

VISTA SUAREZ FLETCHER, Ph.D., R.D.

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EDUCATION

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY (Manhattan, KS)

Doctor of Philosophy in Human Ecology - Specialization in Institutional Management 2000

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY (Tallahassee, FL)

Master of Science Degree in Food and Nutrition 1997

Bachelor of Science Degree in Food and Nutrition (Dietetics) - Graduated with Cum Laude Honors Distinction 1995

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

Chicago, IL

Regional Director (GS-340-15) – Food and Nutrition Service

November 2019-Present

Responsible for the overall management and administration of all Special Nutrition Programs, including CACFP, CSFP, FDPIR, WIC, SFSP, TEFAP, and School Nutrition. Oversees the development and implementation of regional strategic plans in support of FNS Programs including planning, programming, budgeting, program integration, and oversight. Manages human, fiscal, and technological resources and shifts resources to meet deadlines and accomplish changing priorities. Provides written and verbal recommendations on best courses of action for resolution of issues and initiatives to senior executives. Communicates with state leadership officials to further advance partnerships and secure commitments in improving management of FNS programs. Collaborates with regional and national office colleagues to ensure accomplishment of Agency goals and priorities. Works with leaders and staff to promote cultural diversity and heighten cultural awareness.

Branch Chief (GS-301-14) – Food and Nutrition Service

2012 – 2019

Responsible for the management and administration of School Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs for six states in the Midwest Region. Oversaw the administration of programs through federal, state, and local partners. Directed and oversaw the review and evaluation of program operations to ensure nutrition assistance programs are administered in compliance with laws, regulations, and policies. Appraised the effectiveness of policies and procedures implemented by State agencies and provide feedback to national policy makers. Participated in strategic workforce planning and maximized employee potential in meeting the organization's mission and goals. Participated on regional and national work groups, committees, and task forces. Directed, managed, and assigned work to subordinates based on priorities. Led and encouraged ongoing staff development, conducted performance appraisals, and evaluated staff work to improve employee skills.

Regional Director (GS-301-14) - Food and Nutrition Service

2010 - 2012

Responsible for the management and administration of the Women, Infants, and Children Program for the Midwest Region. Provided leadership and oversight for six state agencies. Developed, negotiated, and implemented annual work plans and made adjustments as necessary. Managed human, fiscal and technological resources to accomplish changing priorities. Developed and amended budgets to adhere to established spending targets. Offered guidance and interpretation of federal regulations.

MEMPHIS CITY SCHOOLS

Memphis, TN

Director – Division of Nutrition Services

2008 - 2010

Provided vision and oversight for the Division of Nutrition Services, including strategic planning, program development, and management of a \$55M budget. Ensured division's compliance with federal and local regulations. Developed nutrition models and collaborated with staff to implement programs that provided safe, nutritious school meals for all students (75,000 lunches and 37,000 breakfasts daily). Responsible for the overall management of 1,300 employees, a warehouse, bakery, and cook chill operation. Successfully secured program funding through grant writing. Instituted activities to strengthen team dynamics and increase staff morale.

RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Richmond, VA

Director – School Nutrition Services

2005 - 2008

Led the division's initiatives to ensure that all students had access to fresh, safe, and nutritious meals daily. Responsibilities included managing a \$10M budget, creating budgets and forecasts, and leading a team of 250 employees (including 4 supervisors and 38 school cafeteria managers at 60 locations) in the National School Lunch; School Breakfast; Afterschool Snack; Fresh Fruit and Vegetable; and Summer Food Service Programs. Developed menus that were affordable and appealing to students without sacrificing nutritional value. Planned, directed and evaluated the management of the department to ensure quality and accountability.

- Facilitated the turnaround of a \$1M dollar deficit within School Nutrition Services.

ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Orlando, FL

Administrator

2004 - 2005

Performed a wide range of responsibilities including financial analysis, writing grant proposals, and leading numerous special projects designed to improve the district's school food services. Supervised and trained over 1,000 food service personnel. Ensured the efficient operation and management of school food services and provided technical assistance as needed. Initiated an annual recognition program to showcase the numerous contributions made by employees in the department.

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Las Vegas, NV

Nutrition Consultant

2000 - 2003

Implemented federal regulations for USDA Child Nutrition Programs. Evaluated applications and budgets for approval for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and provided technical assistance and training to sponsors. Conducted monitoring and program reviews of SFSP sponsors and assisted with reviews of other Child Nutrition Programs.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

United States Department of Agriculture Administrator's Award (2019)
United States Department of Agriculture Abraham Lincoln Honor Award (2016)
Chicago Federal Executive Board Nominee for Management Excellence (2016)
Chicago Federal Executive Board Mission Support Team Finalist (2016)
Profiled member on the Courier Online – American Dietetic Association (2001)
Southern Scholarship Foundation Exemplary Leadership Service Award (1996)
Florida State University's Sean Pittman Leadership Award (1995)
Florida State University Homecoming Court (1994)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education, Leadership Decision Making Course (2016)
Center for Creative Leadership, Leadership Development Program (2012)
National Food Service Management Institute Advisory Board (2010)
Got Breakfast Foundation Advisory Board (2010)
Virginia School Nutrition Association Finance Committee (2007-2008)
American School Foodservice Association Legislative Action Conference (2003 and 2005)
Nevada Nutrition Advisory Committee (2003)
American Dietetic Association Mentoring and Diversity Summit Invitee (2001)
School Nutrition Association (1999 - 2013)
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (1993 - 2013)

PUBLICATIONS

Fletcher, V.S. (2004). *Evaluating Career Values of Dietetic Students: A Model for Other Allied Health Professions*. Journal of Allied Health.

Fletcher, V.S. (2002). *Minority Interns' Experiences during Their Dietetics Education and Their Recommendations for Increasing Diversity in Dietetics: Findings from Structured Interviews*. Journal of the American Dietetic Association.

Fletcher, V.S. (2001). *Factors Contributing to the Success of Hospitality Graduate Students*. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education.

PROFESSIONAL LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Registered Dietitian

STATE AND NATIONAL REPRESENTATIONS

Ohio School Nutrition Association Annual State Conference. Sandusky, OH (2015)
School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference. Baltimore, MD (2005)
Florida School Food Service Association Annual Conference. Tampa, FL (2005)
American Dietetic Association Summit on Mentoring and Diversity. Chicago, IL (2001)
American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference and Exhibition. St. Louis, MO (2001)
American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference and Exhibition. Denver, CO (2000)