



from Business Services

A Day in the Life of a Food Service Intern at AUHSD by Navil Lorenzana

December 9, 2019

AUHSD Food Services takes in 3-4 dietetic interns each school year for their school food service rotation. Navil graduated from CSULB and is currently a dietetic intern with Utah State University.



Anyone looking to become a registered dietitian? Completion of a 1,200 hour (at minimum) unpaid internship which lasts between 9-24 months is the step before the big national accreditation exam to be qualified to add the letters RDN to your name. While this process can be extremely overwhelming and downright frightening, it is an unforgettable opportunity that transitions interns to flourish into a strong future dietitian.

As part of my internship, a 560-hour rotation in food service that focuses on the National School Lunch Program is a requirement for Utah State University. This experience combines with working directly under Assistant Director of Food Services Tiffanie Bas, RDN and working at various school sites within the district to get hands-on experience.

From walking through the doors at the District to grabbing your hairnet to enter the District Food Center to going to a school site to assist with food production; many may wonder why is this a field of interest for soon-to-be Dietitians?

The National School Lunch Program was a national security measure put in place by President Truman in 1946 due to many men being deemed "not healthy" enough to serve in the war effort. Fast forward some decades later and our country currently has 1 in 5 children who may go to bed hungry.

A Food Services Dietitian gets to be part of the system that allows for children to have a complete, balanced, healthy meal at least once a day, an effort that ameliorates food insecurity amongst children. Here at AUHSD, as an intern, I am exposed to what it takes to make that an everyday reality.

The day begins with checking in every morning with Tiffanie or arriving at an assigned school site ready for the duties that lie ahead. This consists of learning cycle menus, the proper menu planning of foods that are compliant with USDA standards, various state and federal policies, meal applications, procurement, production from a central kitchen that produces almost 15,000 meals daily, and hands-on skill development in various kitchens, preparing and serving food for elementary, junior high, and high schools. I attend parent meetings to educate them of the National School Lunch Program and what the Food Service Department at AUHSD does to ensure food safety, quality, and standards for their children. I have the privilege of working with different Food Services staff, who teach me about the different variables that directly affect the department. A day in the life of an intern is full of learning, spontaneity, and surprises. It can be as busy as going to school sites to observe lunch; to a cross-city presentation at the elementary district, to going into the District Food Center and putting together a taste test for potential menu items. At the end of the day, knowing that you were a small part of the well-oiled machine that provides children food and parents a peace of mind is the most rewarding part of it all.

