

AUGUST
2024

NUTRITION



September

- 2 Labor Day - Holiday
- 9 NFPE Virtual Forum with Alicia Gilmore
- 11 Faculty Meeting
- 20 Fall Departmental Welcome Reception
- 20 AGLS Career Fair
- 20 COALS Day
- 21 Texas 4-H & FFA Tailgate
- 30 DPD Orientation

October

- 9 B/CS Youth Career Fair at Brazos County Expo
- 19 Nutrition Dietetic Career Workshop and Fair
- 19 The Gardens at Texas A&M University Fall Festival
- 26 13th Annual College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Tailgate

NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SUMMER 2024 GRADUATES!



On August 10th, the Department of Nutrition proudly celebrated the graduation of thirteen students who earned their Bachelor of Science in Nutrition for Summer 2024. Our graduates are Jenna Flournoy, Cassandra Gonzalez,

Addison Gray, Abigale Harrill, Olivia Johnson, Jennifer Juarez, Kaylea Killen, Jenna Magnusson, Alexis Poston, Conley Robertson, Madysen Stastny, Joshua Todd, and Julia Wright. We are so proud of you all and all of your hard work.



FIRST DAY OF CLASSES FALL 2024!

The Department of Nutrition proudly welcomed **152** new students this fall—more than double the number from last year—highlighting the success of our recruitment efforts. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who made this achievement possible!

Achievements in our Department!



Lexi Poston

Research Assistant - Former Student Worker in the Department!

Howdy, my name is Lexi Poston, and I am a third-generation Aggie from the Houston area. This August, I graduated with a B.S. in Nutrition. Before college, I worked two summers at Baylor College of Medicine in the Department of Statistical Genetics, sparking my passion for scientific research. I began my studies in Chemistry at Texas A&M, working in Dr. Watanabe's lab. After switching to Nutrition, I joined the Chapkin Lab as a student worker, where my role grew from lab maintenance to include genotyping. Now, I'm excited that Dr. Davidson and Dr. Chapkin have offered me the opportunity to transition into a full-time role in the Chapkin Lab, contributing to its operations and continuing to grow as a scientist.



Sharon Donovan

Completed tenure with Dr. Robert S. Chapkin as a Hagler Fellow.

Dr. Sharon M. Donovan has completed her tenure with Dr. Robert S. Chapkin. We are honored to have Dr. Sharon Donovan recognized as a Hagler Fellow, a prestigious title awarded to top scholars with significant professional accomplishments. Over the past four and a half years, Dr. Donovan has traveled to Texas A&M from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign multiple times to collaborate with our faculty. Her work with Dr. Robert Chapkin has been instrumental, particularly in their joint efforts on a newly funded NIH grant. This project focuses on using innovative non-invasive technology to assess gut development and health in a large cohort of very preterm infants.

NUTRITON FACULTY RETREAT



On August 16th, the Nutrition faculty gathered at the beautiful AgriLife Thomas Ranch for a retreat, offering a valuable opportunity for collaboration and bringing together colleagues from across Texas.

Faculty Highlights



Alicia Gilmore

Speaking at a Virtual Talk About NFPE

Alicia Gilmore, MS, RD, CSO, will be speaking at a virtual forum alongside dietitians Ashley Strickland, RDN, LDN, CNSC, and Beth Mordarski, RDN, LD, focusing on their expertise in Nutrition-Focused Physical Exams (NFPE). Hosted by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the forum will highlight their real-life experiences and insights in using NFPE during nutrition assessments of patients and clients.

