



I AM NYCC

SAMANTHA TUCKER (10TH TRI)

Samantha Tucker is a student in the April 2018 class of New York Chiropractic College's online Master of Science in Applied Clinical Nutrition (MSACN) program. She and her husband of 16 years, Joe, live in Frankfort, Kentucky, and their three children, who range in age from 2 to 7.

A graduate of the University of Kentucky with a bachelor's in marketing and management, Samantha Tucker spent several years in corporate business and at the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice. Then, with the birth of her first child, she decided to begin working as a stay-at-home mother. Having struggled personally with her own health over the years, Samantha developed a passion for health and nutrition that, coupled with her desire both to give her children a healthy start and to help other people, led her to pursue a degree in nutrition.

Tucker began her studies at another school; but after learning that it did not meet the requirements of the Board for Certification of Nutrition Specialists, which meant that she would not be eligible for licensure, she went in search of a BCNS-approved school. Discovering that NYCC was on the approved list, she called Dr. Peter Nickless, director of the MSACN program, and was impressed that he took time out of his busy schedule to speak with her personally. "He made me feel confident in my ability to be successful at the school and with my future career in nutrition," she recalls. That conversation was her deciding factor in attending NYCC.

Once enrolled, Samantha's choice of NYCC was further solidified by an early class assignment that required students to assess the licensing laws in their own state to see how these would impact their ability to practice as a nutrition professional. One of her favorite classes was Clinical Nutrition for Pain and Inflammation. At first she found it very intimidating, but says that the instructor, Dr. Heather Heck, made it understandable and enjoyable. Her favorite subject matter so far has been the Clinical Herbalism material, with Profs. Bevin Clare and Camille Freeman; and another favorite instructor is Dr. Corey Schuler, who teaches Nutrition Assessment. Since Kentucky requires nutritionists to earn the designation of Certified Nutrition Specialist (CNS) through the Board for Certification of Nutrition Specialists, Samantha recently began working on the requisite 1,000 hours of supervised clinical practice.

Samantha plans to eventually open her own nutrition practice, which will give her the flexibility to set her own schedule around the needs of her family. She would also be interested in working in corporate wellness.

Samantha's advice for other current nutrition students is, "Take time to take care of yourself, as the demands of both life and school are very stressful." In addition, she recommends continuing to build a local network while still in school. The ACN Conference is one that she recommends highly, as it provides access to a nationwide network of clinical nutritionists as well as a pool of possible mentors and internships for supervised experience hours.

For future students of the MSACN program, Samantha's advice is to "enjoy the ride." She urges those seeking a college for their nutrition studies to make sure the school's ideologies around nutrition align with their own personal thoughts and beliefs about the subject. Prospective students should also look into their state's licensing laws to make sure that the school they are planning to attend allows them a path to practice there.

