

# THE NETWORK NEWSLETTER

*Connecting Consultants of S & S Nutrition Network Inc.*



## Special Edition

At S&S Nutrition Network we have the privilege of working with some exceptional staff. Included in the many people that make everything possible in the facility, the food and nutrition managers rise to the top. Dietary managers have had an even bigger job this year during Covid, often having to manage without onsite support from their Registered Dietitian.

We realize that all of the managers deserve recognition, but this publication highlights just a few of the heroes we work with in the facilities. We plan to recognize additional managers for their hard work and dedication throughout our future newsletters.

## Congratulations and Happy 2020 Retirement

S & S Nutrition Network would like to take the opportunity to recognize and thank two exceptional Dietary Managers **Renee Anderson** and **Tonda Bennett** for their years of service in Long Term Care. Between the two, they have over 50 years working with S & S Nutrition Network and have been strong, dedicated, and reliable leaders in their field.

We can honestly say these two wonderful managers have seen it all. They were front and center when surveyors used a white glove underneath countertop, slicers and can openers became an unfortunate sanitation focus, a cook was cited for touching any part of a plate during meal services, and when a resident with a no weight order was cited an unavoidable situation. Both rallied and pushed hard to transition from reusable, laminated tray cards and paper charting to computerized tray card systems, electronic medical records, from MDS 2.0 to 3.0, numerous Federal Regulation revisions, IDDSI and PDPM. Through all these changes, both showed incredible resilience to the challenges and put one foot in front of the other continuing to strive towards improving their departments.



**Renee Anderson** started as a dishwasher in high school at the Orchards Care and Rehab facility where she worked her way up the ranks and became the Food Service Director. She transferred to Clarkson Care where she completed her retirement this year.

I have had the privilege of working with Renee since 2000. She took a green dietitian and helped me feel part of something by building my confidence and believing in me. She used to tell me all the time, "Don't worry Rachell, you will figure it out and if not it's not the end of the world, we will work together. If not, we can always call Sue." Renee made everyone in her department her family. Most of her employees started with Renee and stayed until they retired. She never missed a birthday for any employee and took the time to get to know each resident and everyone in the department. Renee met each and every new admit prior to the next meal served. She worked hard to meet resident satisfaction and ensure food preferences and needs. Renee was never late for a nutrition assessment, had incredible updated care plans and worked hard at having everything I needed ready each and every day I visited the facility such as RD referrals, snack and supplement lists. Renee breathes commitment and dedication with a gently loving heart. Renee you will greatly miss, enjoy retirement! —Rachell Larsen

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It was a great honor to work with Renee for the past few years. I'm so sad to see her go, but I know she will continue to do great things in her retirement. She was beyond supportive when I started as a fresh dietitian. She made sure I felt that I was part of the Clarkston Prestige team by introducing me to everyone, showing me around, and always inviting me to staff parties and events. Renee always brought her A-game; she was timely, efficient, and effective in all that she did. She never missed an assessment or diet audit, she always made sure resident's food preferences were updated, and she ensured that I had everything I needed for my weekly visit. She was never afraid to ask me for help, and in turn, she was always supportive when I asked for hers. She made sure all of her staff members knew they were appreciated by celebrating each of their individual strengths. She never missed a birthday or Christmas gift, and they were always personalized. For past couple of years Renee has gifted me a yoga-puppy/yoga-kitty calendar, which I kept in our shared office. Through the pandemic and Renee's last few months at Prestige, I was unable to be in the facility, but Renee reassured me by saying, "I still turn your calendar at the beginning of each month". What a joy it was to hear that we were still connected in that way! Her love for her job, staff, and co-workers was proven often, especially when she would break out the photo albums she kept of work, and her face would light up when she spoke about each person. Throughout my time working with Renee, she proven her dedication and commitment to the facility, residents, and staff time and time again, so much so that she came out of retirement to help the facility when they needed her most. Thank you so much, Renee for your dedication and support over the years. You will be deeply missed! – Lauren Keeney

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Renee hosted my first baby shower when I was pregnant with Sarah in 1994! We had the shower in the scary basement of the old Orchards facility when it was owned by Beverly Enterprises. I had the privilege to work with Renee and a tight group of dietary managers (Carol, Vicki, Rena, Fernola, oh man....who else?!) when I worked as a consultant for that company. We got to travel together for meetings and even though Renee hated to leave home, we actually got her to Boise and out of the Palouse a few times. I have so many fond memories of the early days with this group. Renee and the others taught me so much and I will forever be indebted to her. I feel like Renee and I were babies together (both in the LTC industry together and we were in our youth actually having babies). Boy, those were the good ole' days. I love you dearly and will miss working with you, Renee.....but let's not be strangers.- Sue Stillman Linja

CONGRATULATIONS



**Tonda Bennett** started her Long Term Care career in Moscow Idaho back in 1994, staying until she took the Food Service Director position at Life Care of Lewiston in 1998. She retires this year from Lewiston Transitional Care of Cascadia.