Register here: tx.ag/AliciaGilmoreNFPETalk

Dr. Waylon Hastings

Featured in AgriLife Today

Dr. Waylon Hastings' research on aging has been featured in AgriLife Today. His studies focus on innovative methods for measuring biological age and how nutrition impacts the aging process. Highlighted by Science Daily and the New York Post, Dr. Hastings explores telomere length, caloric restriction, and early life adversity. His work aims to advance understanding of how nutrition can extend human health span and improve overall well-being. Read more here: tx.ag/HastingsAgriLife



Dr. Lexi MacMillan Uribe

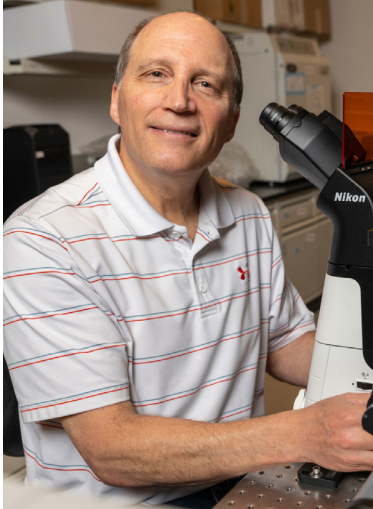
Publication Selected for Editor's Choice Award and Featured

Dr. Lexi MacMillan Uribe, alongside the Healthy Living team at the Texas A&M AgriLife Institute for Advancing Health Through Agriculture, has found that pay-what-you-can community cafes significantly improve the nutritional quality of meals for food-insecure individuals. This research, published in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, was selected for an Editor's Choice Award and featured on the journal's podcast. The study utilized the USDA's Healthy Eating Index to assess the benefits of these cafes.

Read more here: tx.ag/CommunityCafesMacMillan



Faculty Highlights



Dr. Robert S. Chapkin

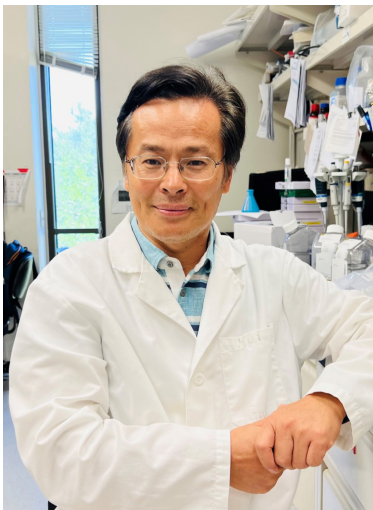
Named ASN Fellow and Recognized for Distinguished Career

Dr. Robert S. Chapkin has been selected as a 2024 Fellow by the American Society for Nutrition (ASN), a prestigious honor reserved for scientists with distinguished careers in the field of nutrition. Since beginning his career at Texas A&M in 1988, Dr. Chapkin has made groundbreaking contributions, including transforming chemoprevention through targeted therapies and pioneering non-invasive precision nutrition techniques. His work has been continuously funded by the NIH for 36 years. In addition, Dr. Chapkin recently gave an invited talk at the American Chemical Society conference entitled “Dysregulation of cellular membrane lipid homeostasis is a crucial modulator of cancer risk” and will present a talk entitled “Targeting plasma membrane spatial dynamics to suppress aberrant Wnt signaling.” at MD Anderson Cancer Center in November 2024.

Dr. Lauren Coheley Spain

Member of the Effective Teaching Practices Cohort

Dr. Lauren Coheley Spain has been selected to participate in ACUE’s “Effective Teaching Practices” program, launching in Fall 2024. This comprehensive 25-week course, offered by the Center for Teaching Excellence, focuses on enhancing faculty teaching practices to improve student engagement, persistence, and deeper learning. The course covers essential competencies such as designing effective courses, fostering productive learning environments, using active learning strategies, promoting higher-order thinking, and implementing assessments that inform instruction. Dr. Spain’s participation in this program not only reflects her dedication to the department and her students but also underscores her pivotal role in the department’s successful recruitment and growth efforts.



Dr. Shaodong Guo

Awarded NIH R01 Grant for Sepsis Recovery Research

Dr. Shaodong Guo has received a new NIH R01 grant, with Dr. Nicolaas Deutz serving as co-investigator, to conduct study on nutritional approaches to restoring muscle health and physiological activity following sepsis. This important work has the potential to significantly advance our understanding of post-sepsis care and contribute to the development of effective, evidence-based nutritional therapies.

