

# IDEA Collective: February 2025

## Black History Month

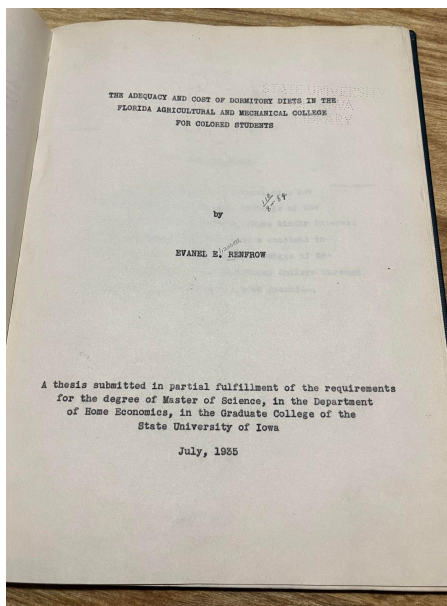
### Ways to Celebrate Black History Month in Dietetics and Nutrition

- **Learn about Black history in dietetics.** The IDEA team identified two Iowa-educated trailblazers for black dietitians.

**Evanel Renfrow Terrell** grew up in Grinnell, Iowa where her dad was a cook at the Monroe Hotel and sister, Edith was the first black woman to graduate from Grinnell College. Grinnell has honored Edith with the opening of Renfrow Hall in 2024 and has shared her story [here](#). Evanel received a Bachelors and Masters from University of Iowa and was one of the first five black dietitians to become a member of the American Dietetics Association prior to 1933 ([NOBIDAN](#)). An IDEA team member checked out her Masters thesis, *“The adequacy and cost of dormitory diets in the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College for colored students.”*

Jennessa (IDEA team member) says,

***“It was interesting to read from the perspective of a black student who was advocating for nutrition inequities in 1935. Reading Evanel’s dissertation 90 years later, I think of how some things haven’t changed with food access issues. Noticing this can strengthen our collective goal of improving equitable access to healthy food and nutrition care.”***



Evanel was a Master of Science student in the Department of Home Economics at the Graduate College of the State University of Iowa. She had noticed that there had been “no record of a dietary study made in an institution for Negro students”. She did an inventory-based two-month study at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College for Negroes in 1935 then determined the calories, protein, calcium, phosphorus, and iron values that would have been included in a student’s diet. Her work identified shortcomings in the students’ diets at Florida A&M’s when compared to dietary adequacy - for example, calories per student and the distribution of fruits and vegetables were found to be undesirable compared to other groups. She ended her dissertation advocating for appropriate distribution of food groups, fresh milk access

to each student, and more fruits and vegetables be served in place of fats and sugars.

**Wilma Ardine L. Kirchhofer** is an Iowa born and educated dietitian. She and five other black dietitians wrote a book, “Six Eves Prevail Through the Garden of Nutrition: From the Campus to the Conference Room”. In the book, these women share their stories and experiences becoming nutritionists and dietitians in the 60s and 70s. If anyone is looking for a book to read during black history month, here’s one!

<https://www.amazon.com/Eves-Prevail-Through-Garden-Nutrition-ebook/dp/B079484P66>

For an updated perspective from a black dietitian, check out this 2020 article, “[My Experience as a Black RDN in a White Dominated Field](#)” by Jasmine Westbrooks, MS, RD,LDN, who shares her journey toward becoming an RDN and her experiences in dietetics as a person of color.

- **Promote Health Equity**

An IAND member and Assistant Professor and Community Nutrition and Health State Extension Specialist at Iowa State University, **Dr. Lyndi Buckingham-Schutt, PhD, RDN, LDN**, was one of several speakers for the “***NIFA Nutrition Security Webinar Series: Honoring and Celebrating Black History Month: The Role of Registered Dietitian Nutritionists and Other Allied Health Professionals***” webinar in 2022. “[This webinar] will focus on honoring and celebrating Black History Month. The session aims to highlight the role of Registered Dietitian Nutritionists and other allied health professionals in prioritizing nutrition security and accelerating progress in health equity.”

Please check out the recorded webinar and resources here:

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/events/nutrition-security-webinar-series-honoring-celebrating-black-history-month-role-registered> (From 2022)

- **Get Involved and/or Spread Awareness** of groups supporting diversity in our profession:

[National Organization of Blacks in Dietetics and Nutrition \(NOBIDAN\)](#) interest group at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. “NOBIDAN is an active professional community of more than 800 members. Our mission is to provide a forum for professional development and support of dietetics, optimal nutrition, and wellbeing for the public,

particularly those of African descent. We embrace diversity, foster inclusion, promote access to culturally competent Nutrition care and cultural humility.” Follow them on instagram to stay up to date: @nobidan\_mig ([https://www.instagram.com/nobidan\\_mig/](https://www.instagram.com/nobidan_mig/))

[Diversify Dietetics](#) is a non-profit organization that aims, “To increase the racial and ethnic diversity in the field of nutrition by empowering nutrition leaders of color.” Some programs include a dietetic internship application support program, educator workshops and webinars, [Feed Me The Facts podcast](#), local meet ups, mentor program, professional development workshops & webinars, student & intern resources, educator resources and RDN spotlights.

[Black Dietitians Matter](#) is an advocacy and support organization amplifying the voices of Black professions in dietetics and nutrition. The organization is dedicated to empowering Black dietitians, advancing racial equity in nutrition and healthcare, and elevating the impact of culturally relevant nutrition care for Black communities. Give them a follow on instagram: @blackdietitiismatter (<https://www.instagram.com/blackdietitiismatter>)

What other groups or organizations are you familiar with? Please share here:  
<https://forms.gle/W3zeAH7d1prS7rwD9>

- If you are interested in more ways on how to celebrate Black History Month, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics come up with a list:  
<https://www.eatright.org/food/cultural-cuisines-and-traditions/celebratory-dates/celebrate-black-history-month>

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