

Public Health/Community Nutrition Practice Group

Member Spotlight

Dianne K. Polly, JD, RDN, LDN



Dianne Polly has over 20 years of experience in community nutrition. She is currently the Deputy Director of the [Shelby County Schools Education Foundation](#) in Memphis, Tennessee, where she helps provide funds to schools for “the extras not often funded by the government”. For example, she encourages the planting of school gardens and advocates for healthy nutrition initiatives in Shelby County Schools. She also teaches a community nutrition class at a local college. Dianne previously worked as the Director of the [Meals on Wheels](#) program in Memphis for nearly 22 years. The Memphis Meals on Wheels program is one of the largest in the country. In her new position with Shelby County Schools, Dianne appreciates the opportunity to use her law degree and showing that dietitians can work in positions of authority outside of healthcare.

Dianne grew up in Omaha, Nebraska, and spent summers in Missouri on her grandparents’ farm. Food and eating have always been an interest and passion for Dianne, and as she entered college, she planned to become a Home Economics teacher. Following the advice of her college guidance counselor, Dianne took a few science classes and decided to double-major in Home Economics and Dietetics. She found that she actually enjoyed learning more about nutrition than clothing! Dianne earned bachelor’s degrees in Home Economics and Dietetics from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, a graduate degree from the University of Nebraska, and a law degree from the University of Memphis. She completed a dietetic internship at Cook County Hospital in Chicago, Illinois, and took advantage of training opportunities in various agencies, including airlines, prisons and a daycare.

Dianne has been a member of the Public Health/Community Nutrition Practice Group (PHCNPG) for over 20 years. She has always been deeply involved in her community and in efforts to improve the nutritional status of all individuals. It was during her work as the Director of Meals on Wheels in Memphis that she initially became interested in joining PHCNPG. Dianne has also been involved with Academy, serving on both the Academy’s Ethics Committee and the Legislative and Public Policy Committee. Throughout her training and career, Dianne has been honored with several awards and recognitions through college, graduate and law school and was honored as the Outstanding Dietitian of Tennessee. She also received a community nutrition award in the late-1970s and in the early 2000s, Dianne won a Betty Crocker Soul Food cooking contest! Dianne has also been honored with one of the Academy’s highest recognitions, the Medallion Award.

Dianne is deeply involved in service to her community, and says that, “If serving on community boards is a hobby, then I am heavily involved with this hobby!” She loves public speaking and serves on boards and committees with the [Kiwanis Club of Memphis](#), the community legal center, the [Access to Justice Commission](#), the Girl Scouts, nutrition associations, and her church.



Dianne has been married for 33 years and has two daughters, one is a pharmacist while the other is pursuing medicine. For their 30th anniversary, Dianne and her husband renewed their wedding vows in Las Vegas in the backseat of a pink Cadillac with an Elvis Presley impersonator! In her free time, Dianne enjoys running local races with her daughter. She also enjoys traveling abroad, playing with her Airedale Terrier, Tedmund, and taking lots of pictures of her new grandson. Dianne loves cooking and eating exotic foods. Among her favorite foods are Mexican, Italian, German and Asian cuisines.

PHCNPG is proud of Dianne's work and appreciates her contributions to the Academy, our practice group, and community nutrition!