



## **THE ISABELLE A. HALLAHAN AWARD**

The Isabelle A. Hallahan Award is granted by New York State Dietetic Association to honor both the recipient and Mrs. Hallahan. Its purpose is to recognize a person who shows great potential in becoming a leader in the dietetics profession and related professional associations.

The award recognizes the leadership potential of a dietitian, following in the footsteps of one of New York's eminent leaders, Isabelle Hallahan. Isabelle was a forward thinker who always remained ahead of her time. She never feared taking stands on issues because they were unpopular.

When the American Dietetic Association leaders debated the choice between licensure and registration of dietitians in the early 1960s, Isabelle pressed for licensure. Unable to convince the national association of the benefits of state licensure over registration, she convinced the New York State Dietetic Association to lead the state associations in their efforts toward licensure. When there was growing evidence that the American Dietetic Association required a strong presence in Washington, D.C., she became the first Coordinator of Legislative Activities and established an office in the nation's capital. Serving on the organizing Committee for Health Certifying Agencies, she continued to press for national exposure of the American Dietetic Association's representative to the National Organization for Children and Youth, the National Council on Aging and the Women's Joint Congressional Committee.

Isabelle Hallahan did not seek personal recognition. She quietly acted as a role model to hundreds of dietitians and nutritionists and encouraged new dietitians into active service to this professional association. Her knack of finding the right people for the right job at the right time accelerated young members into national committees, even as chairpersons. This has introduced them to the great variety of disciplines. She encouraged administrative, clinical, research and education dietitians to work together to network as leaders by sharing skills and ideas. Her protégés have gone on to the highest positions in their professions.

Isabelle Hallahan held a bachelor's degree from State University of New York at Buffalo and a master's degree from Teachers' College, Columbia University. She had a rich and fulfilling career as a Director of Dining Halls at Hofstra College, Director of School Lunch Programs in New York State, Adjunct Assistant Professor at New York University and Nutrition Consultant to the United States Department of State (Agency for International Development).

Isabelle was always a “giver”: to her community, to her profession, and to the men, women and children who benefit from her great dietetic skills. She received the Executive Director’s Award of the American School Food Service Association “For Exceptional Service to Children” and the American Dietetic Association’s highest honor: The Marjorie Hulsizer Copher Award.

Her personal warmth, exuberance, intellect and skill enhanced her remarkable contributions to the profession. She was an exciting speaker who allowed her charm and humor free range. Thus, she was often chosen for prestigious speaking honors: the first Grace Shugart Lecturer at Kansas University, a Mary Swartz Rose Memorial Lecturer for the Greater New York Dietetic Association and a Lenna Frances Cooper Memorial Lecturer for the American Dietetic Association.

As a forward thinker, she was recognized for facilitating change and life to hundreds of programs in the associations and organizations in which she worked. Excitement was endemic when Isabelle was at the helm. In early 1970, a militant group of dietitians from Chicago demanded that the American Dietetic Association become a labor union for its members. Isabelle advised one of her young protégés, who she had selected to investigate and report on the “union issue” at a national convention: “If you see a large group with placards march out of the auditorium, just smile and keep on giving your report, the stage is high and they cannot get at you.”. And she did just that.

Isabelle Hallahan was President of the American Dietetic Association and Speaker of its House of Delegates, President, Secretary and Chair of Delegates of the New York State Dietetic Association; President of the Long Island Dietetic Association, of the National Nutrition Consortium, of the Nutrition Today Society and of the Coalition of Independent Health Professions; and Chairmen of the Nassau County Nutrition Council and of the Nassau County School Food Service Association.

She was a joy to be with. Isabelle was a loyal friend who always found time to send a letter, search you out at a professional meeting for a chat, travel long distances to hear her “mentored leader” speak and support other colleagues in efforts to be recognized and recommended them for high awards. She was a loving wife who always spoke with high praise and respect for her husband. With a permanent twinkle in her eyes, this tiny woman took on giant issues and moved them forward. Mrs. Hallahan always found time to counsel all who come to her for advice and had the knack of giving such advice so that the receiver felt as if he or she had found the solution and that no problem was insurmountable.

The recipient of the Isabelle A. Hallahan Award accepts the challenge to reflect honor upon her good works. Isabelle A. Hallahan, RD, LD, CHE, always demanded much of herself and looked for the promise of success in others.