



Affiliate Spotlights

Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (IAND) Capital Area Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (CAAND)

The Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Capital Area Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (CAAND) district recently demonstrated hands-on ways to give back to their community. Led by CAAND President, Josh Kleczynski, and CAAND members Gayle Jennings, Amy Melton and Katie Kassel, they offered their knowledge and support to the area Transitional Shelter. The Transition Shelter provides shelter, transition housing, treatment centers and women's residential services.



Josh and team led Cooking Matters Grocery Store Tours where the residents of the Transitional Shelter gained a better understand of fresh foods in a grocery store. They also lead multiple cooking classes to educate residents on making meals from scratch using resources at hand. The cooking classes were part of a 5 week program where each mom partnered with a nutritionist or dietitian to prepare meals for the families at the Transitional Shelter. The recipes showcased basic cooking skills and ways to make food with less processed ingredients. For example, instead of frozen, breaded chicken, a class explained how to use panko and chicken breasts to make a healthier meal.



Josh shared, "I chose to volunteer with Contact Ministries because of the unique opportunity to provide a learning experience for the residents. As a food and nutrition professional, our job is to improve the health and wellness of our communities. Through our work, we have provided culinary education to the residents that focuses on healthy recipes that are low cost and require a limited skill set."

He says his favorite thing about volunteering are the residents at Contact Ministries. Josh states, "Everyone has been very receptive to trying new items and learning new techniques. The best part is when we come back later, and one of the residents tells us that they tried the recipe again, and it was delicious!"



CAAND promoted the opportunity to partake in this program to members via email communication and social media. This was a great opportunity to not only engage with the community, but to bring awareness to the profession and the Academy. For more information, contact [Josh Kleczynski](#).