

University of Georgia

Mentor: Jana Heitmeyer

Approximate Start Date: August 2024
8-month program duration

Program Description: While our profession has taken huge strides in job growth, I believe it is our responsibility to invest in the hands-on training of young professionals entering this field. Aspiring sports RDs need to be supported and guided on what they are ready to take on as an entry-level sports RD while learning how to plan sustainable growth within a program. Specialized experience is vital in navigating the demands of jobs in performance nutrition. Professionals who are new to the field should be provided with mentorship opportunities on effective communication and interaction with coaches, administration, strength and conditioning, and other support staff. As the industry continues to grow, so do the challenges in balancing foodservice, education, and individualized care demands of the profession. As experts in this field, we cannot concede to being solely hospitality- and foodservice-focused, and as a mentor, I take it upon myself to teach with this stance in mind. This profession has the capacity to be fulfilling, exciting, and performed exceptionally, all while achieving work-life balance. Mentoring new professionals in this field is a strong passion of mine, and I believe that, if selected, the SNIP fellow will leave with an experience that will best prepare him or her for the next steps as a sports dietitian.

At UGA, a Gatorade SNIP will be immersed in a learning environment amongst a variety of RDs with different backgrounds and strengths. We pride ourselves on working as a team to provide optimal care to each of our assigned teams. The SNIP fellow will be treated as a full-time employee on our staff. He or she will be expected to communicate and foster relationships with coaches, athletes, administration, and support staff, have assigned administrative duties, be fully responsible for one-two sports teams and assist with one-two other teams. I would be honored to mentor a Gatorade SNIP and believe that I can provide the knowledge and skills necessary for the SNIP fellow to advance to and thrive in a full-time job. I am confident that he or she will truly benefit from the experience the UGA Performance Nutrition Department has to offer.

- The fellow will be working with both our Football and Olympic sports teams. He or she will work football camp in beginning of August then be the primary RD for baseball and assist with men's basketball.
- Education exposure: Team talks, recruiting presentations, nutrition demos, social media, plate coaching, nutrition campaigns, class lectures, and print education
- Foodservice exposure: Grab n go, fueling stations, catering, pre/post-game meals, and travel menus/meals
- Individualized care: DXA, refractometer testing, nutrition assessment and counseling, iron screening, and nutrition injury rehab prescriptions
- Administrative exposure: Staff meetings, assist with student-worker oversight, ordering and inventory, budget planning and management

Time spent with me: 10-15 hours per week (other time will be spent learning from the other staff members whom I supervise)