



**Amber D. Howells, PhD, RDN, LD, Paula K. Leibovitz, MS, RDN, CDCES, CDN,  
Donna S. Martin, EdS, RDN, LD, SNS, FAND, Carol W. Shanklin, PhD, RD**

## **Introducing the Academy's 2021-2022 President: Kevin Sauer, PhD, RDN, LD, FAND**

**It is our pleasure to introduce the 96th President of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Kevin Sauer. Kevin's campaign statement when he ran for president-elect sums up his leadership mantra and style: "High fives are difficult to do alone. Leadership occurs when others reach goals together and instinctively do it again because they are inspired."<sup>1</sup>**

Kevin is humble, genuine and an inclusive leader who uses his wit and creativity to move people and situations forward. He is approachable with a dynamic personality. Kevin's colleagues appreciate his levity and use of food puns to bring well-timed laughter to a situation while not losing focus of the task on hand. In our view, Kevin is the "pearfect pearson with the pearfect pearsonality" to lead the Academy.

Kevin has devoted his career to innovative teaching and mentoring; to research that enhances nutrition and dietetics practice; and to servant leadership. Kevin will lead the Academy with vision, strategic thinking, dedication and commitment, and do so while never forgetting the importance of humor and building relationships.

"From the classroom to the boardroom," Kevin says, "I feel there is an enormous amount of opportunity to impact the well-being and health of others, locally and globally."

Kevin's leadership qualities can be summed up in one word: commitment.

### **COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION**

Kevin's career path has shaped his leadership style and ability to work with diverse individuals and situations. His career has been dedicated to management and leadership in dietetics, including professional industry experience and teaching and research. Prior to his current position as professor in the department of Food, Nutrition, Dietetics and Health at Kansas State University, his experience included managerial roles in child nutrition, health care and college and university foodservice.

Through his passion for teaching and focus on people, Kevin inspires students to open their minds, grow professionally and personally and reach their full potential. He uses his practice experiences to make his classroom realistic and relevant, while challenging his students to maximize each educational opportunity. His students describe him as supportive, passionate, inspiring and caring. The numerous awards he has received exemplify his

creativity and innovative teaching style. They include the Myers-Alford Excellence in Teaching Award, Outstanding Dietetic Educator, Commerce Bank Award for Outstanding Teaching and K-State Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching.

As a role model for future and current practitioners, Kevin is frequently invited to present at conferences to discuss his unique and highly effective teaching approaches.

### **COMMITMENT TO RESEARCH**

Kevin values research. In his words: "Research can be a noun or a verb and either way, it is essential for our profession." As co-director of the USDA-supported Center for Food Safety and Research in Child Nutrition Programs, he has helped put food safety, specifically in child nutrition programs, on the map. He guides his team to ensure that results are applicable to practice and engages practitioners in each research project.

Kevin has conducted research on job and career satisfaction in the nutrition and dietetics profession and has mentored graduate students to develop meaningful projects related to clinical leadership and clinical nutrition management. He demonstrates that management and leadership are important attributes in any aspect of our profession.

### **COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP**

Kevin's colleagues quickly recognized his leadership potential and have enjoyed watching his leadership abilities grow throughout his career. His leadership style is inclusive and appreciative. He builds trusting relationships so that difficult decisions can be made even in a divisive environment and everyone can still feel good about the outcome.

Kevin completes leadership positions with a list of accomplishments but also understands and highlights individuals who contributed and helped make those accomplishments possible. True leaders, he knows, are those

who are part of the team. Kevin's leadership roles prior to his current position include chair of the Commission on Dietetic Registration, the Finance and Audit Committee, the RDN/NDTR Exam Panel and RDN/NDTR Entry-Level Practice Audit. He has served on numerous task forces and been a member of several dietetic practice groups.

### COMMITMENT TO FAMILY

Central to Kevin's life is his family: his very supportive wife, Christy; his wonderful daughters, Jillian and Libby; and his

cat, Meatloaf. Kevin enjoys unique family adventures, particularly attending concerts with his family.

It is our honor to *toast* Kevin Sauer as the 2021-2022 President of the Academy. We *cannoli* dream of the great things he will do!

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2021.04.003>

### Reference

1. Academy Elections. Kevin Sauer, PHD, RDN, LD, FAND. <https://elections.webauthor.com/elections/candidates.cfm?actionxm=Detail&guid=3D6DE269-035E-3D91-710C9F29F0AFC95B>. Accessed February 16, 2021.