



## December 2020

### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## Ben Atkinson, MS, RDN, CD

*Learn more about Ben, as he shares how he and his team went above and beyond in the fight against food insecurity.*



Working in a school nutrition program in 2020 feels a bit like taking the RD exam all over again. Dietitians all over the country are being called on to use business knowledge, apply management training, come up with adaptations to handle allergies and clinical-level food modifications on the fly, and still maintain their day jobs. Meet Ben Atkinson, MS, RDN, CD – one such jack of all trades in Auburn, Wash.

“I think we’re all being forced to get out of our bubble and use some of those other parts of being a dietitian. I think it shows the good training that we’ve all had,” Ben said. “I think we’re a creative bunch, and I think that, especially in a pandemic, we’re focused on the right thing. We’re focused on helping our community. We’re focused on keeping our staff healthy and happy. We’re focused on providing good tasting and healthy foods.”

[Read more about Ben](#)

### Legislative Update

#### USDA Issues Proposed Rule to Restore School Meal Flexibilities

On November 25, 2020, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released [proposed regulations](#) to restore flexibilities for

### Announcements



#### POLL: Your voice matters.

Complete [this survey](#) to help the SNS DPG better support our members in the House of Delegates for 2021.

#### 🏆 March 1 Application Deadline: Diversity and Inclusion Action Award

The Academy offers a \$1,000 Diversity and Inclusion Action Award to an ACEND-accredited dietetics educational program, affiliate, dietetic practice group, member interest group, or other recognized Academy group. The award recognizes accomplishments in successfully recruiting and retaining underrepresented individuals. The application deadline is **March 1, 2021**. [Apply today!](#)

milk, whole grain and sodium requirements in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). This [proposed rule](#) maintains Target 1 sodium limits through the 2023-24 School Year (SY), states that Target 2 limits take effect in SY 2024-25, and the final target is eliminated. It also requires half of all grains served under NSLP/SBP to be whole grain-rich and allows the service of low-fat flavored milk.

USDA issued the proposed regulations following the April 13th 2020 [federal district court ruling](#) that vacated the 2018 Final Rule Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements due to procedural issues.

Now is the time to take action! USDA has established a 30-day comment period for the proposed rule and “intends to issue a final rule in spring 2021 to ensure that stakeholders can continue to rely on the operational flexibilities proposed in this rule.” School nutrition professionals can submit their comments on the impact and importance of milk, whole grain and sodium flexibilities [here](#). Online comments on this proposed rule must be submitted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal and must be received on or before December 28, 2020. Mailed comments on this rule must be postmarked on or before December 28, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Reilly, NDTR, SNS

## Wrapping Up

This is a busy time of the year and I know we are all balancing the work demands of the season with personal activities, many of which have been modified this year. I hope that you continue sharing the amazing things you are doing to provide and support innovative healthy school meals around the country. Our goal is to highlight members and allow them platforms to share their stories, so we are looking forward to continuing this into the New Year. The work each member does is essential to the health and wellness of our children. During this holiday season, enjoy the celebrations with family and friends so you will be ready to continue the great work we are doing when we begin again in 2021!



Thanks!

*Stefanie Dove, MBA RDN SNS*

Stefanie Dove, MBA RDN SNS  
Chair, SNS DPG

**Interested in serving on a committee with SNS DPG for the 2021-22 year?**

We have openings on a variety of committees

## **March 1 Application Deadline: Diversity and Inclusion Leaders Program**

The Diversity and Inclusion Leaders Program supports Active category members from underrepresented groups within the nutrition and dietetics profession. Four leaders are selected to participate in a two-year leadership program and are provided mentorship, leadership training, and networking. The application deadline is **March 1, 2021**. [Apply today!](#)

## **Nominations for the Academy's National Honors and Awards open Nov. 1!**

[Nominate a colleague](#) who has advanced the nutrition and dietetics profession, exhibited leadership in the field, and shown devotion to serving others. #eatrightPRO

## **Apply to Be an Academy Media Spokesperson**

The Academy's landmark volunteer media Spokesperson Program advances the Academy's mission and goals and increases the public's knowledge of food, nutrition, and health. Three-year Spokesperson terms begin June 1. Openings are available in a number of geographical and practice specialty areas. The application deadline is **February 5**. [Learn More](#).

## **Looking for CPEU?**

The Academy offers a variety of webinars on topics such as sports nutrition, diversity and inclusion, medical nutrition therapy, professional development and more! [Get Started](#). #eatrightPRO #RDNCPE

including public policy, electronic communications, newsletter, education, and more!

Contact Chair, [Stefanie Dove](#), to find out additional information on the opportunities to volunteer.



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