

THE DEAN'S LETTER FOR TUFTS NUTRITION



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DEAN KENNEDY LAUDS GRADUATES' "DEPTH AND BREADTH" OF NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE AT SCHOOL'S 30TH COMMENCEMENT

The Friedman School awarded 98 degrees, including six doctorates, at its 30th commencement ceremony, held at Cohen Auditorium on the Medford/Somerville campus on May 22.

Dean **Eileen Kennedy**, D.Sc., who is stepping down this summer after leading the school for seven years, praised the "breadth and depth" of nutrition knowledge that characterizes a Friedman School graduate, from scientists who are well versed in policy to policy students who are grounded in nutrition science.

Friedman School students, she said, will never have to defend the relevance of nutrition. "It is more and more related

to almost every aspect of our life globally," said Kennedy, who will spend the next year in Geneva working with the United Nations and other organizations involved in the Scaling Up Nutrition effort.

Nutrition is not without its thrills, said **Edward Cooney**, executive director of the Congressional Hunger Center, who gave the commencement address. Just last month, he said, he and a Friedman School graduate were visiting food programs in Africa and found themselves racing across the savannahs of Senegal in SUVs going 100 kilometers an hour, while "dodging potholes which were obviously made by giant dinosaurs."

"This story highlights one of the exciting opportunities and challenges that await you as new leaders," said Cooney, a Friedman School overseer who has held two senior positions in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and has worked on every major child nutrition and food stamp bill since 1977.

Being a true leader, he said, means always saying and doing what you think is right, no matter what the cost.

"The word 'no' you should treat as advisory only," he said. In Washington, D.C., in particular,

he said, the word no “means you haven’t reached the person with the amount of power necessary to assist you in achieving your stated goal.”

In giving the class address, master’s degree recipient **Ronit Ridberg** proclaimed it was time for her and her classmates to change the world—having gotten no reprieve by the rapture that was predicted the day before. “I thought maybe we’d be off the hook, but since the world didn’t end yesterday, it looks like we are actually going to have to do this,” she said.

With appropriate apologies to her professors, the Agriculture, Food and Environment Program graduate then compared her education to manure: “It doesn’t do anyone any good unless you spread it around,” she said. In the case of nutrition, she said that means making links for others between nutrition and health, food and the environment and production and consumption, for example.

Fertilizer is an honorific metaphor for a graduate who hopes to support small and mid-sized farmers. She encouraged her classmates to hold onto their passion, which for her is the wonder that food comes out of the ground. “Ever pulled a giant head of garlic up by its stalk, or dug for potatoes?” she asked. “Yeah, it’s that awesome.”

DR. ELIE J. BAGHDADY MEMORIAL INTERNS

Two Dr. Elie J. Baghdady Memorial Interns will be traveling overseas this summer to help improve the health and well-being of families. **Elaine Siew**, a master’s degree candidate in the Food Policy and Applied Nutrition (FPAN) program, will be going to Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India, to work with the Clinton Health Access Initiative, created by former President Clinton to improve health care in the developing world. **Elizabeth Whelan**, also a master’s degree student in the FPAN program, will be traveling to Port-au-Prince and the Lower Artibonite in Haiti to conduct research for Partners in Health. Read more about the Dr. Elie J. Baghdady Memorial Interns and the people who support them at: <http://alumni.nutrition.tufts.edu/?pid=93&c=145>.

FRESH PRODUCE PIPELINE FOR TUFTS COMMUNITY

Tufts’ **New Entry Sustainable Farming Project**, which trains farmers in the greater Boston area, is helping bring some of that produce back to campus for the Tufts community to enjoy in the dining halls and at home.

New Entry provides beginning, immigrant and refugee farmers with farming and financial training; helps them access land and equipment both on their training farms and through a land matching program; and helps them connect with local consumers, primarily through a marketing cooperative called World PEAS (People Enhancing Agricultural Sustainability).

