



## spotlight on members

Spotlight on Members gives us the opportunity to hear about what our members are up to today, as well as how they found their way to the NHA health program. If you're interested in sharing your own story, we'd love to hear from you (please email essays of no more than 500 words, and one or two photos, to [info@healthscience.org](mailto:info@healthscience.org)).

### Jenny Cameron

Richmond East, Victoria, Australia

A decade ago I was a typical mum of two teenage children who thought she was eating a healthful diet and teaching good habits to her children. I had always leaned toward a vegetarian diet but believed that I needed to eat meat for iron, dairy for calcium, and fish for "good fats."

Then in the Australian winter of 2008 Dr. Malcolm Mackay skied into my life, literally. We met on a chairlift at a ski resort, and it was love at first sight, even with our helmet and goggles on! Malcolm opened my eyes to the link between food and health. He is a medical doctor working in general practice, and has been following a plant-based lifestyle since the early 1980s.

Malcolm first made the connection after learning about the "inevitable process of atherosclerosis" in medical school, and soon after heard about the Papua New Guinean Highlanders, who were free of atherosclerosis. He wanted to know what they were doing differently. They were eating mostly sweet potatoes! He soon began to see patterns of disease across the world and how they were linked to food consumption. He then found Nathan Pritikin's work, and this set him on a path of eating a plant-based, no-oil diet. In the 1990s, Malcolm completed a postgraduate course in human nutrition and developed a special interest in his medical practice of preventing, treating, and reversing chronic disease with a whole-food, plant-based diet.

When we first began dating we were living more than 700 km (450 miles) apart. I would happily eat plant-based, no-oil meals when we were together, but I would still include meat and dairy back home with my children. I didn't really "get it" until nearly a year later when he showed me some data from *The China Study* to illustrate a point in a conversation we were having. I quietly went home and read the book, and by the time I finished Chapter 3, I gave up dairy foods. My reaction to the book was to question why this isn't more widely known?

I am a librarian and so I immediately started trawling the literature for evidence, and everything I found pointed in the same direction: eating more plant foods and fewer animal foods leads to healthier outcomes. At this point in my journey I was still oblivious to the environmental and ethical considerations of animal consumption.

My online searching connected us to the growing whole-food, plant-based (WFPB) movement in the U.S., and through Facebook, blogs, YouTube and the medical literature, I fed my voracious appetite for nutrition knowledge. When we finally came together to live under one roof five years ago, we combined our expertise to build a local WFPB presence in Australia.

First, we built the website "wholefood-splantbasedhealth.com.au" and then created the Facebook page "Plant Based Health Australia," and later with a friend I started an Australian WFPB support group, which now has more than 5,000 members. I completed the T. Colin Campbell Plant-Based Nutrition Certificate, followed by Dr. John McDougall's Starch Solution Certificate, and by this time in 2014 I decided to get serious about a career change. I went back to university to complete a postgraduate course in nutrition. As if that wasn't enough, in 2016 I enrolled in a couple of Pam Popper's Wellness Forum courses and also completed a certificate in wellness coaching.

Malcolm and I have been hosting plant-based nutrition seminars since 2014 and often speak at public and private events. We put effort into networking with other Australia- and New Zealand-based health practitioners, and I've helped facilitate the establishment of plant-based meet-up groups or "pods" in several Australian cities. We have visited the U.S. each year to attend plant-based nutrition conferences, and I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to meet some of the icons in plant-based nutrition, including Drs. Esselstyn, Campbell, Ornish, and Klaper, and have been on three Mc-



Jenny Cameron with Dr. Alan Goldhamer and Dr. Malcolm Mackay.

#### Dougall Adventure Trips.

I have been fascinated by medically supervised water-only fasting since reading *The Pleasure Trap* many years ago, and last September while visiting Santa Rosa for the McDougall Advanced Study Weekend we met with Dr. Alan Goldhamer at TrueNorth. My interest was piqued when I heard that the TrueNorth practitioners also do a water-only fast each year.

