

MARWIC

T · I · M · E · S

MID-ATLANTIC REGION SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN

FOOD BANK OF DELAWARE HOSTS COOKING CLASSES WITH WIC PARTICIPANTS

By Leah Brown, MS, RDN, LDN, Food Bank of Delaware Community Nutrition Director

During the month of May, Food Bank of Delaware (FBD) WIC Community Nutrition Educators hosted four Virtual Creative Cooking events for Delaware WIC participants. The purpose of these events was to invite Delaware WIC participants to cook alongside or observe the educators demonstrating dishes that could be made utilizing the WIC food package. WIC participants were sent text messages via WIC to register. In registering, they also could suggest or request a recipe they were interested in learning to cook. There were a total of 27 participants throughout the four sessions.

Topics for the sessions were:

- **May 5** – Adding more veggies into meals: rainbow vegetable pizza
- **May 12** – Foods on the go - homemade fruit roll-up and peanut butter bites
- **May 19** – Quick & easy meals: tostadas and butternut squash pasta
- **May 26** – Nutritious sweets: chocolate banana smoothie and fruit salsa with cinnamon sugar tortilla chips

For each session WIC participants attended, they received an entry for a raffle. The winning prize was the opportunity to come to the FBD facility in Newark, DE and cook with Chef Tim Hunter, Executive Chef of the FBD Culinary School. The two winners selected were able to bring a guest; however, only one participant was able to attend. On June 23, Raffle winner Kim Collymore attended the event. The menu that day included fresh greens with raspberry vinaigrette, grilled flank steak with Chimichurri sauce, grilled shrimp, roasted red skin potatoes, sautéed zucchini and yellow squash, grilled asparagus, and espresso bread pudding garnished with raspberries for dessert. All produce was fresh from the FBD Farm. It was a great success! ■



Tim Brown, Executive Chef of the Food Bank of Delaware, and Raffle winner Kim Collymore.

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WEST VIRGINIA'S MCHD WIC HOSTS THE "MOTHER'S LOUNGE" AT LOCAL FESTIVALS

West Virginia's MCHD WIC has started setting up a safe space for mothers to nurse and change their babies at fairs and festivals. The first lounge was held at the Italian Heritage Festival in Harrison County, and the second was held at the Buckwheat Festival in Preston County.

Before the Mother's Lounge, parents would struggle to find a safe and comfortable spot to care for their children. Some parents would have to walk back to their cars or wait in line for a public restroom. When you have small children, this isn't always the easiest task. While hosting the lounge, we were told that some moms made the decision to come due to the lounge being there to meet their needs. This lounge provided chairs, fans, or heaters (depending on the weather), water, diapers, wipes and changing tables to accommodate any needs they may have when changing or nursing their children. We have plans to continue supporting moms with the Mother's Lounge at future fairs and festivals in our region. ■





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By Jennifer Nagy

On September 28, 2022, the Biden-Harris Administration hosted the second-ever White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health. The first conference was held over 50 years ago in 1969 by President Nixon. Several FNS programs were established or expanded due to the recommendations from the 1969 conference. These included significant expansions to the Food Stamp Program (now SNAP), increasing the reach of the National School Lunch Program, permanent authorization of the School Breakfast Program and authorization of the pilot for the Supplemental Feeding Program for Women, Infants and Children in 1972 which later became WIC!

The recent conference was a gathering of elected officials, advocates, health care providers, leaders of business, faith, and philanthropy and many others to mobilize a bold goal, to end hunger in America and increase healthy eating and physical activity by 2030 so fewer Americans experience diet-related diseases and disparities. In addition to the conference, a National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health was released that outlines steps the government will take while calling on the public and private sector to address the intersections between food, hunger, and health.

The National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health contains achievable and sustainable actions the federal government will take to shift the country's food, nutrition, and health policies across five pillars as listed below.

Pillar 1: Improve Food Access and Affordability

End hunger by making it easier for everyone, including individuals in urban, suburban, rural, and Tribal communities and territories, to access and afford food.

Pillar 2: Integrate Nutrition and Health

Prioritize the role of nutrition and food security in overall health, including disease prevention and management and ensure that our health care system addresses the nutrition needs of all people.

Pillar 3: Empower All Consumers to Make and Have Access to Healthy Choices

Foster environments that enable all people to easily make informed, healthy choices, increase access to healthy food, encourage healthy workplace and school policies, and invest in public education campaigns that are culturally appropriate and resonate with specific communities.

