martin BR, Weaver CM. Predicting Population Sodium Intake from a Single Timed Urine Collection. Foods and Nutrition Conference and Expo, Chicago, IL, October 2017.
- Coyne M, **Lobene A**, Lachcik P, Zhang X, Hsieh MJ, Newman C, Weaver C, Nie LH. Determination of Bone Sodium (Na) and Na Exchange in Pig Leg Using *In Vivo* Neutron Activation Analysis (IV-NAA). Healthy Physics Society Annual Meeting, Raleigh, NC, July 2017.
- **Lobene AJ**, Martin BR, Macdonald-Clarke CJ, Anderson CAM, McCabe LD, McCabe GP, Weaver CM. Pattern of Urinary Sodium Excretion Following

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