

Graduate Testimonials from the Behavioral Health and Nutrition Department

Brittany Van Sickle-Kowlaski MSHP, NBC-HWC



- 1. What is your current position?**
 1. Director of Training for Health & Wellness Coaches
- 2. How long have you been in this position?**
 1. I've gone from a Health Coach, Operations Manager, Director of Health Coaching, to Director of Training for Health & Wellness Coaches with the same company over the past 6 years.
- 3. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?**
 1. PRECEDE PROCEED! Even as a health coach, you can be put into business development situations to help create overall wellness programs for different types of accounts and it's important that our approaches are evidence based.
- 4. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?**
 1. I believe it was the chronic disease management class where we reviewed diseases and medications. That was one of the most important classes because patients just assume you know all these types of things when they tell you about themselves.
- 5. What advice would you give a recent graduate?**
 1. Get your foot in the door; internships in various settings are super helpful in making a resume stand out!

Angelina Seeney MSHP



1. What is your current position?

1. Assistant Director of Student Community Experience & Engagement at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia (Basically a Health Promotion and Community Outreach Department)

2. How long have you been in this position?

1. One year. Before that, I was the Assistant Director of Wellness Programs at Thomas Jefferson.

3. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?

1. Two major skills from the program stick out in my mind: time management and program planning. Both I use on a daily basis.

4. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?

1. How to use Motivational Interviewing! Motivational interviewing has helped me immensely! While it is typically used in health coaching or in a clinical setting, I find that it improves every interaction I have with co-workers and our students.

5. What advice would you give a recent graduate?

1. Be creative in your job search process. Sometimes the job descriptions can fool you. Also, stay connected with your professors and advisors. They can be a great person to turn to when you need advice or guidance.

Caitlin Hennings MSHP, NBC-HWC



- 1. What is your current position?**
 1. I am working in Rochester, Michigan at Oakland University. My current position is a Wellness & Educational Outreach Coordinator which focuses on employee health.
- 2. How long have you been in this position?**
 1. I have been in this position for about a year now and truly love it!
- 3. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?**
 1. Through the UD program, I learned a lot of hands-on experience through my assistantship in Employee Health & Wellbeing and the Health Coaching Certificate Program.
- 4. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?**
 1. Through these experiences, I gained skills in leadership and helping individuals facilitate positive behavior change, helping me in my current role today

Breanna J. Nicholson MSHP, NBC-HWC



1. What is your current position?

1. Corporate Health and Wellness Coach/Corporate Wellness. Assigned to two clients, a large hospital network in NJ and a pharmaceutical company. Additionally, I started my own online business as a virtual health and fitness coach.

2. How long have you been in this position?

1. 2.5 years in corporate wellness and 1 year with my own business

3. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?

1. The program supported my work today in so many ways from knowledge in health behavior science, behavior change, programming, employee wellness, health coaching and so much more. I think what helped the most is that not only were we provided the knowledge but were also given real life case studies and experiences to implement what we learned. Going into the workforce after graduating from the program I felt well prepared and ready to use what I learned and implement it in my new position. My position is very self-managed, the clients have a need and we deliver but much of what I do I had done before throughout the program so I was ready to deliver. Reflecting back on the knowledge and skills that I left with and how it helped me to perform in my career and just the support and experiences I was given while in the program makes me so grateful for BHAN.

4. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?

1. Going off of my previous answer, I definitely see how well prepared I was with the knowledge and experience I had going in.

5. What advice would you give a recent graduate?

1. Not to worry, opportunities are endless and they are out there so take your time and don't feel like you have to have it all figured out right away just because you just graduated or are about to. Enjoy the process and be open to different opportunities. Even though school is over, continue to learn, develop and grow, we can never know too much. Don't be afraid to reach out to different resources and support systems. If you see an alumni doing something you're interested in, get connected with them and learn more, connect with your favorite professor or instructor and see if they can help in any way.