Pillar 4: Support Physical Activity for All

Make it easier for people to be more physically active in part by ensuring that everyone has access to safe places to be active, increase awareness of the benefits of physical activity, and conduct research on and measure physical activity.

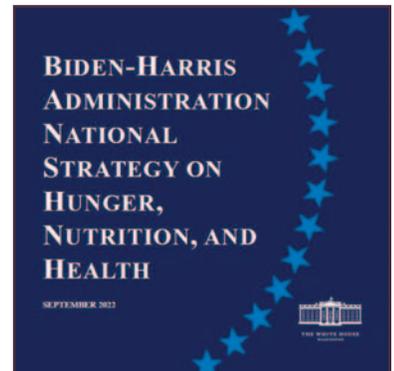
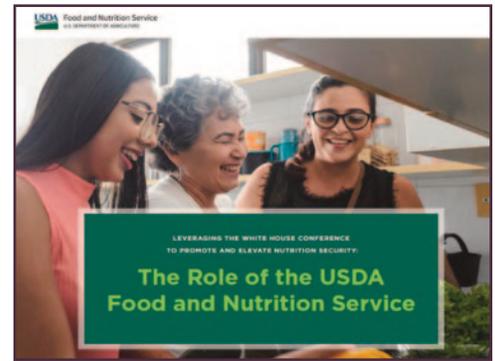
Pillar 5: Enhance Nutrition and Food Security Research

Improve nutrition metrics, data collection, and research to inform nutrition and food security policy, particularly on issues of equity, access, and disparities.

The National Strategy has many interesting and exciting initiatives within each pillar. In addition to this document, you may be interested in seeing the report titled, Leveraging the White House Conference to Promote and Elevate Nutrition Security: The Role of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. This report describes how the USDA Food and Nutrition Service is supporting and will continue to support the president's goal to end hunger, reduce diet-related diseases by improving healthy eating and physical activity, and eliminate disparities surrounding them by 2030. These items can be viewed at the links below.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/White-House-National-Strategy-on-Hunger-Nutrition-and-Health-FINAL.pdf>

Leveraging the White House Conference to Promote and Elevate Nutrition Security: The Role of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service | Food and Nutrition Service ■



PUERTO RICO WIC INTRODUCES NEW NUTRITION EDUCATION APP

By Magdaliz Bonilla, LDN

In our WIC Program, we continue to develop efforts to provide the most effective nutrition education for our participants, particularly the children we serve. As we all know, capturing children's attention is a challenge and as such, we have developed an app entitled "Coloring Books and Learning to Eat Healthy." This is a simple tool to educate our children about the importance of consuming nutritious food from an early age. Through coloring, children are capturing and learning about balanced food consumption and the harmful effects of junk food.

This mobile app is compatible with any device (cell phone, tablet, computer); it can be downloaded through the App Store or Play Store; and it has the following two functionalities:

Four coloring books, each with an original story titled: Running; Junk Food Planet; José Lost a Tooth; and Frutilina's Birthday. (Frutilina is a character in our WIC Program that represents an orange from the fruit food group, as well as Veggie which represents a broccoli from the vegetable food group. Our kids recognize these characters and are familiar with them). Also, we have created these books to promote parent-child interaction.

The coloring books have fun drawings on each page that help develop motor skills and support artistic creativity; they provide tools to color and erase each drawing as well as healthy food stickers; and there are multiple games in each book. The drawings can be downloaded just as the stories in their entirety, and ultimately printed and painted by hand.

The app has augmented reality (AR) technology which works once the books have been printed. By touching the "colorful stories" button and pointing the phone at the coloring book page, the colors can be seen before painting. AR also helps in interaction and successful completion of activities. On the other hand, it is important to emphasize that this new app project is an essential part of the nutrition education offered in the WIC Program. Therefore, we have created QR codes to distribute the information content of the app in all WIC clinics so that our nutritionists can share said content with our participants.

As always, we will continue creating innovative initiatives through the use of technology, with the aim of improving and expanding the best WIC services! ■



WEST VIRGINIA WIC HOSTED ROLL & READ EVENT FOR COMMUNITY

West Virginia WIC partnered with Parents as Teachers for a Roll & Read Event at the Capitol building on September 12. The Parents as Teachers Association is an evidence-based home visiting model that works to foster strong communities, thriving families, and healthy children that are safe and ready to learn by matching parents and caregivers with home-visiting professionals that can aid in a child's earliest years of life, from prenatal through kindergarten.

