

Gorilla Tactics

PA Power Eating Is All About Teamwork

Next time you're in Paresky Commons, don't be put off by the colorful gorillas with the dorky names. In truth, AntiDrain, ProBrain, Maintain, Regain, and Sustain are superheroes on a mission to boost PA students' physical and cognitive performance.

How? By helping students make informed food and beverage choices.

Team Gunga is part of a new health and wellness initiative called PA Power Eating, spearheaded by Aggie Kip, PA's longtime nutrition counselor and sports dietitian. "It's no secret that eating well is the foundation of living well," says Kip, "but even smart kids can get confused about optimal nutrition. Healthy foods don't just offer longer lasting energy, they displace hundreds of junk food calories."

This past summer, Kip received seed funding from the Tang Institute to broaden and deepen the impact of her PA Power Eating pilot program. "Aggie is just the person—and personality—to talk with students of all backgrounds about smarter eating," says Medical Director Amy Patel, MD. "Her empathetic and knowledgeable coaching

will help students adopt some healthier habits not only here at PA, but for life."

PA Power Eating is all about good food that *tastes* good. "Our goal is to offer delicious and varied menu items, dispel the mysteries around healthy eating, and help students do their very best at whatever they do, whether it's playing the violin, taking SATs, staying more focused in math class, or practicing crew," explains Kip. Designed in cooperation with Paresky Commons' food service professionals, PA Power Eating menu selections incorporate cutting-edge nutrition science from Stanford, the Harvard School of Public Health, and the Culinary Institute of America.

An exercise enthusiast and longtime healthy eater, Kip walks the walk. Her 35 years of living "holistically" among PA students as an Isham staffer, school nutritionist, house counselor, and yoga instructor inform her desire to tailor the program to the rhythms of the students. "We want to hit them where they live," she says.

Kip emphasizes that the program is nonjudgmental. "Too many issues



Aggie Kip works closely with Executive Chef David Rossello to offer—and create—delicious and varied menu items. One recent healthy re-do was pizza crust made from sweet potatoes and whole wheat flour. "The kids never knew the difference," says Kip.

around food involve shame," she says. "I want students to feel comfortable with and empowered by the changes they decide to make."

"PA Power Eating will be an important component of the nutrition segment of our wellness programming going forward," confirms Patel.

—Alessandra Bianchi

No single food item or group can do it all. Team Gunga cheerfully draws students' attention to nutritious menu items that lay the groundwork for optimal athletic and academic performance. Examples include:



Sustain (provides sustained energy/endurance)—oatmeal, quinoa, pasta, lentils, rice, hummus, muesli



Regain (aids in repair/recovery)—poultry, fish, milk, dairy products, soy, tofu, nuts, peanut butter



Maintain (boosts immunity/anti-inflammatory)—tomatoes, oranges, grapefruit, spinach, berries, avocado



ProBrain (enhances cognitive power/alertness)—salmon, olives, extra-virgin olive oil, flaxseed, dark chocolate



AntiDrain (prevents dehydration)—all liquids, including tea, coffee, 100% fruit juices, and foods high in water content

Although packed with nutrients, sesame seeds and tree nuts are prohibited by PA's dining policy.