Jenna Hoxton MSHP, NBC-HWC



- 1. What is your current position?**
 1. I currently work for Mars, Inc. as a Human Performance Specialist on the Health and Wellbeing Team. In other words, I'm a Health Promotion Manager within the "corporate wellness world".
- 2. How long have you been in this position?**
 1. I've been in my position for about five years now, and it's constantly evolving and changing, which allows me to continue to grow and develop new skills.
- 3. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?**
 1. The Health Behavior Science undergraduate program, as well as the Health Promotion graduate program, both helped me to get where I am today. I still utilize many of the health behavior theories that we learned about as well as many aspects of program planning.
- 4. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?**
 1. These programs also provided me with opportunities to work with professors, actively practice public speaking, as well as provided networking with past graduates. All of these opportunities have helped me along my career journey, and continue to do so today.
- 5. What advice would you give a recent graduate?**
 1. To recent graduates: I encourage you to use your network while you job search. It's such a powerful tool! Set up informational meetings with previous graduates or companies that you're interested in - you never know where those conversations will lead.

Alyssa Whittaker MSHP, NBC-HWC



1. What is your current position?

I am currently an Extension Agent at University of Delaware Cooperative Extension. I work in program areas of 4-H Youth Development and Family and Consumer Science. My job role entails nutrition education and mentoring teens to become peer health educators. I absolutely love my role. I am also an adjunct for the BHAN and ENTR departments at UD.

2. How long have you been in this position?

Since November 2020

3. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?

There are many things, but the two main things I find myself using are 1) Listening skills such as active listening and motivational interviewing from the Health Coaching Certificate courses. These skills are essential in any line of work, but I find them imperative to my job role in health education where people are reluctant to make changes or share about themselves. Also, the use of the PRECEDE-PROCEED model/models and theories of health promotion. I've come to realize it is nice to have lots of ideas on how to help people and feel like you are an expert, but when implementing a health program careful attention needs to be paid to things like needs assessment and focus groups. Your program will fail if the people you are aiming to reach feel it doesn't apply to them or they aren't engaged.

4. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?

I suppose models of health, such as considering the PRECEDE-PROCEED and implementing/evaluating programs. My job falls really in line with so many of the skills this graduate program offered that it is hard to pinpoint one unique skill, but I do think the Certificate in Health Coaching and Health Promotion program compliment each other very well as you get to cultivate one on one skills in the certificate courses, but get to practice big picture thinking in the core Masters classes.

5. What advice would you give a recent graduate?

I'd say be open and patient. I didn't have a full time placement right away and even had interviews and offers rescinded due to COVID, but looking back it gave me time to actually figure out what I wanted out of my job and not sure I would have figured that out had I started right away. Also, make an annual plan to keep your credentials/certifications up now, even if things don't expire until 5+ years you will thank yourself when you're not scrambling for hours and credits later.

Dominique D'Angelo MSHP, NBC-HWC



1. What is your current position?

I am a Wellness Coach for Bayless Integrated Healthcare located in AZ (however I am working remotely). I get to lead group wellness sessions, facilitate 1-on-1 wellness coaching, and train the Junior Wellness Coaches. At the moment I have over 60 clients. I am a Board Certified Health and Wellness Coach, NBC-HWC

I am also working with Life Time part time as a Fitness Professional (personal trainer, Pilates instructor, and group fitness instructor). When I was full time prior to being hired by Bayless I started a Health Coaching program there as well. (I had to end this program in order to abide by the non-compete contract when accepting my new position). At Life Time I have 10 long-time clients that appreciate not only my knowledge and skills to help with their physical fitness, but my ability to help them build sustainable behavior changes into their lives.

2. How long have you been in this position?

I was hired by Bayless in January and started in Feb of 2022. I have been with Life Time since August 2021.

3. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?

I learned Motivational Interviewing skills that I use both in and out of work. I also learned Behavior Change theories that serve as the framework needed to help clients go from not knowing they even have unhealthy behaviors to making lasting healthy lifestyle choices. In undergrad with my minor in Strength & Conditioning I learned the skills and knowledge necessary to be a well-informed Personal Trainer— it is these skills that help me to sign clients, but my health coaching skills help me retain them.

4. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?

Going through this program during the pandemic gave me the life skills to be able to balance working full time from home and still maintain my own sanity and health. Because of that experience I knew I needed a separate space in my home to work from, so when I bought my first house I chose the one with an upstairs that can be 100% dedicated as an office space. Now I am able to keep my work and home life separate, even though my commute is just up a flight of stairs. The program's major focus on Motivational Interviewing allowed me to stand out as a candidate when applying to jobs. I also crushed interviews using these skills. In fact, in my position with Bayless I will be conducting a training on MI skills for the Junior Wellness Coaches!