This Roll & Read event featured the book *Cows Can't Jump*, written by Dave Resiman. The Roll & Read event is for families with children ages five and under. Families were encouraged to bring strollers, bikes, tricycles, and scooters to roll around the Capitol grounds, where there were several stations to pause at and participate in book-related activities. At 1:30pm, author Dave Resiman spoke at the stage area outside to kick off the event activities that ran until 5:00pm. Participation in the event was free and all families received a copy of the book.

Cows Can't Jump is a wonderful beginner reading book, telling of a humorous and inspirational adventure about animals. This book focuses on what animals do best and helps make them comfortably aware of their limitations, while being proud of their own special skills. With colorful and bright illustrations, *Cows Can't Jump* engages young minds and aids in learning diverse and dynamic words with an impactful message! ■

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S MARY'S CENTER WIC PROGRAM CELEBRATES NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING MONTH

By Noni Robinson, MS, Project Officer

Mary's Center WIC Program honored their pregnant and breast-feeding mothers by hosting its first in-person event in over two years for National Breastfeeding Month. Mary's Center WIC collaborated with DC Petworth Library and United Health Care to host a "Read-In" event with WIC participants.

DC Petworth's librarian read to WIC participants about how mother's feed their children. The children and their families then enjoyed a story time activity.

Mary's Center WIC staff and WIC mothers shared their breastfeeding experiences, allowing for an open forum to ask questions and provide breastfeeding education.

A community resource table was in place to provide WIC Program information, community resources, give-aways, and a library card sign-up for WIC participants. Several families left with library cards and books that had been donated to the event. A wonderful time was had by all.

A Happy National Breastfeeding Month to all from Mary's Center WIC Program and DC Health. Together We Do Great Things. ■



DC Petworth Librarian reading to WIC participants.



Mary's Center WIC Staff gathered around the community resource.

PENNSYLVANIA CELEBRATED OUR THRIVING BREASTFED BABIES

By Chandra Dyne, CLC, WIC Director, and Breastfeeding Coordinator, Blueprints

During National Breastfeeding Month, the Blueprints WIC Program of Washington and Greene counties in Pennsylvania used social media to highlight some of the "thriving breastfed babies" on WIC.

Staff distributed onesies to breastfed infants and the caregivers sent pictures and success stories, which were used on social media throughout World Breastfeeding Month. Five pictures were submitted and turned into social media posts.

Great feedback was received from those following the Blueprint's Facebook page. Families were excited to help promote and support breastfeeding, while showing off their adorable babies. With feedback from families, we plan on hosting a group breastfeeding photoshoot next August 2023. ■

NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING MONTH!!
August 1st-31st

"I really enjoy breastfeeding because of the bond it creates. I love knowing that I am helping Lyla to build a strong immune system. Our breastfeeding journey started out rather difficult. I've totally removed dairy from my diet, and now Lyla is thriving!"

blue prints
break barriers • build futures
powered by community action

Baby Lyla and a quote from her mom.

New Jersey's Burlington County WIC held its first Breastfeeding Summit. We welcomed breastfeeding professionals and advocates to share their perspectives, in our mission to empower families in their breastfeeding goals. ■

BURLINGTON COUNTY BREASTFEEDING SUMMIT

Breastfeed Your Baby Today, for a Healthier Tomorrow



L to R: Jezenia H., Daiania G., Irma N., Kelsey C., Ashley A., Tracy L.,
L to R bottom row: Evelyn B., Kaitlyn M., Nicole P., & Leshette W.

SUPPORT

The Burlington County WIC, held their first Breastfeeding Summit during World Breastfeeding Month 2022. It was a day filled with sunshine as participants gathered at the Amphitheater. We welcomed breastfeeding professionals and advocates to share their perspectives, in our mission to empower families in their breastfeeding goals.



Dr. H. Conaway, Burlington County Health Department Director, speaking on how breastfeeding impacts the health of the community.

GIVEAWAYS

This summit offered support and encouraged mothers to breastfeed their babies for the many proven health, nutrition and emotional benefits to both mothers and babies. Participants also received specialty baby items and breastfeeding care products.



