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## **Mateja R. Savoie-Roskos PhD, MPH, RDN to Receive SNEB 2021 Early Professional Achievement Award**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 1, 2021) – The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) will honor Mateja R. Savoie-Roskos PhD, MPH, RDN with the Early Professional Achievement Award in acknowledgement of her remarkable contributions to the field of nutrition early into her career at the 2021 SNEB Annual Conference, held virtually August 8-10.

Mateja Savoie Roskos is an Associate Professor and Director of the Master of Public Health (MPH) Nutrition Program in the Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Sciences at Utah State University (USU). Mateja's primary research focus is on farmers' market incentives, SNAP-Ed nutrition education, and food insecurity. The data she collected for her dissertation, *The Role of Farmers Market Incentives and Nutrition Education on the Fruit and Vegetable Intake of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participants*, was included in grant applications, specifically the USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant, which helped initiate farmers market incentives across the state of Utah.

Her work with SNAP-Ed has also resulted in positive changes and expansions to SNAP-Ed programs in many states. In 2019 she first authored an article that described the evaluation of the now nationally recognized *Create Better Health* curriculum that was developed by SNAP-Ed professionals in Utah and has since been adopted by SNAP-Ed programs in several other states. This article received the Best GEM (Great Educational Material) Award by the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* in 2020. In addition to the previously mentioned research, Mateja has published 2 book chapters, 20 journal articles, 19 Extension fact sheets, 20 posters, and 5 editorials during her short career.

Mateja is the director of the Master of Public Health (MPH) Nutrition program at Utah State University, a role she took on as a pre-tenure faculty member, which is incredibly uncommon. When Mateja started directing the program in 2018, the program had an enrollment of 1-3 new students per year. Mateja quickly recognized the need to switch the program from a traditional face-to-face format to a 100% online format to meet the needs of prospective students, many of whom work in the field of public health nutrition. Due to this change in format and Mateja's targeted recruitment efforts, the program quickly expanded and now accepts 15-20 new students per year.

Mateja is a proven master teacher as evidenced by her exceptional teaching evaluations and several notable awards for teaching. Mateja was awarded the Western Region Dietetics Educator Award (2020) through the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, SNEB Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Nutrition in Higher Education Award (2019), Teacher of the Year Award from the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences at USU (2018-2019), and the Teaching Award of Merit from the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (2018). Mateja led the effort to develop and implement a new Hunger and Food Security Studies Minor at USU, which provides students with

expertise needed to address this very complex public health issues. Mateja works extensively with graduate students and currently serves as the advisor for 25+ MPH Nutrition students, in addition to being a committee member for several MS and PhD students.

Mateja has been extensively involved with SNEB for the past 10 years. As the previous Chair of the Public Health Nutrition (PHN) Division, Mateja has been incredibly committed to mentoring other SNEB members. Specifically, during her time as Division Chair, she provided continual mentorship for the PHN Chair-Elect and members that held appointed positions within the Division. Through her time as Chair and Chair-elect, Mateja mentored three small groups of PHN members on writing editorials for the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*. Currently, Mateja is an active member of the Higher Education Division where she serves on the Food Insecurity Subcommittee. As part of this committee, Mateja led an effort to submit a position paper proposal to the SNEB Position Paper Subcommittee titled, *Creating a Culture that Supports Food Security and Nutrition Equity at Higher Education Institutions*.

Mateja has just finished the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' Leadership Institute. This year long experience provided her with an exceptional opportunity to advance a wide range of leadership and communication skills that will benefit her as she continues to seek out leadership opportunities in the future within SNEB and other organizations.

Dr. Heidi Weingreen says, "In a few short years, Dr. Mateja R. Savoie Roskos has developed a respected national reputation deserving of the SNEB Early Professional Achievement award. I am confident that she will continue to make significant contributions to teaching the next generation of educators and providers and to improving the health and well-being of the underserved and less privileged for many years to come."

When asked about her advice for fellow early-career professionals, Mateja recommends, "Step outside your comfort zone. Take on roles, responsibilities, and new opportunities that challenge you. You never know what you will learn, who you will meet, or how you will advance your skill set."

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## ABOUT THE SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION AND BEHAVIOR

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