

Jessica G. Anderson, MS, RD, CSSD, LD, ACSM EP-C

Location: Fort Drum, NY, 1BCT 10th MTN DIV (LI)

1. Current job title/duties and responsibilities.

- o **Title:** Holistic Health & Fitness (H2F) Performance Dietitian
 - § *GS-12 Civilian Employee*
- o Work alongside a team of sports medicine professionals made up of:
 - § 1 Performance Director (GS-13)
 - § 2 RD's (myself and an officer)
 - § 1 Lead Strength Coach, 14 Battalion Strength Coaches
 - § 3 Physical Therapists, 2 Physical Therapy Assistants
 - § 2 Occupational Therapists, 1 Occupational Therapy Assistant
 - § 1 Financial Aid Counselor
 - § *Pending: Cognitive Performance Specialist, Athletic Trainer(s)*
- o **Mission:**
 - § To reduce musculoskeletal injury, optimize soldier readiness (deployable), extend length of term able to serve
- o **Roles & Responsibilities**
 - § 50% one-on-one patient care
 - § Performance Nutrition
 - § General fitness, special schools – ranger, special forces (SFAS)
 - § MNT
 - § Examples: micronutrient deficiencies, disordered eating/eating disorder, low energy availability, HTN, heart healthy nutrition, pregnancy, GI issues, injury recovery, weight management etc.

§ General Nutrition

§ Healthy eating, eating on a budget, meal prep & cooking skills

§ 20% outreach & classes

§ Post physical training nutrient briefs (aka. “turf talks”)

§ Performance nutrition classes

§ Examples : MRE field rationing & hydration, long-distance rucking, dietary supplement education, nutrient timing etc.

§ 23% Admin

§ Collaborative Meetings

§ Project development

§ Patient care/charting, meal planning

§ Scheduling & coordinating

§ 5% Body Composition Screening & Analysis

§ 2% Food Service Oversight at 1BCT Dining Facility (DFAC)

2. Educational Background and Previous Work Experience

o **Miami University of Ohio 2010-2015**

§ *B.S. Nutrition & Dietetics, Kinesiology, Health Promotion*

§ Intern & Volunteer Experiences

§ Dawn Weatherwax of Sports Nutrition 2Go, Liberty Township

§ Cleveland Clinic Main Campus, Heart & Vascular Institute (outpatient)

§ Cleveland Indians Food Service (concession)

§ SAND Sports Nutrition with Nancy Parkinson (cooking classes, presentations to NCAA D1 Teams at Miami)

o **The University of Georgia 2015-2017**

§ *M.S. Clinical Exercise Physiology*

§ *Certificate in Obesity & Weight Management*

§ Graduate, Intern & Volunteer Experiences

§ Graduate Teaching Assistant (TA):

§ Older Adult Group Fitness Class, undergraduate
ACSM Principles of Exercise & Fitness

§ Graduate Research Assistant (GA)

§ Nutrition, muscle force capacity and bone health

§ Athens Piedmont Regional Cardiac & Pulmonary
Rehabilitation Exercise Physiologist Intern

§ Cleveland Clinic Main Campus, Heart & Vascular
Institute (outpatient nutrition education and research
coordinator)

§ Vice President of UGA Exercise is Medicine

o **Sodexo Dietetic Internship, NY Campus 2017-2018**

§ Location: Lenox Hill Hospital, Manhattan, NY

§ Concentration: Leadership & Sports Nutrition (6wk rotation)

§ Miami University Sports RD – Erin Kratzer

§ Oakland University, US Figure Skating, US Women's Hockey
Sports RD – Carrie Aprik

o **ATP Sports Nutrition, LLC AUG 2018-present**

§ Earned RD in AUG 2018. Opened own LLC as a consultant sports RD
to developing and competitive athletes and athletic teams (K-12, NCAA
D3, individual amateur and semi-professional).

