

# IAND 2026-2027 Ballot Candidate Profiles

## **PRESIDENT-ELECT**

Paula Milas Sochacki, EdD, MPH, RDN, LDN

Academy Membership 2004 - Present IAND Membership 2004 - Present District Membership - CAND 2024 - Present Previously: WSAND (merged with CAND) 2004 - 2024

## **Employment**

### **-Benedictine University, Lisle Illinois**

Associate Professor 2022 - Present Undergraduate Nutrition Program Director 2022 - Present Nutrition (DPD) Program Director 2017 - Present Assistant Dept. Chairperson for Nutrition Department 2021 - 2022  
Assistant Professor 2017 - 2022

## **Leadership Experiences**

### **-IAND**

Membership Committee Chair 2008 - Present Programming Committee Member 2014 - 2018  
Health Care Professions Committee Member 2014 - 2018

### **-NKF of Illinois**

Professional Advisory Board Member 2020 - 2023

### **-WSAND**

President 2009 - 2010 President-Elect 2008 - 2009 Nominating Committee Member 2006 - 2007 Past President Committee Chair 2011 - 2018 Programming Committee Member 2008 - 2024 Student Connection Committee Chair 2019 - 2024

## **Relevant Awards**

2025 - Recognized Outstanding Dietetics Educator of the Year in the Didactic Program in Dietetics NDEP (South Central Region)

2017 - Recognized Dietitian of the Year for Illinois by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

2011 - Recognized Young Dietitian of the Year for Illinois by the American Dietetic Association

## **Statement of Purpose**

Throughout my career, I have been actively engaged in a broad range of volunteer, leadership, and research initiatives focused on mentoring, leadership development, and career advancement. Over the past 20+ years as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, I have held positions in clinical, community, and higher education settings. In my current role as an educator in Nutrition and Dietetics, I have the unique opportunity to work closely with future RDNs, engage with alumni, and collaborate with professionals across diverse areas of practice. Additionally, I have developed a strong professional network throughout my career that would serve as a valuable resource in fostering new and innovative opportunities for IAND members. I firmly believe that building meaningful connections and inspiring others are essential components of successful career navigation. Leading by example through active involvement is one of the most effective ways to make a lasting impact. I would be honored to serve as President-Elect of the Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

## **TREASURER-ELECT**

Jennifer R. Hubert, MS, RDN, LDN

Academy Membership 2013 - Present IAND Membership 2014 - Present District Membership -  
Central 2014 - Present

## **Employment**

### **-Hopedale Medical Complex**

Lead Dietitian 2016 - Present

### **-Illinois Central College**

Adjunct Faculty 2017 - 2018

## **Leadership Experiences**

### **-Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics**

Awards Committee 2025 - Present CPI Chair 2025 - Present CPI Chair-Elect 2024 - 2025

### **-Central Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (CIAND)**

Nominating Committee 2025 - Present Bylaws Chair 2022 - 2024 Scholarship & Awards Chair  
2021 - 2024 Nominating Committee 2020 - 2021 President 2019 - 2020 President Elect 2018 -  
2019 Bylaws Chair 2018 - 2021 Nominating Committee 2017 - 2018

### **-Illinois State University**

Preceptor for MSDI and Distance Track programs 2019 - Present Advisory Board member  
2019 - Present

## **Statement of Purpose**

I have found great value serving in leadership roles within dietetics—both in my local district and at the state level. This has fostered growth in my personal skills, professional connections, and overall leadership style. As the outgoing CPI Chair, I would love to continue to serve IAND in an alternate role. The future of our organization relies on volunteer leaders, and I would love to inspire future leaders to engage at the state level and participate in committees, appointed roles, and elected positions. I hope that I can serve as a mentor to future leaders in dietetics while continuing to learn more about IAND and how it operates. This will increase my knowledge of the organization and offer opportunities for future strategic leadership and volunteer participation.

## **CPI CHAIR-ELECT**

Rifqa Dacloush, MBA, RDN, LDN

Academy Membership 2021 - Present IAND Membership 2021 - Present District Membership:  
None currently

## **Employment**

### **-Benedictine University**

Nutrition Department Assistant 2022 - 2022

### **-Indian Prairie School District 204**

Interpreter 2013 - 2025 Early Childhood Special Education TA 2013 - 2015

## **Leadership Experiences**

### **-DIFM**

Membership Chair 2025 - Present Student Membership Chair 2023 - 2025

### **-WSAND**

Student Connection/Social Media 2021 - 2024

### **-SAND**

President 2022

PR Chair 2021

Secretary 2021

## **Statement of Purpose**

Rifqa is an active leader within the Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Dietitians in Integrative and Functional Medicine (DIFM) practice group. She currently serves as DIFM Membership Chair and previously served as DIFM Student Membership Chair, where she focused on strengthening member engagement and mentoring emerging professionals. With over five years of involvement in Academy initiatives, she brings strong communication, collaboration, and relationship-building skills to her leadership roles. Rifqa is committed to supporting members and advancing the profession through thoughtful, service-oriented leadership.

## **CPI CHAIR-ELECT**

Rachel Mannen, MS, RD

Academy Membership 2018 - Present IAND Membership 2018 - Present District Membership:  
None currently

## **Employment**

### **-University of Illinois Extension**

Nutrition and Wellness Educator 2023 - Present

### **-Headstart**

Nutrition Consultant 2023 - 2023

### **-Champaign Urbana Public Health District**

WIC Nutritionist 2022 - 2023

## **Leadership Experience**

### **-Illinois Extension Association for Family and Consumer Science**

Vice President of Awards and Recognition 2026 - 2027

National Professional Development Committee 2024 - Present

### **-Healthy Champaign County**

Food and Environment Chair / BOD 2025 - Present

## **Statement of Purpose**

In my role with University of Illinois Extension, I regularly translate current research into clear, accessible information for the public. This work keeps me closely connected with university faculty and staff, and it gives me a strong understanding of the innovative research happening across our state in nutrition and dietetics. I would welcome the opportunity to help bring these insights to our members and strengthen the connection between emerging research and professional practice. I also bring experience planning professional development conferences, which has given me a solid understanding of the coordination, collaboration, and attention to detail required to deliver high-quality learning experiences. Professional development is deeply important to me because I am committed to lifelong learning and continuous professional growth. Serving in this role would allow me to support meaningful learning opportunities for our membership while contributing to the advancement of our profession.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR-ELECT**

Denae Sink, RDN, LDN

Academy Membership 2018 - Present IAND Membership 2020 - Present District Membership:  
Central 2020 - Present

### **Employment**

#### **-Carle Health Methodist Hospital**

Community Dietitian 2021 - Present

#### **-OSF Saint Francis Medical Center**

Dietetic Intern 2020 - 2021

### **Leadership Experience**

#### **-Central Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics**

Nominating Committee 2025 - Present Treasurer 2022 - 2024

### **Statement of Purpose**

Involvement with the Central Illinois Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics (CIAND) has provided wonderful opportunities for networking and growth during my career, and I would value the opportunity to expand from this through serving at the state level as IAND Nominating Chair-Elect. During 2022-2024, I served as the treasurer of CIAND. Currently, I am on the CIAND nominating committee for the 2025-2026 year. Through my career and involvement with CIAND over the past four years, I have built many dietitian connections in the Central Illinois area which are a valuable network I can bring to the position. The strong organizational and planning skills I possess will be useful when seeking out candidates and formulating ballots. I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve the dietitian community in Illinois on a larger scale.