World PEAS primarily sells produce through its CSA (community supported agriculture) program, in which members pay at the beginning of the season and receive a weekly box of produce and fruit from mid-June to Thanksgiving. Small shares, sized for households of two, run about \$25 a week, while a larger box for a household of four is about \$39 a week; the

boxes include most or all of the vegetables and fruit a family would need during the season. World PEAS delivers the weekly produce boxes to the Jaharis Center on the Boston campus and to Miller Hall on the Medford/Somerville campus. In addition, there are more than a dozen other pickup locations in the greater Boston and Lowell areas.

World PEAS has also partnered with UTEC, a Lowell-based nonprofit working with at-risk youth, to offer a farmers' market on the Medford/Somerville campus in September and October. This year, World PEAS has also coordinated with the Tufts Dining Service to provide local produce to be served in the dining halls.

To learn more about World PEAS or to sign up for the CSA visit www.worldpeascsa.org, email nesfp@tufts.edu or call 978.654.6745.

RESEARCH UPDATE

Assistant Professor **Jennifer Sacheck**, Ph.D., was awarded a four-year, \$3.1 million grant by the NIH National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute to investigate the impact of vitamin D supplementation on vitamin D status and cardiometabolic risk factors in urban schoolchildren. The study will take place in the Massachusetts communities of Cambridge, Somerville, Everett, Lynn and Malden. Associate Professor **Christina Economos**, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Faculty **Virginia Chomitz**, Ph.D., and Professor **Elizabeth Goodman**, M.D., are also co-investigators on the study.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES

Anita Iskandar, N09, took second place in the best poster competition at the Tufts Cancer Center's Comparative Oncology Symposium. The title of her poster, co-authored with her thesis advisor, Professor **Xiang-Dong Wang**, M.D., Ph.D., was "Beta-cryptoxanthin Inhibits Lung Tumor by Suppressing Alpha-7 Nicotinic Receptor Expression and AKT Activation in A/J Mouse Model."

Associate Professor **Stefania Lamon-Fava**, M.D., Ph.D., a scientist in the Lipid Metabolism Laboratory at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging (HNRCA), received the 2011 Robert M. Russell Scientific Achievement Award, given to an HNRCA scientist, past or present, whose primary paper (not review article) published in 2008 had the greatest number of citations in the literature; this year's winning paper was cited 38 times. Her paper was titled "Extended-release Niacin Alters the Metabolism of Plasma Apolipoprotein (Apo) A-I and ApoB-containing Lipoproteins."

Jonathan Mein, N07, N11, a graduate research assistant in the Nutrition and Cancer Biology Laboratory at the HNRCA, received the 2011 Irwin H. Rosenberg Award for Excellence in Pre-doctoral Research from the HNRCA. His graduate work on carotenoid metabolism has "identified a new role of xanthophylls in cancer prevention and opened a new avenue in carotenoid research," as described by his thesis advisor, Professor **Xiang-Dong Wang**, M.D., Ph.D.

Adjunct Lecturer **Jill Shuman** was honored by the Medford-based organization English at Large, which provides free English literacy instruction to adults in 20 Boston area communities. Shuman received the Mildred Gilman Award, which recognizes a volunteer literacy tutor or trainer who has demonstrated an unwavering commitment and flexibility in meeting the growing needs of English At Large. Shuman provides more than 100 hours per year of one-on-one tutoring, as well as leading several conversation groups throughout the year.

The American Society for Nutrition honored Professor **Xiang-Dong Wang**, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Nutrition and Cancer Biology Lab at the HNRCA, with the Mary Swartz Ross Senior Investigator Award during the 2011 Experimental Biology meeting. The award recognizes his research on the safety and efficacy of bioactive compounds for human health. He has also been appointed an associate editor of a new journal, *Advances in Nutrition*, and director of the Asia Scientific Program of the American Society of Nutrition.