5. What advice would you give a recent graduate?

While you might not land your dream job right out of college, don't settle. Keep looking and always keep your resume updated. I was unhappy working at a commercial gym when I knew there was more out there for me- but timing is everything. Now I get to work my ideal position (with an amazing salary) and what once was my main job has become my side hustle. I am so happy to be doing what I am doing. I would also suggest to never stop learning and find hobbies outside of your intended field. After graduating and working for a year, I enrolled in a program at NJIT to learn UX/UI Design skills and potentially get into App Development. I also wrote, illustrated, and published a children's book about my beloved senior dog, Marvin. (It's called Marvin the Maltese and you can get it on amazon— a portion of proceeds go to the rescue where I got him). In summary, keep growing, learning, and exploring all areas of interest. Good things are out there! You got this!

Jamie O'Hara MSHP, NBC-HWC



1. What is your current position?

BHAN Course Instructor at The University of Delaware

How long have you been in this position?

6 months

2. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?

Person-centered communication. I use this on a daily basis in my position.

3. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?

The skill of "practice what you preach" and "walking the walk". I have learned quite a lot about having healthy boundaries and putting my health first, especially my mental and emotional health. You can teach health promotion in many ways (lectures, presentations, etc), but leading by example makes you a healthier and happier person who can better relate to the obstacles people face on that journey, and a person who has experience in the work that is required to overcome them.

4. What advice would you give a recent graduate?

Protect your boundaries. Know what you are okay with and not okay with and do not settle for the latter. This applies to all things in life, but especially now, when it comes to your next job and workplace. You may be spending a lot of time there, so do everything you can to make sure the next company you work for supports YOUR values, values YOU, and makes you happy. Life is short, make it sweet.

Sarah Albrecht MSHP, NBC-HWC



1. What is your current position?

Currently I work part time as a Group Health Coach for a professional development wellness program for family child care educators called Shining the Light on You, offered by the Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood at UD. I also recently accepted a full time position as a Well-Being & Coaching Specialist at Columbia University in their Alice! Health Promotion department.

2. How long have you been in this position?

Shining the Light on You- Since January 2022
Columbia University- Since January 2023

3. What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?

I learned so much from this program and could talk about it all for days. But I think one of the most critical things I learned about was the connection between our behaviors, physical health, and mental health and the importance of addressing each when working with a client (so basically all of HLPR650). Similar to the dimensions of wellness or social determinants of health, there is so much that impacts the wellness goals one sets and the outcomes they experience. So with my clients I always try to draw the connection between how they are feeling vs how they are or aren't behaving and how those observations can be used to better support their goals and overall well-being.

4. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?

Learning how to use motivational interviewing techniques to help clients better understand their thoughts, desires, motivations, strengths, and challenges is an amazing skill to have (and not just with clients, but friends and family too!). Goal setting and monitoring is the easy part. But being able to help someone in

their own self-discovery so they can better understand themselves is so cool. It's not always easy, but when it happens, it's rewarding to witness as a coach.

5. What advice would you give a recent graduate?

Imposter syndrome is an incredibly real, normal, and valid feeling to have as a new coach. So whether it's discussing coaching concepts, the board exam, applying to jobs, or anything else, I can't stress how beneficial it is to seek out the support of professors, mentors, recent graduates, and peers. It's okay to admit when you are unsure or feel challenged, and by talking to others in the field we can all learn and grow together.

Nicolette Amato



1) What is your current position?

Employee Health and Well-Being Program Coordinator

2) How long have you been in this position?

7 months

3) What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?

I believe learning how to express empathy has played a critical role in my work at Johns Hopkins. Although my position does not involve coaching, I interact with several employees on a daily basis; it is common for employees to discuss their well-being journeys during our interactions. I believe being able to actively listen and express empathy during these conversations has helped build relationships, as well as increase employee buy-in for our well-being offerings.

4) What is the most unique skill you learned from this program?

