Welcome to the second annual edition of the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology’s alumni newsletter NutrEx. The fall 2018 newsletter was a hit, and we are delighted to tell you more about the exciting activities underway in the department.

In these pages you will learn about the first cohort of students admitted into our new graduate research-based academic programs. You will be introduced to a new faculty member who will help ramp up our research activities, specifically nutrition and the gut microbiome and our “soil to society” efforts with colleagues in the College of Agriculture, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS). Our Alumni Spotlight features a blast from the past when our academic programs were housed in the Department of Food Sciences and Human Nutrition on the Pullman campus. As will be tradition in our newsletter, you will get a sense of the many excellent faculty, staff and students in our department and how they are making a difference through their contributions to WSU’s land-grant university mission.

Great things are ahead for NEP, so stay tuned.

Cheers!

Glen E. Duncan, PhD, RCEP
Professor and Chair
Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
The Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology (NEP) was awarded initial accreditation for its Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology degree program by the Committee on Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences (CoAES), under the auspices of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP).

NEP is the first exercise science program to be accredited by CoAES in Washington and one of only 64 accredited programs in the U.S. 

“Earning this accreditation is a major accomplishment for our program and gives us a competitive edge here in Washington and across the nation,” said Glen Duncan, chair and professor for the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology. “Not only does it further validate the quality of education we’re providing to our students, it places our students ahead of the curve in preparation for professional careers in exercise science.”

Founded in 2004, the CoAES establishes standards and guidelines for academic programs that facilitate the preparation of students seeking employment in the health, fitness, and exercise industry.

NEP’s accreditation assures students and stakeholders that the program meets the standards of education in exercise science developed by leading professionals and organizations. It also benefits students by lowering the cost and easing the registration process for credentialing exams and gives students a leg-up on additional credentialing exams, which are expected to be required in future years.

The initial accreditation period is for five years.
NEP WELCOMES SEVEN STUDENTS INTO NEW RESEARCH-BASED PROGRAMS

This fall, NEP launched its Master of Science (MS) and Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) degree tracks focusing on diet and physical activity in clinical, community, and population settings.

The first class of seven MS NEP and PhD NEP students joined the Spokane campus community in August from a variety of backgrounds and regions. This accomplished cohort includes students with prior training at WSU, Eastern Washington University, University of Virginia, Whitworth University, University of Idaho, and Brigham Young University. Their diverse academic training includes nutrition and dietetics, exercise science, and athletic training, as well as zoology, community health, and health science.

The new graduate students also bring energy and expertise to NEP undergraduates with four of the PhD students serving as graduate teaching assistants in lab-based courses in the BS program. These classroom contacts between programs have the potential to lead to new research opportunities for undergraduates and mentorship opportunities for graduate students.

The students are already off to a fast start in promoting an atmosphere of scholarship and professionalism in NEP by organizing a graduate student-run research club in which students in all programs have the opportunity to discuss and debate the most recent research.

This incoming class represents an important transition for NEP, which moved to the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine in 2017. After completing their core coursework in the program, these students will carry out thesis and dissertation research under the guidance of the growing NEP faculty. With four new tenure-track faculty appointments added to the NEP ranks in the last three years, the students will have a wide range of training and mentorship opportunities from which to launch their research careers. Regardless of their choice of research advisor, their projects will be aligned with the renewed mission of the department, which emphasizes rigorous applied research in the service of improving clinical practice and community health.
Terri J. Raymond, MA, RDN, LD, FAND, is a graduate of the Human Nutrition and Dietetics program when it was still in Pullman and is now president and owner of Dietitian Consulting Services and the 2019-20 President of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

A dedicated member of the Academy, Terri has been actively involved in a range of roles including board chair for the Academy’s Foundation, member of the Leadership Institute Oversight Task Force, member of the Competency and Assurance Panel, member of Appeals Panel of the Commission on Dietetic Registration, member of the Finance Committee, and chair of the Professional Development Committee. In addition, she represented Washington in the Academy’s House of Delegates, as well as served as past president of the Washington State Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

True to her commitment to leadership and growth, she challenged dietetic practitioners in her opening address at the annual Food and Nutrition Expo in October 2019 to “maximize the endless opportunities that come with living and practicing in an era of nonstop-and ever-accelerating change."

