The most rewarding part of my career is convincing a client to focus on his or her overall health rather than just the number on a scale.

After applying, Kelan began an INBRE internship with Gallatin County Women, Infants & Children (WIC). A few weeks into her internship, Kelan described having an “ah-ha moment” regarding how to combine her academic interests and passions, and she began researching masters programs in public health nutrition.

Kelan credits her INBRE public health internship for providing the direction and confidence she needed to enter the nutrition field, as well as a strong desire to learn more. After graduation, Kelan applied for and accepted a yearlong AmeriCorps position at a community health clinic. While working at the clinic, Kelan was surprised to find that providers frequently prescribed medications for diet-related conditions such as type-2 diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol – conditions Kelan knew could often be treated with proper diet and exercise.

“When I tried to encourage staff members to provide more nutrition education, they told me that there just wasn’t enough time and too few resources to educate patients. This moment really served as a catalyst, and it solidified for me why I wanted to become a registered dietitian.”

Kelan says she enjoys her career as a registered dietitian because she gets to provide people with the support they need to realize behavior change. “The most rewarding part of my career is convincing a client to focus on his or her overall health, rather than just the number on a scale.”