

Interviewee: Susan Kazen R.D., MS, MPH

Job title: Chair of Fine/Performing Arts and Kinesiology at Northeast Lakeview College

Date: August 27, 2009

1. What is your educational background?

Bachelors of Science in Biology from Texas Lutheran
Masters of Science in Exercise Physiology from Colorado State
Masters of Public Health from the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston
Registered Dietitian's License

2. What made you become interested in Nutrition?

I was working and teaching in the area of Exercise Physiology and got lots of Nutrition related questions and felt that I needed to give them educated answers. I went back to school to get my Nutrition pre-requisites and then took a year off of my job to go through my Registered Dietician's Internship, and then obtained my R.D. License.

3. What was your first Nutrition-related job experience like?

I went back to my Exercise Physiology job and added teaching Nutrition Courses. After I got out of Colorado State, I was involved in research for a study on Very Low Calorie Diets (VLCD), at the University of Nebraska, where we worked on researching what was the best exercise for people on a VLCD, while maintaining lean body mass.

4. What is your favorite aspect of Nutrition?

Nutrition is so diverse. You realize that many people in the field of Nutrition have jobs that you might not even think about. There are lots of job possibilities out there with Nutrition and room to move around.

5. Why do you feel that more people need to be educated about Nutrition?

There are plenty of non-reputable sources of Nutrition information out there; which are the main sources of public information, whether it is someone's personal trainer, a friend, neighbor, supplement companies, or someone's grandma. The public needs nutritional information without the nutritional professional sounding like the "food police". We are not here to tell you what you can and cannot eat, but how small changes can make a big difference. Right now there is a lack of credible, dynamic, people to give out Nutrition information and we need to improve that.

6. What are you current job duties / responsibilities?

Mainly administrative, including hiring, conflict resolution (luckily there is not much of that), scheduling, ordering equipment, budgeting, and I am also currently the department secretary. I would like to dedicate myself fully to teaching again, but I know that the department needs me right now to establish our department in our new building. I am confident that anyone I hired can do a fantastic job of being the chair once I am teaching full-time again.

7. What do you like most / least about your job?

I really like working with everyone here, we have great staff and faculty. I dislike having to do conflict resolution and administration duties.