

DDPG Leadership Interviews:

Education, Career Path, Advice

Paula Kellogg Leibovitz, MS, RDN, CDN, CDCES

1) Where did you obtain your degree in dietetics and nutrition? Is there anything you'd like to share about your schooling experience and internship program?

I graduated from the State University of New York at Oneonta. I completed my dietetic internship at Indianapolis Medical Center. I truly loved my experiences and the friendships made.

2) Can you discuss your career path as a dietitian?

I have had a wonderful career as a dietitian and my career experiences have been varied. I began my career as a clinical dietitian and then assumed the role of Chief Clinical Dietitian. After I had my son, I decided to leave the hospital arena and was offered a position as the Program Director for a Dietetic Technician Program. I loved the opportunity to teach and mentor students. I also worked in a Head Start Program, another fantastic experience, and as a consultant dietitian for an extended care facility. I was the dietitian for an endocrinologist, and this ultimately led to my decision to become a Certified Diabetes Educator (now called a Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES)).

3) How did you become interested in diabetes nutrition?

When I began college, I thought I would pursue a teaching career. However, I always had a love of food and an interest in nutrition. I soon realized that pursuing a career as an RD would allow me to blend both of my passions-teaching and food. I decided to change majors, and the rest is history...as they say.

4) What is your current job position? Can you describe your job duties on a typical day?

I have my own consulting practice, primarily focusing on community nutrition and diabetes. I have managed several grants that have focused on diabetes management and curriculum development and implementation for various organizations. My days vary, so there is no typical day. That's what keeps things interesting.

5) What do you think the future looks like for RDN's in the diabetes nutrition field?

I see so many opportunities for RDNs as the value of MNT continues to be proven. The sky is the limit. Create your opportunities and pursue your passions.

6) What advice do you have for students and interns interested in pursuing a career in diabetes nutrition?

Get involved! I've held almost every office for our CT Academy as well as numerous national offices. The experiences that I have had as a volunteer have been outstanding and I've learned so much and have made so many friends.

A number of the career opportunities that I pursued were outside of my comfort zone, and each of these opened another door for me. Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone.