Welcome to Tri-County Health Department (TCHD). Thank you for your interest in TCHD’s Dietetic Internship Program with a concentration in Public Health/Community Nutrition. Tri-County Health Department, founded in 1948, is Colorado’s largest local public health agency serving approximately 1.5 million residents in Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas counties.

Since 1980, TCHD has been working with dietetic interns for supervised practice experiences. The dietetic internship became accredited in 1989 as an AP4 program and then in 1995 transitioned to an official accredited dietetic internship. Our dietetic internship provides optimal learning environments and diverse supervised practice experiences to prepare our interns in the many facets of the dietetics profession.

Further program details are included in this packet. After reviewing the material, please feel free to contact me with specific questions via e-mail.

Kind Regards,

Michelle A. Harris, MPH, RD
Dietetic Internship Manager
Tri-County Health Department
mharris@tchd.org

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**2020-2021 Informational Meetings**

We will be hosting two informational meetings to share about Tri-County Health Department Dietetic Internship Program. Please RSVP by e-mailing Michelle Harris at mharris@tchd.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wednesday, November 27th, 2019</th>
<th>Tuesday, January 7th, 2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00am-12:00pm</td>
<td>10:00am-12:00pm</td>
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Tri-County Health Department
6162 S. Willow Drive, Suite 100
Greenwood Village, CO. 80111

TCHD Dietetic Internship 2019-2020
Page 1
The Tri-County Health Department offers a dietetic internship accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (A.N.D.). ACEND is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. ACEND can be reached at 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60606-6995, by telephone at 800-877-1600 ext. 5400, email at acend@eatright.org or web at www.eatright.org/acend

Dietetic Internship Program Overview and Benefits

- Program runs from mid-August to late June each year. We accept six full-time interns annually who complete the experience in 10½ months and are then eligible to sit for the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) Examination for Dietitians to earn RDN status
- Public Health/Community Nutrition Concentration
- Tuition $9,000; Application fee $70
- Participate in DICAS and D&D Digital to match intern in April 5th, 2020
  - DICAS ($45 for first designation and then $20 for each thereafter) and D&D Digital ($55) have additional application fees
- Application deadline is February 15th, 2020 (11:59pm-Central Standard Time/ 10:59pm-Mountain Standard Time)
- Networking opportunities with many dietetics professionals
- 40-hour work week with didactic/class learning 2-3 times per month
- 100% first time pass rate for CDR examination the last 6 years
- Time off on most health department holidays, in addition to 2 ½ weeks of vacation

About the Internship Program

Located in Greenwood Village, Colorado, the Tri-County Health Department Dietetic Internship Program prepares thoughtful and competent entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists who demonstrate skills* necessary for success in diverse and multi-disciplinary public health/community nutrition settings to improve the lifelong health of individuals and communities. * (skills in leadership, communication, research and critical thinking)

In January 2017, TCHD’s Dietetic Internship successfully completed the next 7-year accreditation cycle through the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND). ACEND noted program strengths to include; dedicated nutrition faculty, experienced preceptors, extensive resources and excellent first time pass rate on registration examination.

TCHD’s Dietetic Internship Program accepts six dietetic interns. Our small class size allows interns the opportunity to experience camaraderie, team consensus and support with one another as a team and individually, throughout the internship year. Dietetic interns often reflect on the positive welcoming work environment, their appreciation
for staff who genuinely takes time to get to know them and also, the overall culture of organizational wellness with walking breaks, incorporating healthy snacks and movement into meetings.

The internship runs approximately 45 weeks and begins in mid-August, ending in mid-late June. All interns get one-on-one supervised practice experiences with preceptors in various rotations. As our concentration is in Public Health/Community Nutrition, a good portion of your supervised practice time will be with Tri-County Health Department. Our external rotations (outside of TCHD) include hospitals, school districts, long term care and community health facilities. We strive to provide a diverse and broad supervised practice experience, so when our interns successfully complete the program, they feel competent as an entry-level dietitian to work in a variety of dietetics and nutrition professional settings.

Tuition and application fees are comparable based on an analysis of other Colorado dietetic internship programs and when in rotations, some interns are allowed meal allowances during the day from the site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rotation</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Nutrition/Public Health</td>
<td>9.5-11.5 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Medical Nutrition Therapy</td>
<td>9-11 weeks <em>(varies by hospital location)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIC</td>
<td>9 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Research</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Pediatrics</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Care</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intern choice</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacation leave</td>
<td>2.5 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>45 weeks</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Program graduates are competent entry level dietetic practitioners in all ACEND required core competencies and in the concentration of public health/community nutrition.

ACEND Required Objectives

- 100% of program graduates take the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion *(Graduate Performance on Registration Exam).*
- The program’s one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the CDR credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80% *(Graduate Performance on Registration Exam).*
- At least 80% of TCHD interns will complete the program requirements within 10.5 months which is 150% of program length *(Program Completion).*
- Of graduates who seek employment, 50% are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation. *(Graduate Employment).*
- Upon completion of TCHD dietetic internship, at least 90% of graduates will rate overall program effectiveness and preparation for entry-level practice at a level of 3 or higher on a 5-point scale *(Program Specific).*

*(Objectives revised 7/2018 per ACEND requirements)*
Goal #2: Program graduates demonstrate standards of professional performance, leadership and a commitment to ongoing self-directed learning.

Objectives

- Utilizing a survey of employers on program graduates, 80% of respondents will indicate “above average” scores on qualities related to professional practice skills such as teamwork and contribution, communication, cultural competence and leadership (Employer Satisfaction).
- Utilizing a survey of graduates/alumni, 25% who respond will indicate they have enrolled in graduate school or other opportunities for professional development (Program Specific).

*Outcome data on program objectives is available upon request

**Rotation Preceptor Sites/Partners**

**Clinical**

- Denver Health Medical Center [https://www.denverhealth.org/](https://www.denverhealth.org/)
- Parker/Castle Rock Adventist [https://www.centura.org/locations/parker-adventist-hospital](https://www.centura.org/locations/parker-adventist-hospital)
- Platte Valley Medical Center [https://pvmc.org/](https://pvmc.org/)
- Rose Medical Center [http://rosemed.com/](http://rosemed.com/)
- St. Anthony’s [https://www.stanthonyhosp.org/](https://www.stanthonyhosp.org/)
- Children’s Hospital of Colorado (Pediatrics’ only) [https://www.childrenscolorado.org/](https://www.childrenscolorado.org/)

**Food Service**

- Cherry Creek School District [www.cherrycreekschools.org/](http://www.cherrycreekschools.org/)
- Douglas County School District [https://www.dcsdk12.org/](https://www.dcsdk12.org/)

**Clinical Research**

- University of Colorado, Children’s Hospital of Colorado [http://www.ucdenver.edu/research/CCTSI/programs-services/crtc/Nutrition/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.ucdenver.edu/research/CCTSI/programs-services/crtc/Nutrition/Pages/default.aspx)

**Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program**

- Tri-County Health Department [https://www.tchd.org/291/Women-Infants-Children-WIC](https://www.tchd.org/291/Women-Infants-Children-WIC)

**Public Health/Community Nutrition**

- Tri-County Health Department [https://www.tchd.org/236/About](https://www.tchd.org/236/About)
Program Estimated Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Fee</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>Cost for application fee. If matched with TCHD Dietetic Internship, this will be credited towards your tuition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition 2020-2021 year</td>
<td>$9,000.00</td>
<td>First half of tuition is due at the beginning of the internship with the second half remaining due mid-December. This fee covers coordination of your rotations, most learning materials, at least two educational conferences/seminars and trainings and personalized guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liability Insurance</td>
<td>$35.00</td>
<td>This is a requirement for all dietetic interns to have during their internship time period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>Cost may vary dependent on plan</td>
<td>This is required and is the responsibility of the intern to provide proof at the beginning of the internship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>$800.00-$1,000.00/mo.</td>
<td>Average cost per month in the Denver metro area. Some interns have shared housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other personal expenses to take into consideration</td>
<td>$500.00 - $800.00/mo.</td>
<td>Car maintenance, car insurance (required for internship), gas and food, additional educational materials or bus/transit pass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Check, Drug Screen and Influenza vaccination</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>Partnership agencies require this of TCHD Dietetic Interns. These costs are covered as part of your tuition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Rotations

Public Health/Community Nutrition
The community nutrition/public health rotation is the longest rotation, lasting 9.5-11.5 weeks, due to this being our concentration area. The rotation weeks are spread out during the internship year, with the majority of weeks (supervised practice) completed in the fall and winter months. Interns gain a variety of learning experiences through field site visits, attending classes/conferences, teaching nutrition classes, practicing food demonstrations, writing for a variety of target audiences and social media venues and conduct a public health research project for the Tri-County Health agency. In the spring, interns learn about public policy, the grant writing process and complete professional development activities such as resume writing, interview techniques and professional portfolio development.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
The WIC Rotation is nine weeks in length. Dietetic interns are each assigned to a unique WIC clinic within TCHD’s jurisdiction. During this time period, interns are
precepted by TCHD WIC RD’s. Objectives of this rotation are to learn the specific nutritional needs of infants and children and women during the prenatal, postpartum and breastfeeding stages; learn to assess, counsel and document WIC participants nutritional needs taking into consideration income, cultural food patterns, educational levels, home environment and other social determinants of health; learn basic human resource management functions in the WIC clinic and plan, implement and evaluate a full-day training/workshop for TCHD WIC staff.

During the last four weeks, interns will participate in staff relief allowing them to demonstrate the above objectives in a comprehensive manner. The dietetic interns obtain extensive WIC Training that leads to a full Certified WIC Authority (CWA). The extensive training allows interns to be ready and prepared to take an entry-level WIC Dietitian job in Colorado and other states.

Clinical/Medical Nutrition Therapy

Dietetic interns complete a 9-11 week rotation in a Metro-Denver Hospital geared to advance their clinical nutrition experience as it relates to medical nutrition therapy for many disease states. Interns will learn to interpret electronic medical records (disease etiology, medical history, nutrition/physical assessments, medical diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation), gain experience in collaborating and communicating with RDN’s and other healthcare disciplines through team meetings or patient rounds, complete clinical case studies and have the opportunity to blend all experiences into a dedicated week of staff relief at the end of the rotation.

Long Term Care

Interns spend one week in a long term care setting learning about nutritional assessment practices for the older adult population and how this plays a key role in patient care planning and quality of stay. Interns will increase their knowledge of common and multiple medical issues and the nutrition therapies recommended for this population. Interns will be exposed to care conferences, quality improvement efforts and see firsthand the diversity in nutritional and healthcare needs of the older adult population.
**Pediatrics**

The dietetic interns will spend one week at Children’s Hospital of Colorado (CHCO). Interns will be able have the unique experience of seeing RDN’s work in inpatient and outpatient settings providing nutrition expertise to patients with eating disorders, metabolic disorders, general medical conditions and much, much more.

**Food Service**

The food service rotation is six weeks in length and dietetic interns are placed in school district. Interns will gain hands-on food service and management experience learning safety (food and physical) and sanitation regulations and learning about food procurement, production and delivery. Interns will be introduced to management principles related to employee recruitment, interviews, hiring and evaluations. In addition, interns will design a special event to include menu design, costing, production, implementation and evaluation.

**Clinical Research**

Through collaborative partnership with University of Colorado and Children’s Hospital of Colorado (CHCO), the dietetic interns participate in a two week rotation at the Colorado and Clinical Sciences Institute (CCTSI). CCTSI’s goal is to translate research discoveries into improved patient care and public health initiatives. CCTSI has a research branch for Nutrition, Nursing and Laboratory and is called Clinical and Translational Research Center (CTRC). The interns will learn more about research expertise related to nutrition and metabolism clinical protocols, literature reviews to gain further insight into methods, data analysis/statistics and writing and also have the opportunity to prepare research diets in metabolic kitchen. TCHD dietetic interns participate in this rotation with the CHCO dietetic interns allowing for more peer connections during the internship period.

**Other experiences that happen throughout two or more rotations**

There are some supervised practice experiences that happen in more than one rotation, such as learning about human resources and management functions in an organization. This may entail assisting in the process of revising a job description, participating in job interviews and/or understanding the mechanisms of employee incentives, evaluations and retention. Interns will also have many
opportunities in various rotations to provide community nutrition presentations, be able to train or educate staff through brief in-services and connect with various nutrition and public health professionals in their rotation settings.

**What does the Internship Rotation Schedule look like?**

Below is an example, of how the TCHD’s Dietetic Intern rotations are broken out. The green space is our Public Health/Community Nutrition in which you will see this sprinkled throughout the dietetic internship calendar year. At the beginning of the internship year, all interns are together for Orientation and the beginnings of the Public Health/Community Rotation. This is a time when dietetic interns learn about Tri-County, as a local public health agency, complete field site visits and start on the public health research project. This too, is a great time for the interns to get to know each other, connect and support each other individually and as a team before leaving on external rotations.

