



HPEB News and Kudos

Message from the Interim Chair:



Hello HPEB!

When I stepped into this role as Interim Department Chair, I wasn't sure what to expect. Would I be able to balance the demands of this new position while keeping up with my own research, student mentoring, and teaching? Would my family feel neglected? Would I still be able to find time to exercise, cook meals, and spend time with friends? The answer was yes—mostly. 😊

All of you took a leap of faith when you joined HPEB (whether you're a student, faculty, or staff). And with that leap, you learned that you could do hard things. As one of my favorite Peloton instructors once said, "You step into your power when you do something you didn't think you could do."

One thing we value in HPEB is celebrating when we accomplish hard things. Below are some of the many accomplishments our HPEB faculty and students have achieved over the last nine months. If you have an accomplishment to share, please send it to Pam Metz (PMETZ@mailbox.sc.edu). I'm looking forward to seeing what we can accomplish in the new year!

-Dr. Brie

Dissertation and Practice Experience Presentations

Practicums:

- Emily Washenko- April 18, 2025: Addressing the Reproductive Health and Safety Needs of Fire Fighters
- Jaci Williams - November 21, 2025: Creating and Facilitating Development for Multidisciplinary Teams

Proposal Defense:

- Enid Keseko - May 13, 2025: REEL DIETS: Researching Engagement with Educational Content. A Documentary based intervention for Eating and Self-Efficacy
- Alexis Bell - May 22, 2025: Associations Between Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, and Stress Among African American Adults in the Southeast United States: An Ecological Momentary Assessment Study
- Julia Budiongan - June 9, 2025: Between Sips and Sheets: Relations between college students' sex-related alcohol expectancies and risk behavior
- Gazi Pritom - July 2, 2025: Stimulant Use Disorder Treatment Entry and Genetic Susceptibility In The All Of Us Database
- Shiny Drew - October 30, 2025: Examining the Associations between Plant-Based Dietary Quality, Psychosocial Factors, and Dietary Beliefs among Asian-Indian Women Living in the United States: A Mixed-Methods Study

Final Defense:

- Megan Austin - June 26, 2025: The Influence of Sex Education on Sexual Behaviors from Adolescence to Young Adulthood in South Carolina
- Halide Aydin - June 30, 2025: Making sense of PCOS on social media: Women's Experiences and Health Messaging in a Digital Landscape
- Victoria Adebisi- July 24, 2025: Breastfeeding Decision-Making and Practices among Working Mothers and Role of External Influences in Urban Nigeria
- Keren Herrán - October 21, 2025: Food Insecurity and Social Connection of Nicaraguan Refugees and Asylum Seekers: a Qualitative Study

Publications and Presentations

Au LE, Arnold CD, Domfe C, Ritchie LD, Whaley SE, Bitler M, Frongillo EA. Diet quality and weight status are predicted by federal nutrition assistance program participation, health, and demographics. *Current Developments in Nutrition* 9(8):107505, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cdnut.2025.107505>

Aydin HZ, Okpara N, Dubois KE, Jones MM, Carswell J, Wilcox S, Friedman DB, Liese AD, Turner-McGrievy G. Perceptions of the Three Dietary Patterns of the 2020–2025 United States Dietary Guidelines Among African American Adults After a 12-Week Randomized Intervention Trial to Reduce Type 2 Diabetes Risk: A Qualitative Study. *Nutrients*. 2025; 17(21):3453. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu17213453>

Bailey S, Turner-McGrievy GM, Keseko EA, Duncan T, Ward-Johnson D, Davis B, Wilcox S, Friedman DB, Sarzynski MA, Liese AD. The Diet Guidelines: 3 Diets (DG3D) Study protocol of a behavioral teaching kitchen intervention for type-2 diabetes prevention among African American adults. *Contemporary Clinical Trials*. 2025 Oct 10;159:108109. doi: 10.1016/j.cct.2025.108109.