Before launching Dietitian Consulting Service in 2001, Terri worked as a registered dietitian nutritionist for a Food Management Corporation in positions of increasing responsibility including director of clinical consultation, regional manager, vice president, and president.
In August 2019, NEP welcomed its newest faculty member: Dr. Franck Carbonero.

Dr. Carbonero joined us from the University of Arkansas where he served as an assistant professor in the Department of Food Science for nearly seven years. Prior to that, he worked as a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign for three years.

His education includes a BS in Biology from Universite Joseph Fourier, France, an MS in Ecology from Universite Blaise Pascal, France, and a PhD in Microbiology from the University of Warwick, United Kingdom.

Dr. Carbonero has published 40 scientific articles and delivered more than 15 presentations at scientific meetings. He also serves as the academic editor for Plos One and editorial board member for four other journals.

His research program is focused on nutrition and its impact on the human and animal gut microbiome with an emphasis on dietary bioactives.
FACULTY NEWS

NEP in the News
NEP professors are increasingly sought after by local and national media for their expertise on how nutrition and exercise impact our lives. Here are some of the topics they discussed:

EAST-WEST HEALTH DIVIDE
A report on health inequities between eastern and western Washington by Ofer Amram and colleagues received extensive media coverage, including in 1889 Magazine, The Spokesman-Review, Associated Press, and KREM TV.

HOW TO EAT HEALTHFULLY DURING THE HOLIDAYS
April Davis shared her tips with CougCast on healthy eating during the holiday season.

ATHLETE RECOVERY
Hans Haverkamp was quoted in the Inlander on smarter ways for athletes to recover between training sessions.

TOO MANY STEPS TO HEALTH
Glen Duncan provided insights for a piece in The Spokesman-Review on whether we need to reach 10,000 steps per day to maintain health.

WHICH SPOKANE NEIGHBORHOODS HOLD THE KEYS TO HEALTHY LIVING
Pablo Monsivais and Ofer Amram were interviewed by The Spokesman-Review and KREM TV about the SHELI project, their interactive tool to visualize features of Spokane’s urban environment that can shape our lifestyles and health.

CHILD OBESITY IN SPOKANE
Pablo Monsivais was interviewed by KREM TV, Spokane Public Radio, The Spokesman-Review, and the Inlander regarding his research article with Ofer Amram on the link between child obesity, poverty, and neighborhood characteristics.

WHY WE SNEEZE
Hans Haverkamp was interviewed about the science of sneezing and respiration for the Ask Dr. Universe column in The Spokesman Review.

IS KOMBUCHA A HEALTHY BEVERAGE
Franck Carbonero shared his expertise with the New York Times regarding the potential health benefits of the fermented tea-based drink.

LAB MICE
Franck Carbonero was quoted in The Scientist on the limitations of traditional laboratory rodent models for studies of human health.

Research Round-Up
We have developed a more uniform web experience for faculty to showcase their research with links to their curriculum vitae, Google Scholar page, and individual lab pages. We invite you to explore the varied research and scholarship being conducted by NEP faculty here: https://medicine.wsu.edu/nep-department/nep-faculty-and-staff. We will also continue to share news (with pictures!) about our research infrastructure here: https://medicine.wsu.edu/nep-facilities.
In addition to achieving accreditation of the BS NEP program this year, we made several additional strides to elevate and expand our department. Check out some of the highlights from 2019:

WSU’s Office of Assessment of Teaching and Learning recognized the BS NEP program for its use of data and evaluation to improve the quality of student writing across all BS NEP courses.

The BS NEP program added a second study track for students beginning in fall 2020. Supplementing our more traditional Applied Exercise Physiology Track, the Community and Population Health Track will focus on ecological influences ranging from individual and interpersonal factors to community and population-level factors on physical activity and eating behaviors. New courses to support this track include NEP 477 Health Behavior and NEP 481 Population Health.

