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Hee-Jung Song, Ph.D. to Receive 2022 SNEB Korean Society of Community Nutrition (KSCN)-SNEB Professional Achievement Award

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 1, 2022) The Society of Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) will honor Hee-Jung Song, Ph.D. with the Korean Society of Community Nutrition (KSCN) Professional Achievement Award at the 2022 SNEB Annual Conference. This award is presented to SNEB members who made a significant contribution to the field of community nutrition, especially for Korean Americans and/or minority populations in the U.S. The award will be presented at the 2022 SNEB Annual Conference during the opening session on July 29, 2022, in Atlanta, GA.

Dr. Hee-Jung Song is an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD. In the past 14 years, Dr. Song has contributed to the field of community nutrition education and health promotion through efforts in translating research-evidences into community-based programs to address diet-related chronic diseases and improve the overall wellness of underserved populations, including low-income ethnic minorities and community-dwelling older adults. Her studies have also examined the effects of social, behavioral, and environmental determinants on individual health statuses.

Dr. Song's initial work focused on developing, implementing, and evaluating a corner store-based nutrition program at an environmental level for low-income African Americans in an urban area (Baltimore Healthy Stores project). The project aimed at improving dietary patterns and purchasing behaviors of low-income, urban African Americans through increased healthy food availability and accessibility in corner stores in the community to address obesity and other diet-related chronic diseases. Also, she was involved in several behavioral interventions, including health literacy-focused projects for the management and care of hypertension and type 2 diabetes in Korean-American immigrant populations.

In recent years, Dr. Song has closely worked with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to evaluate a USDA Team Nutrition Grant titled 'Wellness Leaders: Champions for Change.' This grant aimed to improve the school health environment by implementing and monitoring the Local Wellness Policy at the school level. Her role as a co-investigator for this pilot trial was to develop, analyze, and evaluate the formative research in order to guide intervention strategies. Dr. Song has continued to collaborate with MSDE to develop, implement, or evaluate a 'Professional Standards Training Grant for School Nutrition Professionals' and 'Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Service Training Grant.'

Lately, Dr. Song's research team has received a USDA AFRI grant to build a sustainable, community-based hypertension management program to reduce morbidity and mortality rates associated with high blood pressure in older adults. Dr. Song's research team is actively implementing the program throughout Maryland in collaboration with the extension system and other key stakeholders including the state Department of Aging and local senior centers. Dr. Song's recent research agenda also includes food waste reduction in college campuses and K-12 settings and its connection to food insecurity.

Throughout her career, she has been involved in research at the forefront of interdisciplinary behavioral interventions. The issues of health disparity, health communication, chronic disease prevention and management, and food system sustainability formulate her career endeavors.

In fall 2021, she was nominated to work as a KSCN-SNEB liaison for 2022. As a first step, she started creating a KSCN-SNEB member database to centralize member information and their research topics, as well as to lay the ground work for future collaboration opportunities. She also leads discussions on activities to accelerate future communication and collaborative works between KSCN and SNEB members by setting up regular meetings, publishing articles in the official, peer-reviewed journal managed by KSCN, *Nutrition Research and Practice*, and sharing ongoing projects of KSCN members with SNEB members.

When asked what opportunities do you see for further collaboration between KSCN and SNEB members, Dr. Song wrote, "In order to create potential opportunities for future collaborations between KSCN and SNEB members, it is important to lay the groundwork first. For example, creating a member database to understand who has expertise in what area, having a regular communication channel through newsletters and conference sessions, or developing a special webinar series can be considered initial steps. KSCN and SNEB members can start sharing ideas to plan tangible collaborative projects by collecting data, planning small pilot tests or cross-validating research tools across settings, or comparing findings. Eventually, we can learn lessons from each other which can not only strengthen our studies but also contribute to our counterparts."

ABOUT THE SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION AND BEHAVIOR

The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) represents the unique professional interests of nutrition educators worldwide. The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior advances food and nutrition education research, practice, and policy that promote equity and support public and planetary health and has a vision of people worldwide empowered by food and nutrition education to change behavior, food systems, and policy.