I have had the privilege of working with Tonda since 2001. What impressed me the most is Tonda's heart and dedication. She never looked at anything as unreachable, didn't run from challenges, would push back for the good of her residents and her department. Tonda always told me you are only as good as your staff. She knew the importance of a strong team. Over the years, Tonda would take PTO time, forgoing any vacation so that when the facility went low census, her staff could keep their full-time hours. Tonda worked hard to maintain a strong working relationship between nursing and the food services department. She made my job easier by having ready an updated referral list, listing, and prioritized high-risk residents, providing specific resident complaints, concerns, and updated resident interview information. Tonda spent long hours reviewing weights, trying to obtain timely weights, and communicating weight concerns. I have to express my appreciation for her updated and accurate care plans and her great communication skills. Tonda you will be greatly missed, enjoy retirement—Rachell Larsen



Working with Tonda has been a great experience for me as a brand new Dietitian. Tonda has taught me many things and holds me to a high standard. Tonda has tons of experience that is unmatched. She has always been extremely supportive of me and always “has my back”. Tonda is an extremely hard worker and has had to overcome many things while managing kitchen operations. Tonda and her passion and expertise will definitely be missed. Thank you Tonda for your time and patience working with me. -Clare Rezentes RDN LD



Tonda is an amazing dietary manager!! I actually think she was a Registered Dietitian in another life.... 😊 Thank you, Tonda, for your many many years of leadership and dedication in the field of Long Term Care food and nutrition. I have work with hundreds (has it reached a thousand yet?) dietary managers over the years, and you are one I count on one hand - the top of the top - the pinnacle. I always felt confidence in your work and knew that if a new S&S dietitian was in your facility, you would treat them well, teach them a lot and also listen and respect them. Thank you for your strong leadership and for your friendship over the past 25 years. I truly adore you. - Sue Stillman Linja


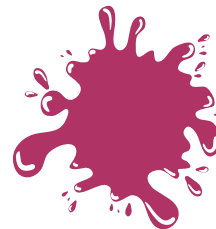






# Thank You!

Working with **Melony Seck** at Lewiston Transitional Care of Cascadia has been a pleasure. While I am precepting her she is also getting her CNA license. While in school and in her CDM course she is raising 3 children. This lady is a rock star dietary manager and cares immensely about her staff and residents. She has overcome many things this year while managing a kitchen and making sure all shifts are filled. Melony is a great person all around and definitely deserves to be recognized.



At Advanced Healthcare of Lewiston, I have been working with **Travis Tolby**, CDM for a year and a half. In addition to managing the kitchen and operations, Travis has had to overcome many things this year like many of us have. He has risen above and kept the facility in great condition to provide excellent dietary services. Residents and families are always very impressed with the food at this facility. I am impressed with his work ethic and his resilience. With the new implementation of IDDSI, he has trained his staff very well. Travis continues to make it all possible!

**Julie Godfrey** has embodied the spirit of love and compassion during these trying times.

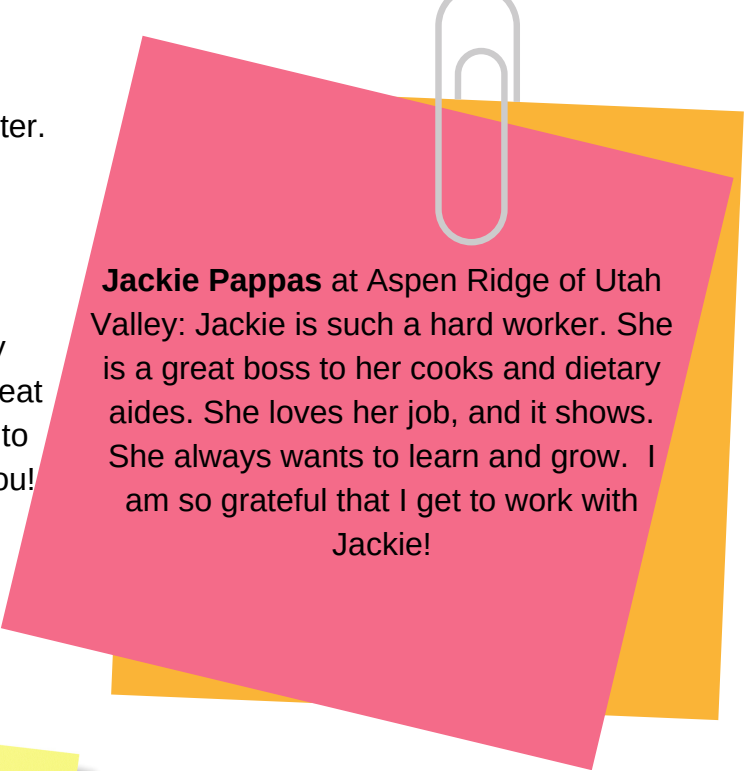
She has supported her staff ensuring vacation and mental health time, despite ongoing job vacancies in her department. She continues to cover vital roles in her department including cooking on a regular basis, all while tackling the "behind the scenes" tasks that every manager has. Beyond this, she focuses on spending a lot of one on one time with her patients and residents, ensuring not only their nutritional needs and preferences are being met, but also their mental and emotional needs as well. In her "spare time," she and her co-workers rearranged the dining room and came up with a rotating schedule so all of the residents who wanted to eat in the dining room were able to, thus cutting down on some of the social isolation they continue to feel. Despite ongoing hardships, she has continued to lead her team with grace and serve her residents in the best of ways. Selflessly. Julie, thank you. You make a difference every day.