We like potlucks (salad, breakfast taco’s) during Orientation!
Intern Evaluations

Ongoing evaluation and feedback is essential to your success as an intern and to the success of the program. Evaluation will consist of the following:

- Progress meetings/checklist reviews with the Internship Manager at least three times during the internship year
- Formal evaluations by rotation preceptors at the end of each rotation. A point system will be used to evaluate intern performance
- Weekly informal feedback sessions during clinical, food service, and WIC rotations
- Self-assessment of learning and challenges
- Feedback on presentations and written work
- Monthly intern meetings to discuss rotations, share experiences and clarify assignments
- Interns will evaluate preceptors/sites at the end of each rotation and complete a final evaluation of the internship

Interns who successfully complete all rotations will be issued a verification statement at the end of the internship, which confers eligibility to sit for the RD exam. A graduation ceremony is held at the conclusion of the internship each year.

Requirements

- Completion of academic requirements of an ACEND-approved Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD), with receipt of a DPD Verification Statement.
- Baccalaureate or master’s degree in nutrition or dietetics or a related field from an accredited college or university.
- A MINIMUM cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. A MINIMUM nutrition (DPD professional and science) grade point average of 3.0.
• Internship placements are competitive. Dietetics-related, public health and/or food service experience is very helpful, whether paid or volunteer work.

• Additional course work and/or qualified work experience is required in nutrition and/or food service to update degrees completed five years or more prior to application to the internship.

Recommended courses include Medical Nutrition Therapy, Biochemistry, Statistics or Epidemiology, and Medical Terminology. Must complete any refresher courses with B grade or better. All courses to satisfy recency of education requirements must have been completed within the last five years and before beginning the internship. Approval of course work/work experience will be at the discretion of the dietetic internship manager.

THE COLORADO LANDSCAPE

Colorado’s scenic backdrop is beautiful in all seasons. The Metro Denver area is only a short drive to the mountains where there are many opportunities for skiing, hiking, fishing, camping or just a chance to get away and decompress in a small mountain town for lunch or dinner. Denver is a young, diverse city and is one of the fittest in the country, partly due to having the nation’s largest public parks system. Educational and cultural activities abound with nine major colleges and universities, museums, a symphony orchestra and numerous theater companies. Major sports teams and world-class restaurants also add to Metro Denver’s appeal.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applications must be submitted by **February 15th, 2020**

- Our program participates in the on-line centralized internship application process through DICAS and D&D Digital. DICAS can be accessed at [https://portal.dicas.org](https://portal.dicas.org), e-mail DICASinfo@DICAS.org and D&D Digital can be accessed at [www.dnddigital.com](http://www.dnddigital.com).

- The on-line application must be completed for our program by **11:59 p.m. Central Time** on February 15, 2020. The fee to use DICAS is $45 for the first application submitted and $20 for each additional application.

- When completing the application form, applicants must include the name and contact information (specifically an e-mail address) for each reference. This will trigger an e-mail message requesting completion of a reference form. The form will be completed on-line and not be visible to applicants.

- Tri-County requires **three references letters**: one school/professor and two work/volunteer references.

- Applicants will be asked to complete a personal statement in DICAS. Questions to be addressed in the personal statement include:
  - Why do you want to enter the dietetics profession?
  - Discuss experiences that have helped to prepare you for your career
  - What are your short-term and long-term goals?
  - What are your strengths and weaknesses or areas needing improvement?
  - Anything else you consider important to the selection decision? (optional)

- Tri-County **does not require any additional/supplemental application materials** beyond those required by DICAS, except for the application fee (see below).

- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended should be sent to:
  DICAS- Transcript Department
  PO Box 9118
  Watertown, MA 02472
Applicants must also register online for computer matching at www.dnddigital.com and select dietetic internship priority choices by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on February 15. There is a $55.00 computer matching fee. Instructions can be found at the D&D Digital website.

