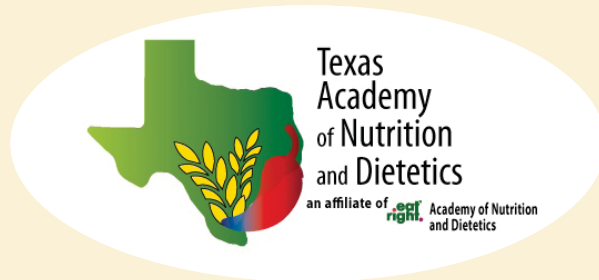




# Affiliate Spotlight



## Leadership Orientation

The Texas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics holds an annual leadership orientation each summer, typically in June or July. All newly elected and appointed officers and leaders are invited to attend the two day event held at a local hotel. District organizations can sponsor other members to attend, if desired.

The purpose of the orientation is to gather and meet colleagues from around the state and to plan the activities for the year. The workshop program is determined by the Affiliate President and can change from year to year. Participants learn about policies and procedures, hear from the Executive Director, and experience various team-building activities. There is also plenty of time for members to meet each other and discuss ideas to improve the affiliate to better serve its members. This year the orientation was held in Fort Worth, TX and more than 50 leaders were in attendance.

By far, the most exciting part of the orientation is the team building activity. This year the conference was held next to the Texas Motor Speedway and attendees participated in a “Pit Stop Challenge.” For most, this was the first time to change a tire (with assistance), and complete the activity in teams of 5 participants. Fun was had by all, yet participants learned the benefit of matching the best skills for the task at hand, planning ahead, and overall team spirit. Other activities in the past have been an “Iron Chef Challenge” in which teams created a dish using various ingredients. Each team had a table with the same ingredients and there was a general table with other foods from which to choose. A team of judges sampled the items and determined the winning team. When the orientation was hosted in Corpus Christi, the leaders performed a service activity by cleaning the galley and airplanes on the World War II aircraft carrier, the USS Lexington. In addition, attendees

participated in a scavenger hunt on the ship, finding clues all over the ship. In general, the affiliates tries to plan something new each year to attract returning leaders. At the end of these activities, there is discussion of what was learned from the activity and how to put these new skills in place while serving in leadership positions.

During the orientation, the group hears brief presentations from the Delegates, membership, Texas Academy Foundation, legislative team and other positions from the leadership team. Some sponsorship is secured to help defray the costs of holding the event. This summer, a speaker from Texas Woman’s University motivated the group to become better leaders. She is a retired major general serving as the executive director of the university’s Leadership Institute. It has been beneficial to utilize experts in the local area, even if they are not dietetic professionals. One of the state media representatives closed the meeting with a hands-on presentation on improving our communication skills to better promote the registered dietitian nutritionist.

The annual Leadership Orientation sets the stage for a productive year for the Texas Academy. Participants leave the meeting with a plan in hand and motivation to accomplish the goals for the year, having seen old friends and met new colleagues. Contact Martha Rew, Texas Academy President, at [mrew@twu.edu](mailto:mrew@twu.edu) for additional information.

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