Faculty Highlights

Meeting Governor Gregg Abbott

Dr. Catharine Ross was invited to the Governor’s Mansion on August 7 for a reception hosted by Governor Greg Abbott for recipients of Governor’s University Research Initiatives (GURI) awards. She had the opportunity to meet the Governor, connect with other GURI recipients from TAMU and other Texas state universities, and enjoyed a tour of the historic mansion.



Meeting the Queen of Aggieland

Alicia Gilmore M.S., RD, CSO, LD and Meghan Windham MPH, RD, LD, met our queen Reville at Faculty Orientation earlier this month!



Lauren DeStefano (Left) and Student Worker Jaiden Workman (Right)

Nutrition in the Sky!

Lauren DeStefano from our business office and student worker Jaiden Workman have both recently earned their pilot's licenses.

Lauren shared her journey: "I got introduced to flying as a kid because my dad is a pilot, so I have been around airplanes since I was young. This past February, I decided to finally pursue getting my license. Then last Wednesday [August 21st], I had my check ride and passed. It was an amazing journey and experience getting to fly numerous planes and learn so much from fellow pilots around me."

Jaiden was recruited by the Air Force to become a pilot and is completing his training alongside his undergraduate degree in Sociology and Criminology. He says, "I plan to hopefully fly F-16s for the US Air Force while getting my certification in criminal investigation. After my time in the Air Force, I hope to fly with Southwest Airlines. I grew up in Germany most of my life because my father was in the military, and he inspired me to follow in his footsteps."

Congratulations to them both on this exciting achievement!

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Take a look at our departments most recent publications!

Masako Suzuki's Lab Published in Scientific Reports: Ueda, K., Chin, S.S., Sato, N. et al. Prenatal vitamin D deficiency exposure leads to long-term changes in immune cell proportions. *Sci Rep* 14, 19899 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-70911-8>

Masako Suzuki's Co-Authored an Article Published in Scientific Advances: MacArthur, I.C., Ma, L., Huang, C.-Y., Bhavsar, H., Suzuki, M., & Dawlaty, M.M. Developmental DNA demethylation is a determinant of neural stem cell identity and gliogenic competence. *Sci. Adv.* 10, eado5424 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.ado5424>

Lexi MacMillan Uribe Published a Study in Nutrition Education and Behavior: MacMillan Uribe, A.L., Szeszulski, J., Borchers, L., Eicher-Miller, H.A., Seguin-Fowler, R.A., & Largacha Cevallos, E. Diet Quality of Community Café Meals Among Guests With Food Insecurity. *J. Nutr. Educ. Behav.* 56, 579-587 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2024.02.008>

Texas A&M Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Evidence Center had its first paper published in JAMA Network: Spill, M.K., Trivedi, R., Thoerig, R.C., et al. Universal Free School Meals and School and Student Outcomes: A Systematic Review. *JAMA Netw Open.* 7, e2424082 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.24082>

Stephanie Rogus alongside colleagues from New Mexico State University and USDA published a paper in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour : Rogus, S., Turner, R., Guthrie, J., & Niculescu, M. SNAP Online Food Shopping: Nutrition Education Needs Perceived by Practitioners. *J. Nutr. Educ. Behav.* (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2024.07.002>

Several members of the Nutrition Department and IHA Healthy Living team contributed to a paper in Annual Reviews: Seguin-Fowler, R.A., Graham, M.L., Demment, M., MacMillan Uribe, A.L., Rethorst, C.D., & Szeszulski, J. Multilevel Interventions Targeting Obesity: State of the Science and Future Directions. *Annu. Rev. Nutr.* (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-nutr-122123-020340>

Happy fall!

Send your news to bea.bradley@agnet.tamu.edu to be included in the next Nutrition newsletter!