Bethancourt HJ, Bose I, Tupou LM, Meinhart M, Frongillo EA, Greaves A, Young SL. Mental distress and resource insecurity in the Kingdom of Tonga following the 2022 volcanic eruption: Associations of water and food insecurity with mental distress. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2025.08.002>

Blake CE, Kim SS, Frongillo EA, Avula R, Menon P. Research priorities for drivers of food choice for food system transformation in South Asia: Proceedings of a collaborative workshop. *Current Developments in Nutrition* 104582, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cdnut.2025.104582>

Boncyk M, Leroy JL, Brander R, Larson LM, Ruel MT, Frongillo EA. Accuracy of Using Weight and Length in Children Under 24 Months to Screen for Early Childhood Obesity: A Systematic Review. *Advances in Nutrition* 100452, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.advnut.2025.100452>

Boncyk M, Leroy JL, Brander R, Larson LM, Ruel MT, Frongillo EA. Accuracy of using weight and length in children under 24 months to screen for early childhood obesity: A systematic review. *Advances in Nutrition* 16:100452, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.advnut.2025.100452>

Boncyk, Rampalli KK, Winters MN, Makkar MK, Nanema S, Amevinya GS, Laar A, Frongillo EA, Blake CE. What, when, and how food and beverage are advertised on Ghanaian television. *PLoS One* 20(6): e0325730, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0325730>

Bose I, Miller J, Bethancourt HJ, García OP, Melgar-Quiñonez H, Salles-Costa R, DelGrossi ME, Miller S, Durham T, Shamah-Levy T, Gaitán-Rossi P, Young SL, Frongillo EA. Investigating the suitability of

dichotomous responses for the Water Insecurity Experience (WISE) Scales using nationally representative data from 39 countries. *PLoS Water* 4(5):e0000338, 2025.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pwat.0000338>

Ellyson AM, Mendoza JA, Liese AD, Tabah A, Bekelman TA, Rudisill AC, Dabelea D, Frongillo EA, Pihoker C, Malik FS, Wright DR. Healthcare and non-healthcare costs: youth with diabetes and food insecurity. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 108028, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2025.108028>

García-Sarmiento JL, Frongillo EA, López-Teros V, Quintana-Zavala MO, López-Teposte IV, Quizán-Plata T. Prevalence and perspectives of food insecurity among university students from indigenous communities in northwest Mexico. *Salud, Ciencia y Tecnología* 5:1800, 2025.

<https://doi.org/10.56294/saludcyt20251800>

Gupta D, Thomas D, Self S, Frongillo EA, Litwin AH, Ewing JA, Ramos-Gonzalez L, Rudisill AC. Impact of food insecurity resource navigation for primary care patients with diabetes and hypertension: A matched cohort study. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-025-09713-1>

Herrán K, Mandujano-Acevedo N, Suarez JC, Boggess B, Frongillo EA. Lived experiences of farmworkers from five U.S. states during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Frontiers in Public Health* 13:1503383.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1503383>

Herrán K, Martínez-Jaikel T, Ghattas H, Larson L, Frongillo EA. (2025, September). Food Insecurity and Social Connection of Nicaraguan Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Costa Rica: a Qualitative Study. Oral presentation at the North American Refugee Health Conference, Niagara, Canada.

Herrán K, Martinez-Jaikel T, Larson L, Ghattas H, Frongillo EA. (2025, November). Food Insecurity and Social Connection of Nicaraguan Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Costa Rica: a Qualitative Study. Poster presentation at the American Public Health Association Conference, Washington DC, USA.

Keseko EA, Turner-McGrievy GM, Bernhart JA, Bell A, Bailey S, Kim YS, Okpara N, Wilcox S, Frongillo EA. Connections between Diet and Mental health: Comparing Participants Randomized to Vegan and Omnivorous Diets in the NEW Soul study. *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*. 2025 Sep 9:15598276251377720.

Larson LM, Frongillo EA, Akter F, Wooten S, Brander R, Ruel MT, Leroy JL. Growth monitoring and promotion as an opportunity to improve early childhood development. *Advances in Nutrition* 100470, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.advnut.2025.100470>

Lee J, Harnack LJ, Torkilsen L, Bauer R, Freese RL, Yip W, Fram MS, Frongillo EA. Weekend backpack program tailored for ethnic and dietary food preferences: nutrition quality, program usage, and parent satisfaction. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 57(1):57-64, 2025.

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Liese AD, Julceus EF, Brown AD, Pihoker C, Frongillo EA, Sauder KA, Malik FS, Bellatorre A, Reboussin BA, Mendoza JA. Reassessing the burden of food insecurity in youth and young adults with youth-onset diabetes: The importance of marginal food security. *Canadian Journal of Diabetes* 49(1):29-36.E1, 2025.

