

# ANFP Recognizes 2024 Award Recipients at Annual Conference & Expo (ACE)

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Contact Information

Sarah Dunton

Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals

Marketing & Member Engagement Coordinator

[sdunton@ANFPonline.org](mailto:sdunton@ANFPonline.org)

800.323.1908 x234

**St. Charles, IL** - The Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals (ANFP) presented annual awards to recipients last month at the Annual Conference & Expo (ACE). Award recipients are individuals or ANFP Corporate Partners that consistently demonstrate unwavering dedication to the association and to the foodservice industry as a whole. The ANFP Awards Program strives to celebrate foodservice industry innovators and applauds individuals who advance and support foodservice professionals and the Certified Dietary Manager, Certified Food Protection Professional (CDM®, CFPP®) credential.

Honorees are selected by the ANFP Awards & Recognition Committee after nomination. This year's recipients were recognized at the Honors Gala, which occurred at ACE on Tuesday, June 11, 2024. Their acceptance speeches are also available for viewing exclusively on [ANFPtv](#). The following recipients were honored this year:

## Ambassador Award

*The Ambassador Award is given to an administrator, dietitian, etc., who demonstrated commitment to the CDM, CFPP credential and supports the nutrition and foodservice department leader through mentoring. **Congratulations, Marcus Braz!***



Marcus has been the Area Chief Executive Officer with Encompass Health (Sarasota, FL) for the last 15 years. In his role, he has been an advocate and mentor for the director of nutrition as well as the department. He has supported employee engagement ideas, and continually allows his director to use the skills developed as a CDM, CFPP to shine, and improve the foodservice department. Through his support and insights, directors have been able to develop initiatives that improve systems, as well as patient outcomes and overall satisfaction.

## CDM, CFPP Spotlight Award

*The CDM, CFPP Spotlight recognizes a member that has received their chapter's CDM, CFPP of the Year (or equivalent award), or was named as 'CDM, CFPP of the Month'. **Congratulations, Michael Kopec, CDM, CFPP!***



Michael Kopec, CDM, CFPP, is passionate about what he does as a CDM, CFPP. He cares deeply about his residents and is dedicated and supportive of his staff and continually seeks out advanced training for his own personal development as a CDM, CFPP, specifically related to leadership. He is well respected and often invited to participate in projects, events, and education sessions in his facility as well as his community.

### Chapter Volunteer of the Year Award

*The Chapter Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes an outstanding chapter volunteer that serves as a positive example to others, and whose dedicated service, time, and efforts to the foodservice industry help to advance the mission of ANFP at the state level.*  
**Congratulations, Maggie Rowlands, CDM, CFPP!**



Maggie Rowlands, CDM, CFPP, has demonstrated excellence in leadership through exemplary service, advocacy of the credential, and dedication to the Indiana chapter. She exhibits qualities of an inspiring leader that has left a lasting impact on a chapter, its members, and the foodservice industry.

Maggie is a long-time, dedicated volunteer for the Indiana chapter. She has held each of the chapter leadership roles throughout the years and is admired by her fellow chapter leaders and members. She ensures the chapter provides stellar education at each of their events and is working to engage and grow a new generation of CDM, CFPPs.

### Dining Distinction Award

*The Dining Distinction Award honors a member that has contributed significantly to the health and well-being of individuals while providing an optimal dining experience, including the nutritional value of food, presentation, the environment in which food is served, and interactions with clients.*  
**Congratulations, Jaimie Griffiths!**



Jaimie Griffiths ensures that each of her students have the required five options of items to choose from each day and gets students excited about nutrition through creative food presentation and decor in cafeterias with themes to celebrate nutrition. From catchy phrases and decorations for national breakfast week, to the theme, “soaring to new nutritional heights” during the national school lunch week, Jaimie makes dining in cafeterias a positive experience each day.

## Distinguished Service Award

*The Distinguished Service Award is given to a corporate partner for exhibiting an unwavering commitment to the credential. **Congratulations, Sherri Conde!***



This year's recipient, Sherri Conde, has been a dedicated Corporate Partner of ANFP for many years. She has served ANFP in several ways, including Industry Advisory Council Chair, and as a Director at Large - Corporate Partner, on the ANFP Board. She continually strives to support ANFP's vision and mission by providing education by way of speaking engagements at ACE and Regional Meetings, as well as through her position at the Performance Foodservice by supporting the Foundation. Performance Foodservice's Visionary Level support of NFEF provides funding for up to 12 CDM exam Preparation grants with additional funds directed towards other NFEF initiatives. Performance Foodservice has supported NFEF via this grant funding for the last six years.

## Horizon Award

*The Horizon Award recognizes a member that has been in the nutrition and food industry for five years or less and is new to management. They have demonstrated a desire for future growth within their facility and community. They also display leadership in fostering equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. **Congratulations, Maria Alvarado!***



This year's recipient, Maria Alvarado, implemented wellness goals and challenges that help students learn and appreciate nutrition. She also implemented monthly nutrition connection objectives for parents to practice with their students at home and she ensures that all students receive the same nutritional meals, with the same nutritional value and the same nutrition education as any other student.

