

Member Spotlight

Frances H. Cook, MA, RDN, LD

The Public Health/Community Nutrition Practice Group (PHCNPG) is pleased to recognize Frances Cook for 50 years of membership in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics!

During her career as a registered dietitian nutritionist, Frances served for four years in clinical nutrition and 34 years in public health. As Director of the Office of Nutrition at the Georgia Department of Public Health, Frances developed and implemented a statewide public health system that provided nutrition information and services to citizens within Georgia's 19 public health districts, including participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). The system involved policymaking, statewide planning and evaluation, management, supervision, and fiscal control. Program planning included a population-based approach to address the complexity of obesity and chronic disease prevention in children, as well as some adolescents and adult populations. As part of the approach, Frances built partnerships and collaborations between public health, the community, schools, worksites, and the private sector. One of the highlights of Frances' career occurred in 1991 when the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetic Education or CADE (now called the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics or ACEND) granted approval for an accredited community-based dietetic internship in the Office of Nutrition at the Georgia Department of Health making Georgia the second state (following Virginia) to have an accredited internship in a state public health agency. Frances retired in 2007, and was proud of the fact that 150 employees (public health nutritionists) had completed the dietetic internship with an overall passing rate of 80% for first-time takers of the National Registration Examination.



Frances grew up on a family-owned, 500-acre farm in Fort Gaines, Georgia, located in the southwest rural section of the state. Peanuts, cotton, corn, wheat, fruits and vegetables were the primary crops that were sowed and harvested. Frances attributes her interest in foods and nutrition to her experiences in growing up on a farm. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Food and Nutrition from Tuskegee University, and a Master of Arts degree in Food and Nutrition from New York University. Frances completed a dietetic internship at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts.

Frances has been an active member of the Academy and the Public Health/Community Nutrition Practice Group (PHCNPG), and she has served in several leadership roles within the Academy along with other public health nutrition organizations. Frances served as Chair for the 63rd Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo™ (FNCE®) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics when the meeting was held in Atlanta, Georgia, for the first time. She served as a program reviewer in conducting site visits for the CADE (now ACEND), and served on the Academy's Item Review Committee where she reviewed test items for the National Registration Examination for Dietitians. Additionally, Frances served as President of the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (1996-1997) and was appointed by Georgia's governor to serve on the Georgia Board of Examiners of Licensed Dietitians (2007-2012).

Since retiring in 2007, Frances has continued to be involved in many aspects of her community. In her own words, Frances says, "*Retirement can cause you to either resign from everything that is*

worthwhile in life, or it can open new doors. When I retired, I chose the latter. My living is renewed as I continue involvement in bible study, traveling and consultant work in community health and nutrition initiatives”.

In her free time, Frances enjoys planting and caring for her yard flowers and vegetable garden. She enjoys the fruits of her labor as some of her favorite foods include tomatoes, collard greens, mustard greens, kale, okra, and green peppers. Frances and her husband, Edmond, have been married for 34 years and live in Fayetteville, Georgia, not far from Atlanta.

PHCNPG is proud of Frances’ work and appreciates her 50 years of contributions to the Academy, public health nutrition, and our profession!