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Onono MA, Frongillo EA, Sheira L, Odhiambo G, Wekesa P, Conroy A, Cohen CR, Bukusi EA, Weiser SD. Effect of improving food security on parenting practices and caregiver-adolescent relationships: Qualitative findings of an income generating agricultural intervention in rural Kenya. *BJPsych Open* 11(e10):1-9, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjo.2024.802>

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Pérez-Velázquez CM, Rodríguez-Madera SL, Sánchez-Salgado CD, Bernardy-Aponte OI, Frongillo EA. Here the refrigerator is empty: food insecurity among Puerto Rican elders. *Puerto Rico Health Sciences Journal* 44(3):150-156, 2025.

Sanghvi TG, Homan R, Nguyen T, Mahmud Z, Walissa T, Nersesyan M, Preware P, Frongillo EA, Matheson R. Incremental financial costs of strengthening large-scale child nutrition programs in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Vietnam: Retrospective expenditure analysis. *Globalization and Health* 21:21, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-025-01118-3>

Sattamini IF, Hanley-Cook GT, Frongillo EA, Coates J for the Healthy Diets Monitoring Initiative. Narrative review of the validity and cross-context equivalence of healthy diet metrics and their data collection methods for global monitoring. *Current Developments in Nutrition* 9(5):107439, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cdnut.2025.107439>

Schwendler TR, Frongillo EA, Craig HC, Hanley-Cook GT, Sattamini IF, Hayashi C, Mehra V, Pries AM, Saha K, Coates JC on behalf of the Healthy Diets Monitoring Initiative. Universal subconstructs of a healthy diet for children and adolescents: A critical review. *Advances in Nutrition* 100511, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.advnut.2025.100511>

Sethuraman K, Bose S, Escobar-DeMarco J, Frongillo EA. Quality assurance and quality improvement in maternal, infant, young child, and adolescent nutrition service provision in five countries. *Maternal & Child Nutrition* 13772, 2025. <http://doi.org/10.1111/mcn.13772>

Turner-McGrievy GM, Delgado-Díaz DC, DuBois KE, Aydin HZ, Monroe CM, Kim Y, Hardin J, Wilcox S, Valafar H. The mLife randomized trial examining the impact of gamifying social support provision for weight loss. *Obesity*. 2025 Aug;33(8):1447-1456. doi: 10.1002/oby.24330. *Editor's Choice for August 2025*.

Woodward-Lopez G, McLain AC, Frongillo EA, Colabianchi N, Collie-Akers V, Ritchie LD. Community and school programs, policies and environments related to child dietary intake: The Healthy Communities Study. *Pediatric Obesity* e70043, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijpo.70043>

Zhu X, Liu J, Frongillo EA, Merchant AT, Cai B, Wilcox S. Maternal postpartum depressive symptoms and complementary feeding practices of infants during the first twelve months of life. *Journal of Nutrition* 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tjnut.2025.09.008>

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Congratulations are in Order!

Congratulations to Keren Herrán for winning student travel awards for the APHA Latino Caucus for Public Health and the APHA International Health Section, Fall 2025

Congratulations to Dr. Debbie Billings for winning the Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health (JMWH) Best Research Article Award for your article entitled "The Effect of Centering Pregnancy Group Antenatal Care on Maternal, Birth, and Neonatal Outcomes: A Stepped-Wedge Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial."

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38339816/>

Congratulations to Farnaz Hesam Shariati for being awarded a Graduate Teaching and Instructional Assistants (GTA/IAs) Teaching Resource Development Grant from USC.

Photo Gallery

HPEB BACK TO SCHOOL BASH: AUGUST 2025



COFFEE AND CONVERSATION



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION 2025 CONFERENCE



STUDENT GATHERINGS



**Health Promotion,
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PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS FOR NEWS AND KUDOS TO PAM METZ SO THAT WE CAN SHARE AND CELEBRATE YOUR WORK!

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SOON-TO-BE HPEB GRADUATES AND ALUMNI, PLEASE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH US! PLEASE ALSO ENSURE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION IS CURRENT WITH THE ARNOLD SCHOOL BY UPDATING YOUR INFORMATION [HERE](#).

WHO TO CONTACT IN HPEB

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