



## Making History: Fifty-Year Member (and Beyond)

**I**N 1969, THE ACADEMY TOPPED the 20,000-member milestone for the first time. Those who joined that year have seen much of the history of our organization and profession. I asked members of our 50-year-plus “club” why they have remained members, even after retirement in many cases; and what are some of the significant changes in food, nutrition, and health that they have seen, and helped bring about.

### GROW AND LEARN

Peter Beyer, MS, a member since 1968, taught at the University of Missouri and the University of Kansas from 1968 until retiring in 2012. He served in the House of Delegates (HOD) and on the Commission on Dietetic Registration, the Ethics and Research committees, the editorial board of the *Journal*, and the Council on Future Practice.

Beyer cites the rise of evidence-based practice, evolving standards of education, and the publication of the *Nutrition Care Manual* and the Code of Ethics as major advancements since he became a member. “I hoped I could help make a contribution and make a difference in the profession and practice of dietetics,” he says of his reasons for joining.

### MOVE TOWARD TECHNOLOGY

Bert Connell, PhD, FADA, FAND, joined in 1969 “and remained a member for the *Journal*, for networking and continuing education. I have also remained a member due to my role as an educator and program director of the coordinated program at Loma Linda University.”

Connell's service includes member or chair of committees in the Council on Education and the Council on Practice, HOD delegate, *Journal* Board of Editors, and the Foundation's Scholarship Committee. Changes he has seen over 50 years include “a move away from contributing to the development of food systems management

and toward increasing the technology associated with medical nutrition therapy.”

### BLOOD, SWEAT, TEARS

Constance Locher-Bussard, LDN, joined in 1955. A charter and sustaining member of the Foundation, she currently serves on the Foundation's board.

Living in Springfield, the capital of Illinois, Locher-Bussard says she was drawn to “all things legislative,” including service as the state's public policy chair for more than a decade. In her “most important role” she was heavily involved in the years-long effort to achieve licensure for Illinois dietitians. “We went through blood, sweat and tears,” she says.

### CHANGING EMPHASIS

Colleen Matthys, of Bellevue, WA, joined in 1967. “I have continued my membership, even after retiring, because I've experienced the benefits the Academy has brought to our profession,” she says.

Matthys served as Speaker of the House of Delegates, member of the Academy and Foundation boards, chair of the Nominating Committee, as well as serving on the Commission on Dietetic Registration. Two of the most significant changes she has seen over her career are “the increase in obesity leading to an increase in chronic diseases, and interest of the public in nutrition, which has skyrocketed since I became a member.”

Matthys adds, “As a young dietitian, I calculated a person's nutrient intake by hand using USDA Handbook 8. Today the computer and software programs have greatly increased our efficiency and analytic ability.”

### ENTHUSIASM AND DEVOTION

Gretchen Robinson, MS, RDN, FADA, FAND, joined in 1968 and worked for 26 years as the corporate dietitian for



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Health Care Facilities Inc in Lima, OH. She says her “untiring enthusiasm and devotion” led her to serve as—among many other positions—chair of the Member Quality Management and Public Policy committees and author of the “Revised 2018 Standards of Practice and Standards of Professional Performance for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (Competent, Proficient and Expert) in Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Nutrition.”

“My membership provides me with confidence to embrace change and venture into uncharted territories; to seek counsel; build partnerships; and be bold enough to challenge the status quo and dare to take risks as a teacher, role model and mentor,” says Robinson.

### YOU MADE HISTORY

More than 150 members achieved 50-year status in 2019. In October at the Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo, I had the privilege of visiting with many of them. I thanked them for their service and for making our organization and our profession what it is today. More than 1,000 individuals have been Academy members for at least 50 years. Thank you all! You are not just a part of the Academy's history; you made our history. And we stand on your shoulders.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2019.12.005>