

INNOVATIONS & COLLABORATIONS AGAINST HUNGER

COLLABORATIONS TO FIGHT HUNGER – Evelyn Crayton

October 13, 2015 - 10:10 a.m.

Ambassador Kenneth Quinn

President - World Food Prize Foundation

So now I'm here to introduce our next speaker. I've got to do this quick, because she's the president of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and they formed a blue ribbon panel to advise them, because their centennial is coming up in 1917. So they had all these distinguished physicians and scientists. And they called me and I said, "I guess I get it that you think you should have at least one person who doesn't know much about nutrition on there to kind of counterbalance all the experts and give the opinion." So that's how I got on there, I think, Dr. Crayton.

But it was an amazing experience, because what I learned is they showed me the picture when the Academy was started in 1917, and it's like three or four rows, all women, who started it. So I said, "You know, before there was STEM, before anybody was emphasizing this, before we were talking about girls need to be educated, it was the women in nutrition and dietetics who were leading the way and showing our country what we had to do." So congratulations. And if you could tell Senator Grassley, I said, "Their organization deserves a Congressional Gold Medal." And I remember how the senator and Senator Harkin led the way for Norman Borlaug, so we can start the lobbying effort today, if it's okay with you.

But she's a professor emeritus from Auburn University, so when you greet her, everybody, the first thing you say is, "War eagle!" because that's what everybody from Auburn... It's a long story. But she's been on FDA Advisory Committees, president now of the Academy and a terrific advocate for extension, for education and for their importance. And now at this critical moment when nutrition, food – everybody's aware that it's so important – we are so thrilled to have her here. So join me in welcoming Dr. Evelyn Crayton.

COLLABORATIONS TO FIGHT HUNGER

Evelyn Crayton

President, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Good morning. Ambassador Quinn is so kind to us as dietitians and nutritionists, and I want to thank you all and Dr. Quinn and Mrs. Grassley for everything that you all have done to advance the cause of dietetics and nutrition in America and globally. Thank you so much for inviting the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics here to speak to you today.

First of all, I appreciate so much... These are the women who started this in 1917 in Cleveland, Ohio. Believe it or not, they didn't even have the right to vote, but they saw a need. And it happened by a few dozen members who started an organization in 1917. We have since grown to over 76,000 members, and I have the pleasure of representing these members at this day and time.

The Academy is now planning for our 100th celebration, and Ambassador Quinn is a part of that blue ribbon panel, and we're blessed to have him to help us prepare for our next 100 years. Thank you so much.

We have spent our lives in our profession and in our career, preparing to reduce and eliminate hunger. It all started when there was a war and these women decided that we needed to help feed America better. Education is one significant area of our work. In every practice area from the clinic and the community to schools, to corporate wellness, registered dietitians and dietetic technicians register are focusing on education, consumers and on the best food choices within the realm of available resources.

For example, we have a position paper on food insecurity, and it states that systematic and sustained action is needed to achieve food and nutrition security for all in the United States. To eliminate food insecurity, interventions are needed, including adequate funding for an increased utilization of food and nutritional assistance programs, the inclusion of food and nutrition education in such programs, and innovative programs to promote and support individual household economic sufficiency.

You heard about the SNAP program. That is an important program. We all understand that education is as important as providing food assistance. To quote from a 2013 article in our journal, "Eliminating hunger does not have only one answer or a pair." There are many different ways that Academy members are achieving the goal. The article spotlights the efforts of several of our members. At Arizona State University, we have Meg Brunnan; she's exploring how eating behaviors and other psychological, psycho-social issues relate to food insecurity among parents and youth.

In North Dakota, there's an increased demand for food in gaps in areas served by food pantries. This has led to the formation of State First, creating a hunger-free North Dakota coalition. In Burke County, Georgia, we have a nutritionist who feeds all of the students in their school food service program, the school lunch program, all of the students on free and/or reduced lunches. In Ohio, Michelle Berger Marshall and Kim Prendergast are leading efforts for Feeding America, which is a pilot project to see how its members and the Food Banks can be part of the solution to programs and problems that are related to diabetes and trying to reduce the burden of diabetes among that population.

Now, we're at the table. If you look to my right and your left, there's one of our members, Donna Martin, who's meeting with the President's first lady, meeting with the first lady, Ms. Michelle Obama, talking about food policy as relates to school nutrition.

Feeding America—you just heard about the efforts of one of our partners in Feeding America. In June 2012, the "Future of Food Security in the 21st Century" Conference was held in Washington, DC. This initiative is by the National Dairy Council, the Academy of Nutrition and

Dietetics and Feeding America. This slide shows the Academy president at that time, Ethan Bergman. The purpose of the partnership is to lead the nationwide initiative to design and help families obtain adequate amounts of healthy food and reduce the level of food insecurity in the United States.

