



## Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals

### **\*President's Message\***

To my fellow Certified Dietary professionals across New Jersey,

If you're reading this, the chances are you've stood on that quarry tiled kitchen floor at 6:00 a.m. reviewing your call out board. You've reworked your menu at the last minute because the delivery didn't arrive on time. You've balanced clinical expectations, resident satisfaction, sanitation audits, financial bookkeeping, and yet somehow, we always make sure lunch goes out on time. Life in a kitchen is not for the faint of heart. The expectations keep rising, regulations get more detailed, and let's be honest life has become more about doing more, with less.

Yet what we do matters in ways few roles can match. We make a difference in the lives of people who need us the most. We feed people at their most vulnerable, we comfort families without even realizing it, and we manage operations that require clinical precision and hospitality level service, simultaneously. We are clinicians, operators, mentors, repairmen, problem solvers, and sometimes crisis managers, all before 2 p.m. And still, many of us feel like we're doing it alone.

That's exactly why the ANFP exists. We're not just about CE credits or a line on your résumé, we want to create a community. It's about being in a room where you don't have to explain why a late truck delivery can derail your entire morning. It's about talking to someone who understands the pressure of survey week without you having to explain it.

As someone who has stood in your shoes, feeling the weight of responsibility on a short staffed Saturday, those experiences made me into who I am today. Now I have the privilege of walking into kitchens across the state, working with teams, troubleshooting challenges, and supporting professionals who are navigating the same pressures we've all faced.

And I can tell you this: the strongest departments are led by professionals who stay connected, keep learning, and who show up for one another.

That's what participation in our chapter helps create. We are ready to take our first major step forward as a state organization and that starts with building a strong board. Most urgently, we are looking for a Treasurer to help us lay the foundation correctly and responsibly. This isn't about paperwork. It's about leadership. It's about helping create something that supports every CDM in New Jersey.

Whether you're brand new in your role or a seasoned veteran who has seen every version of "this is how we've always done it," there is a place for you here.

Our vision is clear:

- Regular meetings and networking events that matter.
- Meaningful trainings and ServSafe classes.
- Continuing education opportunities so you can earn the CEs you need without scrambling at the last minute.
- Access to trade events and industry experts with operational knowledge and trending foodservice innovations
- A professional network that understands exactly what you're navigating, celebrates your growth, and introduces you to some solutions that worked for them.

So I ask you to please join us and volunteer. We need visible mentors because this profession deserves strong, connected leaders. Let's show up for each other and build something that supports the professionals who keep our kitchens running every single day.

If you're even slightly curious about joining our board, especially in the Treasurer role, please reach out.

My door is always open,

Brian Schleper, CDM, CFPP  
President, ANFP-NJ  
551-419-8033