RESOURCES

The Burlington County WIC invited local service agencies to make this event one of resource-sharing and networking. It was a great opportunity for all to come together post pandemic. Seamless coordination between service and healthcare organizations greatly increase the well-being and opportunities for WIC participating families.

VIRGINIA/MARYLAND WIC DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM WELCOMES ITS 31ST COHORT

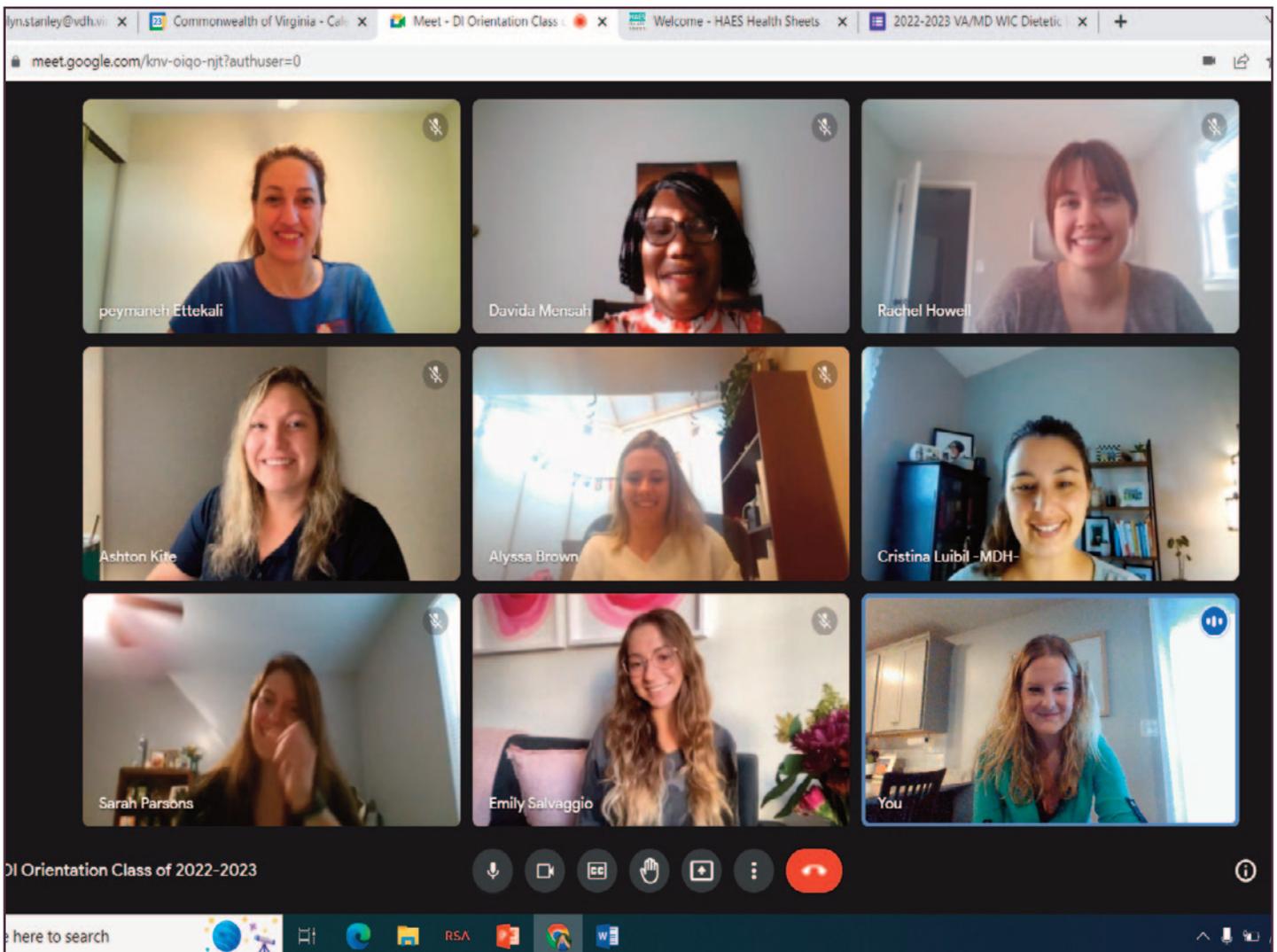
By Kailyn Stanley, MPH, RDN, CBS and Cristina Luibil, MS, RD, LDN

The VA/MD WIC Dietetic Internship Program has welcomed its 31st cohort! Orientation was held on September 19-23, and interns are on track to graduate mid-August 2023. This year, the program consists of seven interns: one from Maryland and six from Virginia. Interns will complete rotations in Foodservice, Clinical and Public Health in a variety of facilities throughout Virginia and Maryland.