This collaboration has brought together many professionals from all around the country – dietitians, registered dietitians and nutritionists to help with the hunger relief. Here we have another opportunity in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. We now have a dietetic internship because of the growing need of hungry in America, we decided that we needed to educate our future dietitians and nutritionists in working in Food Banks. Therefore, we have created a dietetic internship to help our young people or our future dietitians and nutritionists learn the importance of working with people who are food insecure. This is a 120-hour program, which is supervised by other registered dietitians and nutritionists. For nearly a year, this project has been advancing, and we're now in the testing phase for the learning activities. We're very enthusiastic about the future of dietetics and what our future dietitians can do in the area of Food Banking.

Now, I'm rushing, as you can tell, because I want to leave some time for questions and answers if you want to hear more about us.

The Healthy Food Bank Hub is a collaboration of the Academy's Foundation, Feeding America, and the National Dairy Council. The Hub is a website designed specifically to bridge conversations about hunger relief and good nutrition and to provide information and resources necessary to connect Feeding America's network to over 200+ Food Banks and over 61,000 agencies with the nutrition professionals available to answer your questions or to connect with you, work with you in your projects or with your agencies.

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation is entering its fourth year of leading the "Meet the Challenge Project" with the Iowa Department of Education through their USDA Team Nutrition Grant. In this project, we train and provide technical assistance to RDNs in Iowa to help schools from wellness committees assess their wellness environment, develop action plans, and apply for USDA HealthierUS Food Challenge Awards. We have worked with many schools here in Iowa, impacting thousands of young people, thousands of children.

This year, RDNs will be presenting an enhanced version of the Kids Eat Right / Healthy Schools – it's a team effort toolkit as part of a two-hour workshop for teachers in 20 Iowa schools. Teachers will gain practical tips for integrating nutrition education and physical activity into the school day. We're also promoting our healthy breakfast or feeding school breakfast, and the champion for school wellness changes in the districts here in Iowa. And we're supporting the district nutrition programs, and we're trying to spread the word to our peers. Ten of the schools then receive RDN assistance, and they can then apply for the HealthierUS School Challenge Award.

I'm rushing, because it's hard to follow up with all of the wonderful presentations that have been made, but I want you to have an opportunity to ask me questions. I hope in the past few minutes I have been able to tell you about some of the ways the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and our members are working to address hunger and create healthy food-secure families. We have no higher priority than improving our nation's health.

I'd like to say, personally, I have spent my entire career as a registered dietitian, nutritionist, working with underserved populations. I myself came from an underserved population. I truly believe that education is the key to help lift our people out of poverty, and if we're educated and we can convince our policymakers that education is important, we can help our people to no longer be food insecure.

For all of you to accomplish this goal, for all the people who asked the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to be here today, I want to thank you personally and open this up for questions if we have time for that. I have a colleague here, Mary Pat Raimondi, from my public policy office in Washington, DC. We'll be around. Mary Pat, would you stand so that they can come to us and ask us questions how we can partner with you in your state, in your community, and in your country to help you with getting a registered dietitian nutritionist to come and work with you. Thank you.

Questions?

Ambassador Quinn

One or two quick questions?

Q&A

Evelyn Someone asked the question over here about obesity and what are they doing to document it. There are food-insecure people who are actually obese because they're getting foods that are less expensive. It's hard to say the word "cheap" anymore, but they are getting the lower-cost foods, and they are high in calories but not so nutrient-dense, thus contributing to the obesity epidemic. So food insecurity and obesity go hand in hand, because a lot of food-insecure people are getting foods that they don't necessarily need, thus an increase in wages for those people who are working really hard so they can afford to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. And when they can't afford to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, they could buy canned fruit or frozen fruit as opposed to a bag of chips or sweetened drinks, sugar-sweetened drinks that fill them up or satisfy them but they are not nutrient-dense.

There's one way in the back there.

Q When you combine education, nutrition education with food assistance, how much difference does it make in the actual eating habits?

Evelyn There's a project that started in 1964 in Alabama, and I'm from Alabama. There was a project done with low-income, low-literacy people, which led to what we now know as the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. That program is well documented to show that, when you do nutrition education – and this was one on one, going in the homes, educating the parents, educating the children, teaching the children in the school system, doing home food demonstrations, teaching meal planning, meal costs, calculating the cost of the food, meal planning, meal preparation and all. We found that people did better; even on a low-income budget, they did better when they were educated in meal planning, meal preparation and cost calculations.

We are available.

Ambassador Quinn

That's right. Thank you, Dr. Crayton.