

## Whitney Fung Uy, PhD, CPH to Receive 2022 SNEB Korean Society of Community Nutrition (KSCN)-SNEB Student Award

The Society of Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) will honor Whitney Fung Uy, PhD, CPH with the Korean Society of Community Nutrition (KSCN)-SNEB Student Award at the 2022 SNEB Annual Conference. This award is presented to members of SNEB who made significant contributions to the field of Community Nutrition, especially for Korean Americans and/or minority populations within 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. Fung Uy was recently awarded her doctoral degree from the University of South Florida College of Public Health. Her current research interests surround concepts of sustainable food systems and the intersection between food and the environment, hunger/food insecurity, health disparities, and chronic disease prevention.

She focuses on mixed methods and community-based participatory research, implementation science, and transdisciplinary, cross-sector initiatives to promote health equity with a racial justice lens. While she primarily works with limited income populations and emergency food providers, she has collaborated with various audiences ranging from healthcare providers and sustainability planners to higher education stakeholders.

Her master's thesis, "Development of a Preliminary Scale to Measure Diet-related Self-efficacy and Autonomy of Children and Adolescents," stemmed from the desire to develop and evaluate theory-based interventions and furthered her knowledge in psychometrics and mediation analysis with structural equation modeling. Additionally, several years of experience working for Cooperative Extension crafted her skills in educational approaches, program planning and evaluation, and community engagement.

Dr. Fung Uy has involved herself in projects related to the food systems since 2013. As a graduate research assistant for the University of South Florida (USF) Department of Anthropology, under the direction of Dr. Tara Deubel, she led the design and program evaluation for a local food pantry hub. Her analysis and results revealed a mismatch between food pantry clients' food preferences and the choices offered at the pantries.

She is involved in community-level coalitions such as the Florida Food Policy Council, Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger, and the USF Urban Food Sovereignty Group. Through these groups, she has spent the last five years working on community food recovery initiatives like the Waste No Food app and creating educational resources for university students. She presented at the 2017 Graduate Association of Food Studies Annual Conference, 2017 National Sunshine Summit to End Hunger, and the International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity 2018 Annual Meeting.

In 2017, she received a \$500 Advocacy on Campuses that Impacts Our Nation student grant from the American Public Health Association. The findings were presented at USF Health Research Day and sparked the collaboration of an interdisciplinary project to increase food recovery on campus – the Campus Food Waste Recovery project (FWR). She served as Principal Investigator for FWR, which was awarded \$25,600 by the USF Student Green Energy Fund in 2018.

As the project principal investigator, she collaborated with faculty to work with students in creating a service-learning course project where students could apply concepts from their graduate-level public health courses like Social Marketing and Intervention Mapping. Since the project ended in the summer

2021, she has been working on disseminating the lessons learned through Town Hall meetings, webinars, technical reports, presentations to university administration, and peer-reviewed papers.

Dr. Fung Uy's dissertation research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of food security and its four dimensions (food availability, access, utilization, and stability over time). She is conducting a mixed methods study that utilizes initial/follow-up surveys to assess food security status change using the U.S. and in-depth interviews to understand people's experience of seeking food assistance and how they coped with limited access to food during the COVID-19 pandemic. Implications of the study include recommendations for emergency food providers to further their efforts to promote long-term food security and theoretical guidance on understanding and measuring food insecurity as a multidimensional construct.

She was on a panel on emergency food assistance during COVID-19 at the 2021 SNEB Annual Conference and is presenting a session on “The Zoom Dissertation: Building Capacity for Research in Nutrition Education and Behavior with Technology” at the 2022 SNEB Annual Conference. Given her work in food insecurity, she is also co-authoring a book with Dr. William Schanbacher, *Food Insecurity: A Reference Handbook*, which is anticipated to be published in 2023.

Reflecting on her SNEB membership, Dr. Fung Uy writes, “Being a member since 2013, I have been able to experience SNEB resources as a Master’s student, Cooperative Extension Agent, Doctoral student, and now, early career researcher. As a member, I appreciated the webinars and networking at conferences. The conferences always provided relevant content whether it was for community nutrition education or innovative research methods related to food insecurity. SNEB membership has also provided me with several mentors that have helped me in various ways such as reviewing papers or helping me with the job search. I also met my current Major Professor, Dr. Heewon Gray, at my first SNEB conference when she was at Teacher’s College, Columbia! SNEB is truly a wonderful and inspiring community of people!”

She continues, “My advice for other students would be to get involved in campus student organizations, research labs, or SNEB divisions. SNEB Student Division is an easy way to meet other students and find leadership opportunities. Attend different SNEB Division meetings to see what you might be interested in and volunteer to help with assisting in webinars, publishing social media content, or creating a newsletter. Don’t be shy in starting a conversation with any SNEB member or anybody at conferences because most attendees are usually very friendly and willing to share advice! I have been very fortunate to be surrounded by many supportive and helpful professionals – including SNEB members – along the way, especially to finish the PhD!”