Valley Vista Care Corporation at the Saint Maries Care Center.  
**Danielle Outland**, CDM, CFPP is the Manager of Dietary & Environmental Services.

**Heather Birch**, CDM, CFPP is the Assistant Manager of Dietary & Environmental Services.

These ladies are a true gift to the people in their lives! They light up the room and make people smile as well as set a great work example for everyone around them and inspire others to do a better job! Thank you, Danielle & Heather, for being you!




**Jackie Pappas** at Aspen Ridge of Utah Valley: Jackie is such a hard worker. She is a great boss to her cooks and dietary aides. She loves her job, and it shows. She always wants to learn and grow. I am so grateful that I get to work with Jackie!



Thank  
you!

As unexpectedly as the Pandemic hit everyone so did a tragic death in **Inna Pachina's** Food Service family and the entire Scottsdale building. A young, dedicated, and beloved employee, Omar Castrejon died suddenly last October. Inna and her staff stepped in to work extra hours- all feeling the loss of a dear food service family member. Inna and her staff continued to maintain the high standard of quality food service that has always represented Inna's building. I am proud to be part of Inna's Food Service family.



I have the privilege of working with and precepting a fabulous dietary manager. While she is newer to the manager role, she has provided steady and consistent leadership in an unprecedented time. Even while struggling with a recent family loss, she still is on track with her course work and "shows up" every day. I've even had to talk her out of driving in to work in a snowstorm, just to answer one of my questions on a Sunday. She is growing as a leader. Her staff looks up to her and under her management, they have turned around many staff issues. I'm proud to see how much she has grown this year and look forward to working together in 2021.



**Kathy Hauser** has been operating as CDM in training since the beginning of the pandemic when our CDM left our facility. She stepped into managing the kitchen, enrolled in the CDM course, and has been working short-staffed in a pandemic! She is reliable, diligent, and super hard working. She has a great sense of humor and wants others to succeed. For the majority of her time managing the kitchen, she has also worked as a diet aid while trying to hire for the position. Kathy is reliable for me to make requests and follows through on what I need from her despite the challenges of having me (the RD) work remotely. She then goes home and studies and completes assignments for the CDM course. I feel so blessed to have Kathy manning the ship during this chaos. She has a realistic and positive outlook and will continue to be an asset to our patients and staff. She learns quickly and truly wants to do what is best for our patients. Thank you so much Kathy for everything!!!!

I am the dietitian/nutritionist for Advanced Healthcare in St George, Utah. **Stacy Fager** is the Nutrition Services Director at this facility, and I feel extremely fortunate to work with her. 2020 has presented many challenges in the way our facility does business and we've had to figure out how to work in new and unusual circumstances with constant change. Stacy has made things happen regardless of difficulties or obstacles. She gets things done!!! This NSD is experienced and skilled in performing her responsibilities and has many years of work in her field of expertise. Stacy truly cares about our residents; she gets to know them well and seeks to ensure they are comfortable and happy with their meals. She takes good care of the employees she manages and works hard right alongside them. Each week she provides me with excellent information regarding new residents and those on NIT and takes time to do audits with me. She keeps me up to date on changes happening including diet orders and menu adjustments. Most importantly, she is a good-hearted person and a joy to know and work with. She inspires me and I'm tremendously grateful for all that she contributes to our team. Thank You Stacy! I appreciate you so much and wish you well.



**Nicky Smith**, clinical CDM at Bridge View is awesome! She runs the nutrition at risk meeting every week, helps residents with their menus, and attends resident care conferences. She completes all quarterly nutrition notes and initiates nutrition assessments. She keeps this RD on her toes. Nicky is an asset to Bridge View, and she provides an invaluable service to residents at Bridge View.