So, when my mother asked if I would accompany her to TrueNorth, I jumped at the chance to try it for myself. I wasn't trying to heal any known disease but I was aware that at 56 years of age I could benefit from a "reboot." We stayed at TrueNorth for three and a half weeks in February-March of this year and found it to be an amazing experience.

I fasted for six and a half days and was surprised at how good I felt during the fast. I would have gone longer were it not for the fact that I was already lean and was getting too low in weight to continue. My voracious appetite for knowledge was well-fed at TrueNorth, with lectures twice daily and opportunities to talk to the interns and the practitioners to explore the boundaries of fasting to restore people's health.

I loved meeting like-minded people and hearing their fascinating stories. My stay overlapped with Wanda Huberman and she introduced me to the National Health Association and its excellent magazine. I would like to return to TrueNorth with Malcolm so he can experience a water-only fast, and I will definitely try fasting again; I am hooked on its benefits!



Two of the newest members of the NHA are truly well-established stars at TrueNorth Health Center. They help make everyone's stay both inspirational and informative. During my recent two-week visit, I had the wonderful opportunity to catch up with both of them and am pleased to share their stories. —Wanda Huberman



## Katie Mae

Santa Rosa, CA



Katie Mae is a nutritionist and culinary instructor, who, along with Cathy Fisher and Chef Ramses Bravo, teaches weekly cooking classes at TrueNorth. Katie, who began teaching in 2011, is also available for nutrition consults and can prepare TrueNorth-friendly recipes for patients to enjoy on their travels once departing the center.

Katie holds a master's degree in nutrition from Bastyr University, and during her last year of school she became a personal chef for a former patient and doctor from TrueNorth. This was her first experience cooking without added salt, oil and sugar. The dramatic effects had her hooked! One year later, Katie moved to Santa Rosa, California to work directly with TrueNorth Health and Dr. John McDougall's Health and Medical Center.

Katie Mae feels privileged to work in such an inspiring community, and that she can make a difference in people's lives and the food system at large. She also spent three years teaching nutrition at Sonoma State University.

Katie is the author of the *Plantz*

*eCookbook* series, and the creator of "Plantz For All: The Online Culinary Boot Camp," a whole-food, vegan cooking course, free of gluten, sugar, oil and salt. Katie's ultimate passion is supporting people in becoming their best self. Her goal is to show people how easy a plant-based diet can be and how to make it simply delicious.

Katie lives and works in downtown Santa Rosa where she operates what she calls a "culinary gym." She describes it as a wonderful, fun space where she conducts cooking classes, holds potlucks, and records cooking

videos. The walls are green, and there are containers of food everywhere, giving it the feeling of a yoga studio and kitchen combined. Katie Mae also brings in plants to give it a more outdoors "rainforest" feel, something that is consistent with her philosophy of saving the rainforests and preserving biodiversity. Learn more about Katie Mae at [PlantBasedKatie.com](http://PlantBasedKatie.com) and [PlantzForAll.com](http://PlantzForAll.com).

## Alese Jones

Santa Rosa, CA



Alese Jones began teaching yoga and meditation at TrueNorth in 2011. At that time she moved from South Florida, where she had been teaching yoga for over 20 years, to Sebastopol, California, and was seeking employment in a consciously aware environment.

It was through Dr. Michael Klaper, who arranged a meeting with Dr. Alan Goldhamer, that Alese came to TrueNorth. At the time there was no yoga program at the Center, and her experi-

ence, along with her sweetly effective teaching style, soon proved to be a perfect match for TrueNorth that is now widely praised by guests and staff alike.

Teaching yoga at TrueNorth has proven to be deeply rewarding for her as well. And she says about the guests, "It is often a first exposure to yoga for some guests, and their response is always something amazing." During her Gentle Yoga classes, Alese loves to read poetry and quotations that sup-

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*Alese with her husband, Dr. Michael Klaper.*