§ Partnered with AIM Performance Training (local performance training
facility in Mentor, OH) NOV 2018 – MAY 2019

§ General Nutrition, Performance Nutrition

- o **Contractor Performance Dietitian at Ft. Drum, NY – JUL 2019 – MAR 2021**
- o **GS-12 H2F Performance Dietitian at Ft. Drum, NY – MAR 2021 – Present**

3. Most Challenging Aspect of Position

- o The H2F program is brand new to the military – officially adopted OCT 2020. Receiving buy-in from battalion leadership has been the greatest challenge. Through development of relationships and sharing of data showcasing improvements in physical fitness, reduced musculoskeletal injury and those deployable... adoption of the H2F initiative is slowly changing the “army way” for the better.

4. Likes & Dislikes

- o Likes:
 - § Flex-schedule (8hr days, max of 40hrs/week, choose hours work day-to-day)
 - § Vacation & time off (11 gov holidays, snow days, brigade chosen days off, 10 PTO days, 10 sick days)
 - § Pay (salary higher than most full-time sports RD positions available; annual salary about \$15-20,000 higher)
 - § Creative Freedom – developing content, policies & standard operating procedures from the ground-up
 - § Opportunity to Grow – continuing education, participation in conducting research with Walter Reed Medical Center
 - § Soldier Relationships – ongoing patient care within a team-setting, getting to witness and support soldiers as they learn, grow & achieve their goal(s).
 - § Variability in Day-to-Day work J
 - § Student Loan Forgiveness for civilian gov employees after 10yrs of work
 - § Retirement plan

- o Dislikes:
 - § Location: majority of military posts are in rural areas – very little things to do within a 70mile radius. It can be difficult to meet people.
 - § Lack of Direction: building everything from the ground-up, resiliency is constantly being tested; continuing to push through trials and hardships in gaining buy-in; having to develop all content - nothing previously created.
 - § Slow Work Orders: ongoing issues related to equipment and network access can take much time to be resolved.

5. Educational Background Use the Most & Least. Additional Coursework May Have Been Helpful.

- o Most:
 - § Medical Nutrition Therapy, Nutrition Counseling, Exercise Physiology, Dietary Supplements & Ergogenic Aids, Sports Nutrition
- o Least:
 - § Food Systems Management
- o Additional Coursework May Have Been Helpful:
 - § Disordered Eating/Eating Disorder, more business management classes, food relationship nutrition counseling.

6. How Could You Make This Job Better? What Are Trends in the Field?

- o Location: closer to city-life and culture, within a 30mile radius
- o Expediting work orders – quicker IT support when issues arise (often daily; it can take up to 2-3+ months to get issues resolved)
- o Trends: increase in tactical performance RD job opportunities
 - § Increasing to other branches of military, firefighters, police etc. J

7. What are the specialty certifications for this position and/ or continuing education opportunities, professional organizations?

- o Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics (CSSD)
- o Master's Degree
- o *Preferred: Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) or Certified Exercise Physiologist (EP-C)*
- o Continuing Education: able to request any continuing edu opportunities related to field of expertise; I believe each civilian employee receives 4,000 annually. We are currently looking at the ISAK Level I course (skin fold) for all Performance RD's at Drum.
- o Organizations:
 - § Collegiate & Professional Sports Dietetics Association (CPSDA)
 - § Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics (AND)
 - § American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)

8. What have you learned (as the student) from this experience?

I learned a lot from talking to Jessica. I've always been interested in Sports Nutrition and after hearing her experience, the route she took, and her current job, I really want to follow in her footsteps. My plan once I retire is to work as a Sport Dietitian for the military. In the Marine Corps, I'm a force fitness instructor and my job is to ensure that physical training is conducted in proper form and is effective. The most important part of her job is to reduce musculoskeletal injury. From personal experience, service members end up going to medical clinics because they are not fully educated on forms and techniques. The use of supplements is also a big issue especially with GNC in every main Exchange on bases. With everything I'm learning now and with her mentorship, I know I will be able to provide better education on performance nutrition. I plan to continue getting mentorship from her and work my way to be a sports nutritionist even while in the Marine Corps.