



CANADIAN FOUNDATION FOR DIETETIC RESEARCH

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CFDR's Morgan Awards recognize dietetic researchers of the future

Toronto, June 2012 – The Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research (CFDR) announces the recipients of its Morgan Awards Program. Six students received regional awards and one was presented with the National Morgan Medal.

The Morgan Awards program, created in honour and in memory of Susan Morgan, a dietitian and former CFDR manager, recognizes dietetic students and interns for their passion for research.

“This year’s Morgan Awards recipients certainly embodied Susan’s attributes,” says Cathy Paroschy Harris, RD, President of CFDR. “They demonstrate having a positive outlook, enthusiasm for new ideas, the ability to rise to challenges, and strength and determination – all traits for which Susan was known. We are pleased to recognize these dietetic researchers of the future.”

Award recipients are:

Keira Magee, Acadia University Graduate Dietetic Internship Program – recipient of the Atlantic Regional Award and the National Morgan Medal. Keira’s project was “The experiences of participants taking part in the “Strive for Five at Home” cooking workshops: a descriptive multi case study.” As she worked on her project, Keira’s attitude towards research changed. She says, “Prior to starting my internship research project my feelings toward research were stress, disinterest, and admittedly, fear ... Today when asked about my feelings on completing a research project, the first words that come to mind are intrigue, inspiration and possibility. I have learned the importance of researching topics that make me feel passionate and inspired. As I begin my career I am grateful for having had the opportunity to conduct an internship research project, which has manifested into a desire to complete a Master’s thesis and to continue conducting research throughout my career.”

Barbara Grohmann, Ottawa Hospital Dietetic Internship Program, Quebec, North East and Eastern Ontario Regional Award. Barbara’s project was “Healthcare providers’ perceptions of communicating gestational weight gain recommendations to overweight/obese pregnant women.” This research was part of a much larger project and Barbara soon realized that her research results could have real world practical implications, potentially leading to positive changes in patient care. Reflecting on her research experience, Barbara says, “Research rarely stands alone, but builds on the information pioneered before and serves to inform or direct future avenues of research. It can clarify or transform points of view and corroborate or refute previously held assumptions. It is not static, but fluid, dynamic and alive.” Barbara looks forward to her next research opportunity.

Shannon Richter, MScFN Brescia University College, Central and Southern Ontario Regional Award. Shannon’s project was “Development and reliability of an observational training protocol for dietary intake assessment in an elementary school setting.” With this project Shannon’s main tasks were training, organizing, and mentoring fourteen upper-year undergraduate nutrition students to observe and accurately record children’s eating practices. She says, “It was rewarding to see other future dietitians as passionate and enthusiastic as I am about gaining knowledge regarding children’s eating habits and knowing that my training and mentoring helped foster their research interests.” Her research project has heightened her interest in pursuing future research. She says, “I am intrigued by the future of dietetics and how research in the field can drive positive change.”

Rylan Haas, Saskatoon Health Region Professional Practice Program, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and North West Ontario. Rylan’s project was “Nutrition implications of community gardening.” Rylan’s personal goal is to advocate for access to local, affordable, sustainable food. Rylan says, “I drew inspiration and motivation from the

stories of research participants. During one focus group the passion and sense of community between participants resonated with me, as they shared the importance of their gardening experience ... Now, one of my professional learning plan goals is to expand upon and share my food knowledge. I have started my own cooking and nutrition blog ... my research experience has strengthened my passion for dietetic research.”

Ping Li, University of Alberta Integrated Dietetic Internship Program, Alberta and the Territories Regional Award. Ping’s project was “Prevalence of fat-soluble vitamin deficiency in patients with liver cirrhosis undergoing liver transplant assessment.” Ping was especially interested in this research topic because she foresaw a unique opportunity to learn research skills in an environment that supports evidence-based clinical practice that can be translated into patient care outcomes. “Overall, participating in this research study has enhanced my self-confidence, inter-personal and teamwork skills, and my ability to remain calm under pressure. I truly enjoyed reaching every single milestone of my project. After participating in this study, I was inspired to pursue post-graduate studies after RD qualification to continue doing research throughout my career, and to promote evidence-based practice to ensure effective nutrition care.”

Danielle DeGagne, UBC Dietetic Internship Program (Northern Health), British Columbia Regional Award. Danielle’s project was “Descriptive Profile of Individuals with End-Stage Renal Disease Receiving Dialysis: Factors Related to Vitamin D Sufficiency.” Through her research work Danielle learned the important role researchers play in enhancing practice. She says, “I realized that our project would contribute to current knowledge in the field and be read, understood, and built upon by not only other Dietitians, but also other health professionals. Researchers have a large responsibility in producing recommendations for practice; they are asserting themselves as experts on the topic and have the potential to affect standard practice of patient assessment, care-plan implementation, and counseling on a large scale; ultimately impacting patient health outcomes.” Danielle plans to continue using a research approach to problem solving throughout her career.

The Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research is committed to recognizing and encouraging dietitians in their research efforts and congratulates the recipients of the 2012 Morgan Awards. For information on the 2013 program, visit www.cfdr.ca after July 15, 2012.

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