



Affiliate Spotlight



Kansas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics KSAND Public Policy Boot Camp - September 2015

Recognizing the vital role public policy plays to the dietetics profession, the Kansas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recently hosted a Public Policy Boot Camp. Advocacy is an important focus for the Kansas Board, and a dedicated event provided an opportunity to improve member education and preparation on public policy and advocacy initiatives. The event also provided an opportunity to help new leaders take on their roles when many feel they lack an adequate knowledge of public policy to fulfill their responsibilities. This challenge has left the advocacy team to be inconsistent with programs and lack a clear direction. Leaders felt they were “reinventing the wheel” with each new plan of work. And so began the planning for the Public Policy Boot Camp.

The Boot Camp planning committee consisted of several members from the KSAND Board, the

advocacy team members, and Teresa Nece from the Academy’s Policy, Initiatives, and Advocacy team. KSAND members were invited along with dietetics students from Kansas State University and the University of Kansas Medical Center. The planning committee felt it was important to include students with the goal of educating them early in their career so they can continue to benefit the profession as they move into professional roles. Costs were minimal to both KSAND and the attendees. The event was free for attendees, and KS was able to secure a free meeting space. CPEU was offered, and KSAND covered the cost for badges and lunches.

The primary goal of the event was to educate participants and stress the importance of public policy and advocacy efforts in relation to the profession of dietetics. The committee strived to provide a basic foundation to understanding leader and member roles and the mechanics of public policy and advocacy. Furthermore, the event was meant to show members how to get involved and hopefully inspire them to do so. The boot camp also introduced the participants on ANDPAC and the role it plays in the advocacy efforts of the Academy.

The KSAND public policy coordinator and co-coordinator had participated in the Academy’s boot camp and Public Policy Workshop in Washington D.C.

2015. Using the motivation, ideas, and topics from this event, they created six presentations for the boot camp. Teresa Nece was an integral player in pulling together content and speaking. The KSAND president, public policy coordinator, and co-coordinator also shared the responsibility of presenting.

Feedback from the boot camp was positive with 80% of attendees stating they felt more confident in public policy. KSAND has provided public policy training during spring workshops in the past, but a dedicated boot camp proved to be a valuable resource and a way to create energy and enthusiasm. The KSAND Board is reviewing how this training can be repurposed to continue to educate more members, districts, and educators. To learn more about KSAND Public Policy Boot Camp, contact KSAND's executive director, [Abby Heidari, RDN, LD](#).



KSAND Public Policy Boot Camp Speaker Johannah O'Malley