In addition to the DICAS and D&D Digital fees, which applicants must submit separately to those organizations, Tri-County requires a **non-refundable $70.00** application fee payable to Tri-County Health Department. Application fees can be paid online at [http://www.tchd.org/298/Dietetic-Internship](http://www.tchd.org/298/Dietetic-Internship) or via check. If paying by check, please mail your application fee (postmarked by February 15th 2020) and include your DICAS number in the memo line) to:

**Tri-County Health Department**  
6162 S. Willow Drive, Suite 100  
Greenwood Village, CO 80111  
Attn: Nutrition Division Program Assistant

Please note that we will hold application fee checks for deposit until mid-February and will not notify applicants when checks are received. If you wish to have notification, please send your check using return-receipt mail or a trackable option.

If clarification is needed, contact, Michelle Harris, Dietetic Internship Manager, at [mharris@tchd.org](mailto:mharris@tchd.org) or 720-200-1513.

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*Food Pun credit to Emma Sickles, RDN*
FAQ’s about the Tri-County Health Department Dietetic Internship

How can I make my application stand out?

All components of your application are important, yet it is the total package we are looking for. First and foremost, you are encouraged to obtain as much dietetic-nutrition and/or food-service related experience (paid or unpaid) as you can on your own. This is much more attractive than solely a series of required practicum hours you did for your classes. You can also demonstrate initiative by showing your involvement in clubs and other school or civic organizations. Second, if you have any special skills or training, such as the ability to speak a second language, experience writing a grant, or culinary training, please list this on your application.

Does my state of residency matter?

We accept interns from all over! There are no quotas on how many interns come from Colorado each year. We consider each applicant individually; sometimes we are matched with mostly Colorado folks and other times with mostly out of state applicants.

How many applications do you receive each year?

Of course this changes from year to year, but has been steady the last couple of years ranging from 95-100. However, this is the case with many dietetic internship programs and should not be the main factor in your decision about where to apply. It is best to find the programs which most closely match your interests, and then go for it! You may be the perfect fit for Tri-County, but you won’t get in if you don’t apply!

What is the process and timeline for reviewing internship applications?

Tri-County has many dietitians on staff, and most participate in reviewing the applications during February. From there, we narrow down the field to the top ~25 applicants for interviews during mid-March to early April. If selected for an interview, you can do this in person, via Skype or over the phone. After interviewing is concluded, we rank order our list of applicants for submission to D&D Digital.

With Tri-County’s emphasis in community/public health nutrition, do interns get enough MNT (medical nutrition therapy) experience to be well-prepared for the RD exam?

Absolutely! Interns in our program obtain over 500 hours of supervised practice experience in medical nutrition therapy in large, high acuity hospitals, long-term care facilities, and Tri-County Health Department clinics. Our interns have an excellent first-time pass rate on the exam, and have always scored above the national average on nutrition content.

Do interns work together during rotations, or are they each in a different place?

Interns are together in the same office for some rotations, such as research and community, and work on many projects as a group. In other rotations, such as clinical and WIC, interns are at different
facilities, although they may be completing the same rotation at the same time. We also have monthly intern meetings to share experiences and check progress.

**Can I visit the program?**

We will have open house dates each fall and early winter, so please watch our website for more details (http://www.tchd.org/298/Dietetic-Internship). If you will be in the Denver area at another time, you may contact the internship manager to see if it is possible to set up a visit with her or one of our WIC clinic dietitians. In order to maintain objectivity in reviewing internship applications, no visits will be scheduled after January 17th, 2020. Visiting Tri-County before you apply is completely optional. You are also welcome to ask any questions via email or over the phone.

**How do most interns finance the internship?**

Many interns ask how they can finance the cost of the internship tuition and living expenses for the year. While interns with us are currently not eligible to apply for student loans, many interns are able to live with friends or family during the internship, or share an apartment with a fellow intern to reduce costs. Some interns borrow money from family if needed, or rely on savings to see them through. Other interns take on a part-time job on the weekends or evenings. Some facilities that interns rotate through during the course of the internship offer free or reduced-cost meals.

**Do interns have fun?**

Yes!

Creative break from harvesting fresh produce at the 27J Community Gardens

Do interns have fun?

Yes!

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) Foundation has offered over $200,000 in scholarships each year to dietetic students and interns who are members. For more information, please visit https://eatrightfoundation.org/scholarships-funding/ (Deadline for submission is April 17th of each year, which is approximately two weeks after D&D Digital Match Date).

Your local dietetic association and other civic and private organizations may offer scholarships as well. Ask your academic advisor or financial aid office to help you get started. You may also be able to obtain deferments on student loan payments until the completion of the internship. Please contact your lender for more information and the appropriate forms.