**Norma Rodrigues de Andrade** is not only a very strong co-worker, in the role of dietary manager and housekeeping manager, but an amazing wife, mother, and friend. 2020 has proven to be a great challenge for her as well as her family. Despite the death of 2 parents and almost losing a third, she has worked tirelessly to ensure things continue to run smoothly in her facility. She has had and continues to have, open positions in her departments that she and her staff have had to cover. She has also encouraged and insisted that her staff take vacations and, of course, has covered for illnesses within her departments. She has also ensured continual communication between the interdisciplinary team when I haven't been physically present in the building. She takes pride in her work and that example shines through the tasks she does day in and day out, challenging those around her to be better and do better. Despite all of the hardships and challenges, she has continuously gone above and beyond. Those working with her, as well as those she cares for, are so much better for it. Thanks, Norma, for making a difference.


**Esther Delafuente** at Advanced Healthcare of Salem: Esther is so fun to work with. She has one of the cleanest kitchen's that I have ever seen. The meals she cooks are delicious and look amazing. I love working with Esther!



I work with 3 of the best dietary managers in the world, **Anela Misanovic, Christine Beach, and Amber Townsend**. During this past year, I have watched them grow so much. They have become my hero's during this pandemic. I cannot express enough appreciation for all the extra hours visiting with the patients and working so many extra hours in the kitchen covering for staff and completing audits. I look forward to weekly, which I honestly can say is a highlight, to visit with them over the telephone. I truly feel blessed to work with each of them.

**Tanary Mendoza** works at Advanced Healthcare in Albuquerque. She is the food director and CDM and has done a fantastic job covering all areas as needed with her RD working remotely. The employees love working for and with Tanary and I could not ask for a more professional CDM to work with.

Tanary even kept the areas going with work at home when she went through a Covid diagnosis with two young children at home. I want to thank her for all she does and for keeping our nutrition department running smoothly.

Thank you... 

**Pauline Leonard** is a shining example of a great attitude and work ethic during these trying times. She leads a crew of hard-working professionals who have, time and time again, pulled together when things became challenging. She has covered vacancies in her department ranging from unexpected illnesses, extended vacations taken by her crew, that she supported wholeheartedly, forced vacations, aka quarantining, as well as when people took positions outside of her department. Plus, in the midst of it all, she and her crew endured a kitchen remodel. Despite all of the challenges 2020 has brought, Pauline has navigated through it all with strength, patience, and a magnificent attitude. Her staff and residents are better because of her many attributes. Thank you, Pauline, for all that you do every day.

I have had the pleasure of working with **Phil Mason** of Advanced Health Care since 2000. Phil started in the Grangeville skilled facility in 1994 without any long term care experienced. With the help and patience of Monica Perry RDN-Educator Coordinator for IHCA, he completed the Boise State Dietary Managers course and has helped many others as a CDM preceptor for the class. Phil loves to tell everyone he “taught me everything I know”. I’d have to say there is a lot of truth in that, especially in managing a survey. Phil can manage a survey like no other manager I have ever known. I will never forget 1 specific survey where Phil showed his strength when the surveyor attempted to enter the kitchen. Phil kindly told her she needed to leave. She argued and told him he couldn’t ask her to leave and he clarified she was not allowed to enter his kitchen with open-toed shoes. That she could return with a change of shoes or the addition of surgical shoe coverings per the facility’s policy. Phil is a great advocate for his residents and team leader for Advanced Health Care. He retired from Grangeville Health and Rehab 3 years ago and now is Advanced Health Care’s Corporate CDM. Phil continues to help with the opening of new facilities, provided much needed and appreciated CDM coverage within the corporation, and continues to be a leader in his field. Thank you Phil for everything, you are much appreciated— Rachell



I have the honor of working side by side with **Theresa Aiken** of Advanced Health Care of Grangeville. Theresa started for Advanced in 2009 in environment services, transferred to Activity Director until 2015 where she found her home in the Food Service Department. She worked with Phil Mason CDM and Monica Perry RDN-Educator Coordinator for IHCA to complete the Boise State CDM Course and became certified in May 2017. 2020 has been difficult for each and every one of S & S Nutrition dietary managers each with their own facility and personal struggles and battles. Up until COVID, Theresa had 4 consecutive quarters for 5 Star rating (within Labor and Food Budget, >92% on RDN audit scores, >90% on resident satiation, no survey citations, and not active/current corporate action plans). I cannot express my appreciation and amazement for Theresa’s strength, heart, and dedication during such a difficult year. Theresa doesn’t know quit, slow down, take a break, or let someone help. She takes each and every challenge and puts one foot in front of the other and powers through everything. The quality of her work never falters no matter her challenges. She knows each and every one of her residents' food presences, feeding abilities, and habits. She is always prepared with the necessary information I need and makes my work easier and rewarding. Thank you, Theresa, for everything, you are much appreciated— Rachell