As a program, we look forward to participating in the NWA Policy and Leadership Conference in February, welcoming guest speakers who are experts in their respective areas of Dietetics to speak at our class days, and hosting a WIC Class day for neighboring Dietetic Internships in Virginia, Maryland and DC.

Please help us in welcoming our Virginia interns from the class of 2022-2023: Davida Mensah (Rappahannock Health District); Rachel Howell (Norfolk Health District); Ashton Kite (Chesterfield Health District); Alyssa Brown (Lord Fairfax Health District); Sarah Parsons (Chesterfield Health District); Emily Salvaggio (Blue Ridge Health District).

We would be remiss not to mention our graduating class of 2022 – the 30th cohort of our program. In August 2022, five interns graduated: three from Virginia and two from Maryland – all of whom are currently studying for their RD exam. We wish Kenneth Makaiwi (Virginia Beach Health District), Heather Brunk (Central Shenandoah Health District), and Kelly Jung-Kim (Fairfax), good luck on their test and know they will be amazing WIC RD/RDNs very soon! ■



Introducing the Internship Class of 2023 (from top, left to right): Peymaneh Ettekali, Davida Mensah, Rachel Howell, Ashton Kite, Alyssa Brown, Cristina Luibil (Program Coordinator, MD), Sarah Parsons, Emily Salvaggio, Kailyn Stanley (Program Director, VA).

MARYLAND ENTERS FALL WITH SOME NEW WIC BABIES

By Ernest Le

Maryland WIC's continuing search for more participants to feature in the "I'm a WIC Baby" campaign has had a stroke of luck in the past few months. First came Sara, who was a featured speaker at a statewide webinar. When she mentioned that she had been on WIC as a child, we knew that we had to ask her to participate, and fortunately she agreed.

Sara's parents were public school teachers in Baltimore, and they instilled in her a love of learning and a dedication to personal health. The whole family exercised together every day, and they always made sure to have fresh vegetables with every dinner. Sara started to wonder why not every kid could eat well, and that led her to dedicate her life to studying public health and nutrition. She eventually earned a Bachelor's degree from Columbia and a PhD from Harvard. Today, she's a professor at Harvard and the Director of Nutrition Security and Health Equity at USDA.

We were also contacted by Diana, Erin, and Maureen, who are three out of a set of quintuplets. We normally like to do a separate ad for each individual, but they insisted on doing their ad together. Once we met them, it was easy to see why. They really do everything together. They never had any trouble keeping themselves amused since they always had each other to play with, and when it was time to try a new food, they looked to each other to figure out if they liked something. As you can imagine, feeding them as babies was also quite a production. Their parents had to prepare 25 bottles at a time!

The sisters are living and thriving today, and they still live close to each other. Diana works in early childhood nutrition and is studying to be a dietitian. Erin works for a company supporting peer reviewed research. And Maureen just had a baby and is studying to be an elementary school librarian.

As we have continued this campaign at Maryland WIC, we've learned to always keep our eyes open. We never know when we will find someone who has an interesting story to tell. Our ad campaign is continuing to draw great feedback, and we hope other states will consider running their own version of this campaign. ■

I'M A
WIC
BABY

SARA,
WIC BABY
SINCE 1978

READ HER STORY
AT MDWIC.ORG

MARYLAND
1-800-243-4342
www.mdwic.org

@MDH.WIC

Sara

WE ARE WIC BABIES

DIANA MAUREEN ERIN

WIC BABIES SINCE 1994

READ THEIR STORY
AT MDWIC.ORG

MARYLAND
1-800-243-4342
www.mdwic.org

@MDH.WIC

Diana, Erin and Maureen

VIRGINIA WIC STAFF ATTENDS THE UNITED STATES LACTATION ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

By Ricaya McCray, CBS, Nutritionist Senior/Site Supervisor, Little Creek WIC Office, Norfolk Health District, Norfolk, VA

Virginia Department of Health (VDH) WIC staff had the pleasure of attending the 2022 New Horizons in Clinical Lactation Conference held in Norfolk, VA, September 23-25. Hosted by the United States Lactation Consultant Association, the event provided cutting-edge clinical lactation education, academic posters, exhibitors, and opportunities to link and learn with other lactation professionals and educators. Staff from around the state came to attend this exciting educational and informative event. Importantly, this gave attendees an opportunity to share best practices and learn from their Virginia peers and colleagues in person. The information gathered will be utilized to promote, educate, and support pregnant and breastfeeding families. It was a great opportunity for to network and share the happenings within the respective agencies.