I think being able to successfully conduct both individual and group coaching sessions is a unique skill we learned. This program provides the opportunity to coach in various settings, as well as coach individuals with different backgrounds/experiences. The variety of clinical opportunities provided throughout the program helps to hone your skills and expand your potential clientele.

5) What advice would you give a recent graduate?

It is okay if you do not have it all figured out the minute you cross that stage. Enrolling in this certificate program can provide you with the opportunity to obtain a full-time coaching career, the ability to coach as a "side-hustle", and so much more! Given the current climate, I believe certifications, like this program, can help give you a competitive edge in the workforce. With health coaching on the rise, this is a great opportunity to get involved!

Brad Adair, MSHP, NBC-HWC



1. What is your current position?

I am currently contracted as a health coach with a virtual telehealth organization named TimelyMD. In fact, we have recently partnered with the University of Delaware, so you may become more familiar with the name very soon!

How long have you been in this position?

2. About six months.

What did you learn from the program that supports your work today?

One of the more useful skills I learned in the program are the four core skills in motivational interviewing, O.A.R.S.

I use these skills very frequently in my interactions with clients, and they have been very helpful in my development as a coach.

3. What is the most unique skill you learned while in this program?

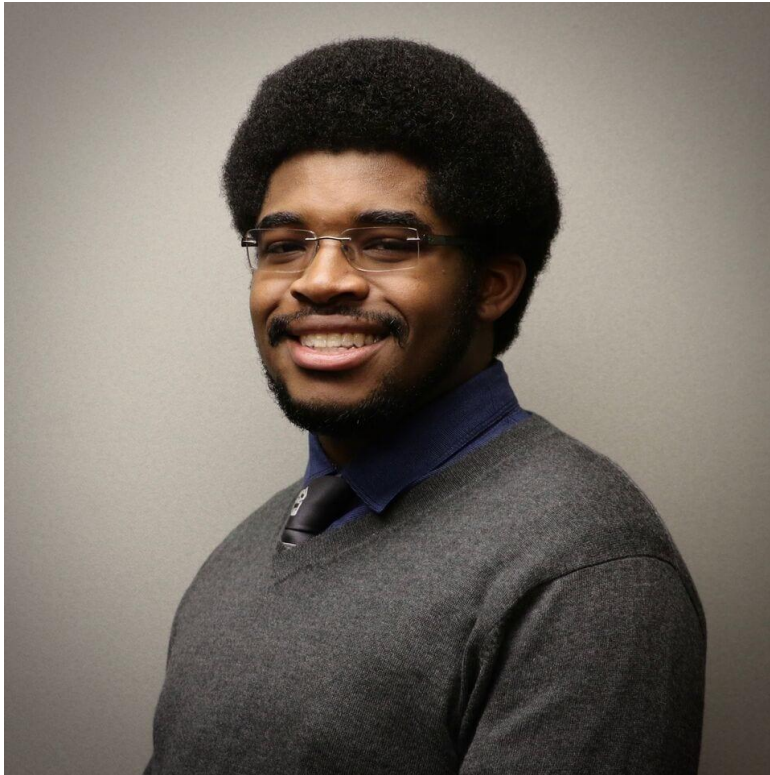
The most unique skill I learned in the program is the ability to meet people wherever they are in their wellness journey, and to utilize the "coach approach".

This becomes especially important as you begin to coach a more diverse group of individuals throughout your career.

4. What advice would you give a recent graduate?

My advice to a recent graduate would be to have fun with it, and don't be afraid to add some humor! Coaching is supposed to be challenging, but also very exciting, and I think it is super important to switch things up and continue to add new skills and language to your "coaching toolbox".

Stephen McLaren, MSHP, NBC-HWC



1. I am currently working as a clinical health coach at a stealth start-up that's coaching individuals living with Rheumatoid Arthritis.
2. The Health Coaching program instilled in me the core coaching competencies that allow me to excel as a coach today. I utilize reflective listening techniques everyday, and I believe I am a better listener in my daily life because of my work in the program.
3. The most unique skill I learned was the ability to move a client across the stages of change simply by asking the right questions. When clients are able to hear their own words, it allows them to make new connections and develop new insights.
4. My advice would be to keep an open mind, but listen to your gut as well. Not every opportunity will look like the best one to you, but sometimes new experiences can help you grow into the person you're meant to be.