

**Marlene Smith**  
**Dr. Marlene MD**  
*Educator, Author, Family Practice Physician*  
[www.DrMarleneMD.com](http://www.DrMarleneMD.com)

## **The Protege**

Protégé is defined in the Webster dictionary as one who is protected or trained or whose career is furthered by a person of experience, prominence, or influence.

Looking back on my many years on this earth, since the dinosaurs roamed, I have been a protégé many times, sometimes not by choice as being a student, other times unaware of the protégé status and many times by choice.

This past year, I have reinvented myself. I now have the title of “Adjunct Associate Professor”. I developed and teach the course titled “Nutritional Therapy Seminar” in the Keiser University College of Chiropractic Medicine. I look back on the journey that brought to this point in 2019 with amazement. It started with my curiosity about a new subspecialty in medicine, “Culinary Medicine”. What is this about? With the help of Dr Google, I learned about Culinary Medicine, the combination of the art of food and cooking, backed by the science of medicine. I then sent several emails to Culinary schools including Johnson and Wales, in North Miami, asking them if they had any courses for me on Culinary Medicine. The Dean of Johnson and Wales in north Miami answered my query. No but we would love for you to audit, free of charge, our Applied Nutrition class. My answer, YES. I was a protégé again during the month of April 2019.

The course was excellent- in a commercial kitchen, with culinary students juniors and seniors, learning from a Chef who also was a certified dietician. The course was twice a week, 8am to 1 pm. I was not late once! Observing both the students and Chef Professor was priceless. In this class, the students learned how to turn unhealthy, fattening foods into a much healthier version, maintaining taste and texture. The Chef Professor explained to me her approach to teaching such a course. At this time, I felt like a sponge, absorbing everything around me in this commercial kitchen, from the tools to techniques, food storage and course development. I knew I was her protégé but did not have any idea at the time of this course, the invaluable lessons I was learning. It was after the course ended, that the opportunity to teach nutrition was offered to me. The answer was YES!

Being aware that you are the protégé is uniquely wonderful. My passion is food and health, all put into motion thru our nutrition. At all stages of life, finding your passion is golden. But setting yourself up to be a protégé, as you follow your passion, is a wonderful experience. I love my job teaching nutrition. The wonderful feedback from the students tell me that maybe, they will consider themselves my proteges.

What is your passion? How can you set yourself up to be a protégé as you follow your passion? It can be done! Keep trying, push open those doors, when the doors close, climb thru a window.