

Laura Thomas, MED, RD, LD, FAND

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Achieve YOUR Goals with My Passion and Precision Performance

HIGHLIGHTS

- Author/developer, *Food Buying Guide Online training* (ICN & USDA, 2020), *Menu Planner Guide for School Meals* and online training (USDA, 2015 and 2016, online training in production) and *Guide to Professional Standards for School Meal Programs* (USDA, 2016), *Grow It! Try It! Like It!* (USDA, 2010), *Nutrition 101: A Taste of Food and Fitness* (NFSMI 2006, 2010, 2012) print and online courses, and numerous training programs (Idaho and South Dakota Child Nutrition Programs). Creator of award-winning and award-worthy nutrition education resources for USDA, WSDC and other lead education groups.
- Newsletter Editor, School Nutrition Services DPG of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (2015-18 term)
- Session presenter at School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference in Denver (2012, Legumes topic), Boston (2014, Sodium topic) and Salt Lake City (2015, Food Safety topic).
- Practical cook, health/culinary skills developed in trainings at CIA (Greystone), Johnson & Wales, and Denver Art Institute; Recipe development, testing, component/nutrient analysis for multiple clients for school nutrition programs.
- Project manager, proven track record of providing superior products – previous clients' projects have been delivered on time, on budget, and with minimal revisions needed. I craft quality work and manage multiple aspects of projects.
- Child nutrition consultant, expertise in USDA child nutrition programs; consultant to manufacturers specializing in nutritious products to meet current USDA food-based meal pattern requirements. Experience in writing cycle menus that meet new program components and target nutrients; menu and recipe nutrition analysis. Provide superior training experience – overwhelming majority of participants 'strongly agree' based on evaluation ratings from trainings conducted during the last 10 years. Extensive experience in national, state, and regional child nutrition professional trainings for ICN (formerly NFSMI), SNA and other organizations. Training topics include food safety, early childhood feeding and CACFP, Child Nutrition programs.

EXPERIENCE

Laura Thomas Nutrition Communications, LLC

Owner/consultant

Clients' goals and objectives are achieved through my passion and precision performance – often with award-winning or raving-review results. My passion is helping others take nutrition and health information – including nutrition, culinary skills, fitness, and food safety – from learning activities to personal, active choices for daily life.

Impact Creative force behind innovative, inspiring education materials and facilitated trainings – designed to move learners from information 'know how' into actionable 'how to' and 'can do' applications, producing improved work performance and personal health.

- ❖ **Dynamic Trainer** – Facilitated more than 150 training sessions in past 15 years (single hour to 10-hour certification) on content including *Nutrition 101: A Taste of Food and Fitness*, *Serving Safe Food in Schools*, *Culinary Math* topics and other child nutrition program topics in ten states and three national meetings. Numerous venues have requested I return as a presenter.
- ❖ **Innovative Author** – Created innovative nutrition training programs and resources for the Institute of Child Nutrition (revision author CARE Connections, author numerous Mealtime Memos), Idaho SDE Child Nutrition Programs, South Dakota SDE Child and Adult Nutrition Services, and USDA on child care (CACFP) nutrition (Dietary Guidelines 2005 4-hour training), school breakfast, afterschool snack program, summer meals, special nutrition and dietary needs, wellness, introducing new foods to young children, and marketing school meals. Past work has received national awards and honors and high reviews in peer-reviewed journals.
- ❖ **Expertise through Experience** – Well-versed in USDA meal pattern requirements. Ongoing work in child nutrition programs keeps approach and knowledge current: activities include program reviews and technical assistance for NSLP/SBP, Summer Foods, Wellness, Healthier US School Challenge:SL applications, and other child nutrition program operations.

Faculty Member – University Affiliations (2005-2014)

University of Phoenix, Boise, ID Campus; Flexnet Course (online); Independent Study in Idaho (online), University of Idaho, Moscow, ID; Culinary Arts Program at Sellaand Technical College, State University, Boise ID Taught Human Nutrition and Culinary Nutrition courses.

Impact: Online and classroom education experiences for health professional majors through chef training culinary arts programs; students report changes in behavior as a result of coursework – some students reduced weight 20 or 30 pounds during courses!

Nutrition Coordinator, Boise School District, 3 years

Boise, ID

Impact: Provided supervision, project management, and creative in-classroom nutrition education thus contributing to achievement of school food and nutrition department goals.

- ❖ **Marketing and Education** – Conducted classroom nutrition education activities and marketing to increase student input and participation.
- ❖ **Technology Project** - Coordinated major technology roll-out. Updated computer hardware and software for 50 sites and central office with comprehensive training while maintaining day-to-day operations (front and back of house) with no data loss in a 4-month window.
- ❖ **Food Service Operations** - Conversion of free and reduced application process to computerized scan system increasing accuracy of data and reducing costs to department. Supervision of 12-15 kitchen sites and staff.

Director of Nutrition Education Programs, Idaho Dairy Council, 18 years

Boise, ID

Impact: Established position as the lead organization in state with school nutrition professionals, health professionals, and educators through development and delivery of nationally recognized nutrition education materials and resources.

- ❖ **Visionary Leadership** – Developed national award winning education materials. Strategically planned and launched campaigns to reach 80% or more of target audiences with materials placement and demonstrated use by reorders.
- ❖ **School Food Safety Innovator** – Based on the results of a food safety milk temperature study, developed a low cost method to maintain safe serving temperatures of milk and provided momentum for later establishment of refrigerated milk cooler grant program for Idaho schools. Results of study were published in the *School Food Service Journal*.
- ❖ **Master Communicator** – Orchestrated statewide partnership during National Nutrition Month on importance of breakfast, including school breakfast with five partner organizations. Conducted statewide media tour generating 1.2 million media impressions. Appeared bi-monthly on local NBC affiliate early morning television for nutrition interview.

EDUCATION

Registered Dietitian 661527, Licensed Dietitian in Idaho D-128

MEd, Vocation Education (emphasis on Adult Education); University of Idaho; Moscow, ID May 1995

BS, Home Economics, Foods and Nutrition Emphasis, Coordinated Consortium Undergraduate Program in Dietetics *Summa cum Laude*; University of Idaho; Moscow, ID, May 1983

Certified Trainer, School Nutrition Association, 2007- 2014

HONORS and RECOGNITION

National and State Honors and Recognition for professional activities and creation of innovative nutrition education resources include: the Dannon Institute; Nutrition Education for the Public DPG, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*; Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior**; Idaho affiliate of/and Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*; Idaho Association of Family and Consumer Sciences; Margaret Ritchie School of Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Idaho, Moscow; Who's Who of American Women and Who's Who in the West; Everyday Hero for Kids Eat Right Campaign, August 2012 and 2014; Fellow, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, FAND awarded August 2014.

MEMERSHIPS and LEADERSHIP

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, Idaho Affiliate and Dietetic Practice Groups: Dietitians in Business and Communications, Food and Culinary Professionals, Nutrition Education for the Public, SCAN, and School Nutrition Services; Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior**; School Nutrition Association and Idaho Affiliate. My leadership roles include state president and media representation for Idaho Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, Webinar chair and EC board member, Food and Culinary Professionals DPG; and Nominating committee chair and EC board member, Nutrition Education for the Public DPG; Newsletter editor, SNS DPG; Reviewer and Volunteer Presenter/Grantee – Kids Eat Right Campaign Healthy Cooking Toolkit, 2011-14, program of the Academy and Foundation of Nutrition and Dietetics. *formerly American Dietetic Association and Idaho affiliate **formerly Society for Nutrition Education