Virginia attendees included Jarene Fleming, Virginia WIC State Breastfeeding Coordinator; Kathrine Wilson-Thompson, Virginia WIC Public Health Lactation Specialist; and Donesha Scott, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Liaison from the Virginia WIC State Office. Local agency representatives from the Norfolk WIC Little Creek Office included Ricaya McCray, Nutritionist Sr./Breastfeeding Coordinator; Tanika Jones, Public Relations Specialist; Daissy Torres, Nutritionist

Associate; and Jessica Martyak, BFPC (Norfolk Health District). Other members of the Virginia WIC delegation included Camille Canty, WIC Coordinator, Prince William Health District; Krista Vondra, BFPC, Three Rivers Health District; and Truus Thomas-Wyatt, Nutritionist and Breastfeeding Coordinator, Eastern Shore Health District. Many other WIC colleagues attended virtually. ■



Pictured (left to right) are Truus Thomas-Wyatt, Krista Vondra, Kathrine Wilson-Thompson, Ricaya McCray, Jarene Fleming, Tanika Jones, Donesha Scott, Daissy Torres, Jessica Martyak, and Camille Canty.



The Virginia Delegation at lunch.

NEW JERSEY WIC CELEBRATES eWIC ROLL-OUT

On October 6, New Jersey State WIC held an eWIC celebration to culminate its success with rolling out eWIC throughout the state. Representatives from USDA and DOH leadership were in attendance. Over 160 staff from the State WIC office and the 16 Local WIC agencies was present while other was able to stream the event via Zoom.

A video testimonial that was created and shown during the event allowed staff and participants to share the benefits of the eWIC card and how it changed their WIC experience. A great highlight to the event was the attendance of three WIC households that gave their testimony as to how the transition from food instruments for the eWIC had added value and quality to the WIC experience.

Without the extensive work and effort of everyone who works for the New Jersey WIC Program, the transition from Food Instruments to eWIC would not have been a success for New Jersey.

Job well done!!! ■



Nancy Scotto-Rosato, NJ Family Health Services Assistant Commissioner



Event Chair Kenya Cohen, Program Specialist I (left) and planning committee member Tiffany Leroy, Public Health Consultant, Nutrition



Enjoying the day are USDA MARO staff Jaime Van Lieu, Branch Chief; Roberta Hodson, Division Director; Amy Holtan, Team Lead; and Jennifer Nagy, Program Specialist.

NEW JERSEY STATE WIC WELCOMES NEW BREASTFEEDING COORDINATOR

The New Jersey State WIC office has been without a Breastfeeding Coordinator since October 2019 until now. So please join us in welcoming Danielle Tropea. Danielle is an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) who provided clinical lactation care to a predominantly WIC population in three Northern New Jersey hospitals. She has also served as a Trustee of the New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition and is ZipMilk.org's New Jersey administrator. Earlier this year, she completed a Master's in Public Health in Community Health Education at Montclair State University.

Her professional and personal enthusiasm is driven by the strategy of increasing breastfeeding success to reduce maternal-infant health inequities. In addition to leading lactation at WIC, she will be actively involved in implementing the just-released New Jersey Breastfeeding Strategic Plan.

Danielle brings a passion for interagency communication and educational material development, stemming from her experience in web publishing, social media, and digital marketing. She was inspired to transition to a career in lactation when she had her children, who are now 13 and 17. However, like many new mothers, she was surprised to learn that while breastfeeding is natural, it is not always easy.

When she is not getting brainstorming ideas for her next lactation-themed tattoo, she enjoys watching standup comedy, singing karaoke, and knitting hats. ■



Danielle Tropea showing off her lactation-themed cubicle.

