Why do you encourage students to join DCSP?

Work experience, whether volunteer or paid, is an important criterion in receiving appointment to post-graduate internships. By creating the DCSP, WMU dietetics has formalized the process of seeking volunteer work experiences. Our goal is to help students develop the professional skills that post-graduate dietetic internship programs and entry-level positions in dietetics require.

Can you explain what the Dietetic Community Service Program is? How this program has evolved and how long it has been available to dietetic students?

The Dietetic Community Service Program (DCSP) is a volunteer service learning opportunity for dietetic students. It was established in 2001 in collaboration with the South West Michigan District Dietetic Association (SWMDDA). Although participation in this program is not required for graduation at this time, students are highly encouraged to join the program.

Why do you encourage students to join DCSP?

Work experience, whether volunteer or paid, is an important criterion in receiving appointment to post-graduate internships. By creating the DCSP, WMU dietetics has formalized the process of seeking volunteer work experiences. Our goal is to help students develop the professional skills that post-graduate dietetic internship programs and entry-level positions in dietetics require.

How do you think this program will benefit the students in their career in the future?

Getting out into real work settings helps bridge classroom learning and knowledge required for entry-level jobs. Further, working alongside various food service, health and allied health professionals boosts students’ confidence and prepares them for demands of post-graduate internships and future jobs.

What is your vision for DCSP? Where would you like to see the program in a couple years from now?

My goal is to increase student participation in this valuable service learning program. On average about 15% of dietetics students submit applications and participate in DCSP each semester. We have been able to do a lot of site development the past couple of years, thanks entirely to the diligent work of our e-board that is primarily composed of upper-level dietetics majors. Currently, we have more facilities and mentors that have expressed interest to collaborate with us than there is demand by students. Therefore, in the next two years, we would like to increase participation in DCSP to 25%.

Still not convinced why you should join? What past volunteers say:

- **Beth Tourney** (TenderCare, Foodservice/clinical)- “Go, and grab this great opportunity! It will broaden your knowledge and help you in your career as a future Dietitian.”

- **Brittany Grison** (Fountains at Bronson, Foodservice)- “I learned how to be more patient with the residents and aware of special dietary needs.”

- **Rachel Place** (Alamo Nursing Home, Clinical)- “You get hands-on experience with creating menu plans, filling out nutrition assessments, and reviewing weight charts.”
Opportunities at WMU:

Come out to the **Student Dietetic Association (SDA)**

meetings every other Monday at 4pm.

SDA is a partnership with DCSP. Membership in SDA allows you to participate in many educational activities during the academic year. If you have any questions, contact the SDA president Johnathan by email: Johnathan.hemoldt@wmich.edu

---

**Percentage of DCSP participants with 4 and 5 ratings on mentor evaluations:**

- Listening skills — 100%
- Working independently — 100%
- Interpersonal communication — 92%
- Initiative and motivation — 92%
- Adaptability — 92%
- Respect for diversity — 92%
- Overall potential as a future Dietitian — 92%

**Rating description:**

4 = More than satisfactory; 5 = Outstanding,

---

**Strengths and skills gained through the DCSP participation: student evaluations**

- Building confidence in:
  - reading patient charts
  - using common formulas
  - doing calculations
  - food/drug interaction
  - medical terminology
- Flexibility, teamwork, patience, listening
- Interviewing skills
- Patient contact skills
- Problem solving skills

---

**DCSP Committee members:**

**Executive secretary:**
Lilibeth Tourney
Lilibeth.l.tourney@wmich.edu

**Mentor Coordinator:**
Rachel Place
Rachel.l.place@wmich.edu

**Public Relations:**
Renee Janisse
Renee.m.janisse@wmich.edu

**Faculty Advisor:**
Dr. Arezoo Rojhani
Arezoo.rojhani@wmich.edu

---

**SPECIALS THANKS TO OUR MENTORS!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization and Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Ross, R.D.</td>
<td>(Borgess Hospital)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane Delhey, M.S., R.D.</td>
<td>(Bronson Hospital Nutrition Services &amp; Diabetes Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie Sutton, R.D.</td>
<td>(TenderCare Nursing Home)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valerie Keich, R.D.</td>
<td>(Alamo Nursing Home)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Webley, R.D.</td>
<td>(Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital, Healthy Weight Center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Mitchell, Director of Dining Services</td>
<td>(Fountains at Bronson)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Neverske, Sous Chef</td>
<td>(Senior Services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leatta Byrd, M.A., R.D.</td>
<td>(Extension Educator, MSU Extension)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>