



Get to know PA NEN's new Executive Director, a hero without the cape!

## **Serina Gaston, M.E.d, CHES**

PA NEN Executive Director

### **What's your favorite way to keep physically active?**

From 2011-2014, I was the co-owner of Epic Fitness Studio, LLC a group fitness studio that focused on providing individuals with the opportunities necessary to reach their personal health and wellness goals. At the studio, we offered Group Fitness Services at an affordable cost as well as provided educational workshops on health and wellness. After the business was sold, I continued to teach group fitness classes in various gyms in the Harrisburg area until October of 2018. Currently, I exercise at my local gym and occasionally take a fitness class if my schedule allows. I enjoy lifting weights and participating in step aerobics classes. I set a personal goal to be able complete a 5k race without stopping this summer.

### **What volunteer opportunities you are passionate about?**

I have a passion for public health and improving the lives of others. My community involvement includes participation on advisory boards with state organizations, non-profits and academic institutions. In addition, I also serve on committees that address the health, wellness, and environmental needs of the local community. The volunteer opportunity that I enjoy most is serving on the Homeless Ministry at my church. I enjoy this the most because I am able to assist with the entire process of serving meals to those in need. We cook and package the meals at the church and then they are driven directly to the people at location in Harrisburg. We get our food from the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. On some days we are able to feed over 100 people –men, women and children.

### **What excites you about the future of PA NEN?**

About twenty years ago, I was a recipient of SNAP. As you know, the SNAP program offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, SNAP-Ed individuals and families. PA NEN provides the much needed nutrition education resources and trainings to nutrition educators who are working to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food and lifestyle choices. I am excited to be a part of an organization that helps people in what could be their darkest days. I hope to lead the organization in its efforts to continue to provide nutrition educators with lasting and meaningful information that teaches the families they serve the importance of eating a balanced diet as a vital part of good health and wellbeing. I am humbled by the absolute dedication of the PA NEN staff, board and members as we work together to provide nutrition education to SNAP-Ed families across the state. I am dedicated to the mission of PA NEN and hope to expand the nutrition education messages and resources.

For more about Serina's professional background, click [here](#).