## Innovation Award

*The Innovation Award recognizes members who enhance their nutrition and foodservice operations through technology, program development, nutrition, and/or creative use of financial management. **Congratulations, Ambika Sethivel!***



Ambika Sethivel is a true problem solver who can consider issues from both a visionary and a granular perspective. She created her company's proprietary "Tagger" system, which has become the technology backbone of the company and enabled it to scale its capabilities to serve an increasingly complex matrix of about 30,000 daily meals from many different recipes.

## Partnership Award

*The Partnership Award recognizes an individual or company that has demonstrated a strong commitment to the CDM, CFPP credential and supports the nutrition and foodservice department leader. **Congratulations, Amy Wees, MBA, RD, LD!***



Amy Wees, MBA, RD, LD, supports the growth and advancement of the foodservice department by ensuring the CDM, CFPPs within her organization attend regular professional development events and helps them understand regulatory changes while accommodating client's food preferences, and honoring physicians recommendations.

## Student of the Year Award

*The Student of the Year Award recognizes a current student enrolled in an ANFP dietary managers program who exemplifies dedication, hard work, and commitment to earning the credential and pursuing a career in the foodservice industry. **Congratulations, Jessie Anderson!***



While staffing levels were low, Jessie stepped up, frequently working 70+ hours a week to cover any needed positions. Jessie was rewarded with a promotion to supervisor within months of starting. When numerous additional hires were secured, Jessie was able to step back from covering positions, and explore the supervisor role. When Jessie Anderson was promoted, one of her first priorities was to obtain her CDM, CFPP. Jessie began the course by setting a realistic timeline and scheduling time specifically for daily classwork. Leaning on her director as a mentor and guide, Jessie quickly advanced through the lessons while still working a full-time schedule (often more) and taking care of her young daughter by herself. Jessie was diligent and dedicated, and at times had to schedule her test and meetings with both her preceptors (one located in Alaska, 4 time zones away) around her working hours, sometimes having to return to work with her child in tow to complete her coursework.

## Legacy Award

*The Legacy Award embodies an ANFP member with proven dedication not only to the organization, but the mission and the credential as well. **Congratulations, Sharon Vermeer, CDM, CFPP!***

This year's recipient, Sharon Vermeer, CDM, CFPP, started her volunteer career by way of presenting at one of the local meetings and has continued to serve the chapter throughout the years in various capacities, starting with a secretary role and eventually working her way up to chapter president. More recently, Sharon has also been active in





helping struggling chapters by reaching out to ANFP dropped members to help figure out how we can keep them in our profession. She's quick to jump in and lend a hand wherever needed, including training new chapter board members as well as mentoring many individuals through their educational pursuits. She generously shares and seeks out new ideas from fellow CDM, CFPP's to help navigate the changing healthcare environment.

Sharon has also been active at the National level for many years starting as a member of the government affairs committee. In 2012, Sharon was appointed to her first role on the National level as a director at large. From that point on, she was appointed to Board positions including treasurer and was eventually appointed to the role of National chair in 2018. She is currently serving on the Leadership Development Committee as a past chair.

She has a passion for helping others both within the industry as well as her community. Sharon, and her employer, are currently helping refugees find training and employment within our healthcare systems to help fill the staffing shortages.

Her continuous work with ANFP at both the National and chapter level is the definition of leadership and what it means to be a Legacy award winner!

### **Diamond Award**

*The coveted Diamond Award recognizes one ANFP state chapter per year that exemplifies dedication to members through chapter initiatives and enthusiastic leadership.*

### **Congratulations, Iowa ANFP!**



Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals

This year's Diamond Award winner, Iowa (IA) ANFP, focused on several ways to give back to chapter members and their communities that specifically focused on re-use and recycling. They did so in several ways, including holding blood drive, hosting a uniform exchange and cookbook swap as well as a clothing drive for students looking to become culinary chefs and/or CDM, CFPP's. IA ANFP also raised funds for Project Pet Alive for pet oxygen masks. Each of these initiatives supported the overall goal of reduce, re-use, recycle.

This chapter's efforts and initiatives resulted in many positive outcomes within their chapter and the community as well. Many current members and students in the local public school systems were gifted with new uniforms and/or business attire that some may not be able to afford as many students in the local public school systems live below poverty levels which make it extremely hard to afford clothing for interviews. Also, during the chapter's fall conference, many members left with new recipes to incorporate into their menus from the cookbook swap. Additionally, the blood drive resulted in 31 lives saved.

The chapter also raised \$675 for a non-profit organization to purchase pet oxygen mask kits given to unfunded law enforcement, fire, search and rescue and our military to save family pets from smoke inhalation. These masks can also be re-used.

You may read more about our 2024 award recipients [here](#).