Our geographic information system expert, Ofer Amram, developed NEP 200 Place and Health, which is part of WSU’s UCORE, and NEP 560 Geographic Information Systems in Health and Social Sciences. We anticipate these courses will draw a diverse group of students interested in learning more about how place impacts health and the tools used in the broad field of spatial epidemiology.
Before attending his first lecture or enduring his first test as a junior in the undergraduate NEP program, Jin Yoo knew he wouldn’t be graduating with his classmates. Instead, he would step away at the end of the 2016-17 academic year to perform his duty as a South Korean citizen and serve two years in the country’s army.

Jin didn’t mind leaving, but not coming back was never an option. Some of his friends from junior year, who are now graduate students in the department, helped make sure he stuck to his plans by keeping in touch over the two years and visiting Jin during his leave and after completing his service last spring.

The goal of graduating with a degree in nutrition and exercise took shape while at Edmonds Community College where Jin landed in 2012 at just 16 years old. He spent his middle and high school years at an international school in Indonesia where many students relocated to places like Australia and the U.S. for college. When Jin mentioned to an advisor that he was interested in computers, he was encouraged to consider the Seattle area due to its ties to Microsoft.

A personal journey to lose weight spurred an interest in nutrition and exercise, which is when Jin realized he wanted to understand the science behind how his body was transforming and help others to achieve similar goals. From Edmonds, he attended WSU Pullman to finish prerequisite courses and transferred to the BS NEP at WSU Health Sciences Spokane.

Jin concluded his military service in 2019 with a rank of squad leader and returned to the Northwest. In August, Jin returned to class, but was faced with a new group of seniors who had bonded over the previous year. Jin quickly recognized the feeling of being a fascination to his new peers.

Settling back into his studies wasn’t nearly as foreign, Jin noted. He feels at home with his new set of classmates and credits the culture in the department as key to his success thus far.

“I so appreciate the staff and professors for helping my transition back after the gap in years, it is such a supportive atmosphere here.”
— Jin Yoo
STUDENT NEWS

BRAJEE GREEN NAMED WSAND OUTSTANDING STUDENT OF THE YEAR

The Washington State Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics honored Brajee Green as its Outstanding Student of the Year on April 8, 2019, at the state educational conference. Brajee is a 2018 BS NEP graduate and current MS CPD student.

The Outstanding Student Award recognizes the emerging leadership and achievement of students in ACEND-accredited dietetics education programs and encourages their participation in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Not only has Brajee exhibited compassion for others while attending graduate school full-time and raising a family, she is actively improving food security in the Spokane community. Through her ability to bring key players together, along with her drive, empathy, and leadership skills, she transformed the Campus Pantry at WSU Health Sciences Spokane from a volunteer-based, student-run club into a student service funded by the Division of Student Affairs. Additionally, she is an Associated Students of Washington State University committee member and a core team member of the University District’s Health Equity Circle.

Brajee will finish her MS CPD this year and plans to take the national board exam and become a registered dietitian nutritionist in 2020. Go get ‘em, Brajee!

GIVE TO NEP

The Nutrition and Exercise Physiology Excellence Fund nourishes our students with support for scholarships, innovative thesis projects on community health, faculty development and promotion of critical partnerships to ensure the growth and maturity of our degree programs.

“The generosity of donor support helps relieve some of the financial debt and stress that comes along with pursuing an advanced degree. I deeply appreciate the financial support and can assure that this assistance is an investment; the return being the influence and changes I hope to make in peoples’ lives and within the field of nutrition upon graduation.”

— Katherine Stutz
NEP student

Please consider a gift to the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology Excellence Fund by visiting medicine.wsu.edu/give/.
WSU NEP Facts

Serving Size............................1
Servings Per University............1

Amount Per Serving

Mission..................................1
The Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology seeks to promote the health of individuals and communities through research, teaching, and service activities in human nutrition and exercise physiology, and the application of these sciences in academic, clinical, public health, and industry settings.

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Support NEP with an end-of-year gift. Donations to the Excellence Fund support student scholarships and financial aid, student travel to professional conferences, new equipment, and faculty recruitment and retention. To donate, click here, visit medicine.wsu.edu/give, or contact our development office at 509-358-7616 or nancy.fike@wsu.edu.