HERE & THERE

Assistant Professor **Oliver Chen**, Ph.D., a scientist in the Antioxidants Research Laboratory at the HNRCA, has been invited to present his research on tree nut phytochemical composition and bioactivity at the International Conference on Natural Products in Toulouse, France.

Gershoff Professor **Alice Lichtenstein**, D.Sc., director of the Cardiovascular Nutrition Laboratory at the HNRCA, spoke on "Dietary Saturated Fat and CVD Risk Reduction: What Do the Data Support?" at the 2011 annual scientific sessions of the National Lipid Association in New York City.

Assistant Professor **Diane McKay**, Ph.D., a scientist in the Antioxidants Research Laboratory at the HNRCA, was a contributing author to a new book by Bob Greene, Oprah Winfrey's personal trainer, titled *20 Years Younger*. She wrote the section "A Reasonable Approach to Supplements."

Assistant Professor **Nicola McKeown**, Ph.D., a scientist in the Nutritional Epidemiology Program at the HNRCA, has been asked to serve on the programming committee for the 2012 Whole Grain Summit.

An article titled "When Is a Food Not a Food?" by Professor **Carole Palmer**, Ed.D., director of the Combined Dietetic Internship/Master's Degree Program, and Alicia Romano, dietetic internship preceptor at the Frances Stern Nutrition Center, was published in the *Canadian Journal of Dental Hygiene*.

Professor **Allen Taylor**, Ph.D., director of the Laboratory for Nutrition and Vision Research at the HNRCA, was named a member of the editorial board of the ISRN *Journal of Ophthalmology*. In May, he gave a series of lectures as the coordinator of a special course for advanced health professionals on the molecular biology of aging and neurodegenerative diseases at the University of Coimbra in Portugal. He also hosted the first Science Training

Encouraging Peace-Graduate Training Program (STEP-GTP.org) fellows at that course. STEP-GTP is hosted at Tufts University.

FRIEDMAN FACULTY IN THE NEWS

In a *Chicago Tribune* article on the Federal Trade Commission's crackdown on the marketing of acai berry products through what it says are fake news websites, Professor **Jeffrey Blumberg**, Ph.D., director of the Antioxidants Research Laboratory at the HNRCA, pointed out the paucity of research into the berries' benefits. "They are a natural berry fruit ... rich in many antioxidants, but there have been very few studies that have been performed using them," he said.

In a Letter to the Editor published in the *New York Times*, Gershoff Professor **Alice Lichtenstein**, D.Sc., wrote that "splitting hairs over whether one fish has less omega-3 fatty acids per serving than other types of fish when the total fat content is low seems to miss the point. Let's get people eating more fish, and then worry about fine-tuning either the fish's diet or our diet to edge up the omega-3 content." The letter was in response to an article about tilapia, a farmed fish that, she points out, is more affordable than most other fish on the market.

Assistant Professor **Diane McKay**, Ph.D., helped explain the nutritional value of Vitamin Water to a CNN.com blogger. She explained that water-soluble vitamins, which include vitamin C and all the B vitamins, can degrade when they are subjected to water for a prolonged period. If you also subject them to heat and, for some, light, they will degrade even more rapidly, all of which means the amounts listed on the label are probably different from what you end up imbibing.

Professor **Patrick Webb**, Ph.D., was the lead author of a USAID report released in April on the nutritional quality of food supplied to victims of disasters. The report suggests tweaking the foods to better match recipients' dietary needs, such as adding vitamin D to vegetable oil. "In many cases they may not see great differences," Webb told CNN.com, but he emphasized "a lot of foods will be better for the consumer even if they don't know about it." The full report is at www.foodaidquality.org.

COMING RIGHT UP

The Friedman School will hold a Dean Portrait Installation Ceremony & Reception on June 30 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Jaharis Center on the Boston campus. The event will honor the three deans who have led the school in its 30-year history: **Stanley Gershoff**, Ph.D., **Irwin Rosenberg**, M.D., and **Eileen Kennedy**, D.Sc.