

I highly recommend Jala Lockhart for the Dr. Mary K. Beyrer Graduate Student Scholarship award.

My experience with Jala has been incredible; going "above and beyond" doesn't begin to describe Jala's work ethic.

Jala joined our team as an Eat Fit ambassador in August 2018 and then took the lead in her fulltime role as the Eat Fit NOLA operations and marketing specialist through August 2020, when she transitioned to pursue her doctorate degree. Her hard work, focus, and perseverance have truly shined with each project that she has been involved with.

She was – and continues to be – an invaluable asset to our nutrition program at Ochsner Fitness Center and the Ochsner Eat Fit team. Jala's analytical thinking and strategic planning skills, combined with her dynamic personality and ability to relate to and connect with anyone she meets, have enhanced all aspects of our team and our programming.

Jala has assisted in protocol development, including streamlining our processes to maximize productivity and efficiency, while also increasing our community touchpoints and engagement.

In her role as Eat Fit NOLA Specialist, Jala worked closely with restaurant owners and chefs to collect recipe information, conduct the nutritional analysis of the recipes, and recommend modifications to improve the nutritional profile of the recipes. She represented our team at local health fairs, and gave nutrition presentations at local schools, churches, and other community outlets, always with very positive feedback from the event organizers.

Jala demonstrated success in effective project management, including leading several large projects such as the Alcohol Free for 40 Challenge, overhauling our Café menu, and launching Eat Fit king cakes in our first year of retail sales.

For the Alcohol Free For 40 Challenge, Jala helped to plan and implement multiple events, including an onsite lab screening for 150 participants, offsite mocktail meet-ups and happy hour workout sessions. She processed and analyzed the statistical data from 150 participants and conducted a pre- and post-challenge survey to assess participants' behavior change. Jala is currently serving as lead author on an Alcohol Free For 40 methods paper for journal submission

Jala worked closely with the Food and Beverage team of Ochsner Fitness Center's FUEL Café to revitalize the menu, including adding more 'Eat Fit' options with clear branding, nutrition facts labeling, and nutrition claims. Jala led this project in recipe development and analysis, recipe testing, scaling and standardization, as well as providing nutrition education and talking points to Café staff.

She is passionate about the field of dietetics, and very skilled in a wide range of nutrition applications including one-on-one and group educational settings, foodservice, and recipe analysis. Her written and verbal communication skills are excellent, with the ability to convey detailed, thorough information in a concise and approachable manner.

Organization and adaptability are also strong points for Jala. She prioritizes and balances a wide range of projects and commitments with a positive attitude, embracing the element of continued learning from new experiences.

She is well-respected and appreciated by our leadership team at Ochsner Health System, as well as her

peers within Ochsner Eat Fit.

As Jala continues to challenge herself, her leadership and communication skills will only continue to strengthen, making her an even more remarkable asset to the community and her colleagues.

Likewise, as she gains more experience in the field of medical nutrition therapy, her knowledge and expertise in this area will only continue to grow. An avid learner, Jala realizes that there is much to learn regarding nutrition science and wellness, and seeks out any and every opportunity to do so.

Jala truly gives her all to projects that she has committed to. She anticipates needs of those around her, constantly on the lookout for ways to help others shine and do their best. Jala is a strong person whose kind and generous spirit brings out the best in those around her.

**Molly Kimball, RD, CSSD**

Nutrition Manager, Ochsner Fitness Center

Founder, Ochsner Eat Fit

[mkimball@ochsner.org](mailto:mkimball@ochsner.org)

504-842-9572 office

[OchsnerEatFit.com](http://OchsnerEatFit.com)