



Get to know PA NEN's new Health and Wellness Coordinator, a hero without the cape!

Erika Siracusa (Registered Dietitian-to-Be)

Health and Wellness Coordinator

What's your favorite way to keep physically active?

Physical activity is a key part of wellness and I always try to find new ways to keep an active lifestyle. I have been a dancer my whole life, and love how it evokes creativity and movement. I now practice yoga and use the mind body approach for muscle strength and mindfulness. I also enjoy being outside with friends whether it be hiking, biking, or even surfing during the summertime. Last fall, I challenged myself to run a 5k (I'm not a runner in the least bit). Not only was I able to finish the race, but I also placed third in my age group.

What volunteer opportunities are you passionate about?

During my dietetic internship, I completed a rotation with a regional food bank located in Connecticut. This opportunity introduced me to the realm of food insecurity and food assistance. Having spent time in countless food pantries across the state interacting with volunteers and clients, I was humbled by their experiences and wanted to learn more about how I could help. I attended local hunger advocacy meetings across the state where I listened to community members discuss strategies to combat hunger afflicting their communities. I also developed nutrition materials to distribute at a mobile food pantry where I talked with clients and educated on ways they can eat healthy on a budget. Having just recently moved to Pennsylvania, these experiences have encouraged me to learn more about my new community, and explore ways I can help others.

What excites you about the future of PA NEN?

PA NEN is dedicated to the wellness of our communities by supporting nutrition educators across the state with resources and training to educate SNAP-eligible populations on nutrition. Our resources provide low income individuals and families the tools they need to make healthy choices on a budget. I am excited to be a part of an organization that continuously develops new ways to impact SNAP communities through healthy lifestyle choices. I hope to see the organization continue to grow their footprint throughout the state, and bring innovative nutrition resources to the SNAP-eligible population.

Get to know more about Erika's professional background [here](#).