PENNSYLVANIA WIC'S NEW, STATEWIDE MEDIA CAMPAIGN REACHING THE MASSES

By Candance Sanderson, MEd, Statewide Outreach Coordinator, Bureau of WIC, PA Department of Health

The Pennsylvania WIC Program continued to execute the new, statewide media /advertising campaign to promote the WIC Program working towards increasing participation and retention, promoting the value of the program, qualified staff, and eliminate stigma.

The updated evaluation campaign results included over 43.1 million digital impressions delivered, nearly 256.3K clicks to the pawic.com website, and over 7 million video/audio completions. ■

WEST VIRGINIA WIC RECOGNIZES NATIONAL DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING MONTH

Depression can affect 1 in every 5 adults and 1 in every 6 youths aged 6-17 each year. October is National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month. During this time, West Virginia WIC highlighted the importance of understanding signs and symptoms of mental health issues, as well as understand where to seek assistance!

Mental health screenings are quick and easy examinations of emotional health and assess for mental health risk factors that may be related to genetics, behaviors, or your environment. Screening allows for early detection and recognition of mental health disorders, and helps bridge the gap in finding treatment while avoiding increased severity, overall leading to improved outcomes.

Mental health can be threatened by a variety of factors. These threats could include relationship issues, feelings of stress and overwhelming responsibilities, big life changes, and even feeling like you have no purpose. Screenings can help identify these threats, as well as underlying depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and PTSD, which are some of the most common mental health diagnoses today.

West Virginia WIC further highlighted the importance of mental health screenings for pregnant and postpartum women, who may experience perinatal mood disorders, such as depression and anxiety.

Though diagnosis and treatment of depression are outside of WIC's scope, WIC's nutrition assessment process and referral services can aid in identification of women who are at risk to appropriate services.

WIC further provides information geared towards these women, their partners, as well as their families and friends. By linking these women to resources and support, their overall chance for appropriate treatment is increased!

It is important to recognize signs and symptoms of mental health disorders early and seek help!

Someone suffering from a mental health issue may have: feelings of intense sadness, confused thinking, reduced concentration, excessive fears or worries, extreme feelings of guilt, mood swings, significant tiredness, or difficulty sleeping. These individuals may also withdraw from friends and activities that they once enjoyed.

West Virginia WIC encourages you or anyone experiencing signs or symptoms of mental health disorders to seek assistance.

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7 free and confidential support via phone or text for people in distress. This shorter phone number will make it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services. There is also a web chat available 24/7. ■

WEST VIRGINIA'S MID-OHIO VALLEY OUTREACH COMMUNITY CELEBRATION AND SUPPORT

By Tracy Bills, Nutritionist I/Outreach Coordinator

As the COVID-19 pandemic has thankfully waned, community outreach efforts have kicked up into high gear! The Mid-Ohio Valley (MOV) West Virginia WIC office has participated in several fellow public resource events, as well as two successful WIC-led events – the World Breastfeeding Event at the City Park in Parkersburg, and Cedar Grove Head Start Fall Jubilee in Wood County.

The World Breastfeeding Event celebration was in support of current breastfeeding mothers, past breastfeeding mothers, and for all the pregnant women who plan to breastfeed. The event partnered with 19 other community organizations which were just as enthusiastic as WIC to provide the needed resources for breastfeeding success! To our surprise, the local Parkersburg news station, WTAP, showed up to interview our very own Tammy Moyers, CLS, MOV WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator, who planned the event.

The Cedar Grove Head Start Fall Jubilee was a four-station event that included bracelet craft (Jamie Jacobsen, DHHR), reading of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Francis Coyne-Davis, Children's Home Society and Sue Stoneking, OA II, Vendor Liaison), Veggie Bug healthy snack recipe (Tammy Moyers), and a group exercise (Tracy Bills, Nutritionist/Outreach Coordinator) that included jumping jacks, push-ups, and squats, which energized the kiddos!

MOV WIC's Wood County office also unveiled a book vending machine in partnership with West Virginia Public Education Collaborative's Born to Achieve: I CAN READ project, WVU School of Pediatric Medicine and early childhood educators, and the Neal and Brook Brown Foundation.

MOV WIC Director Jennifer Habeb wanted to support the WV WIC mission of health and wellness monitoring through nutrition supplementation, counseling, and education. This book vending machine has been a huge success with the children as they get quite excited to select their very own book to take home. The local newspaper, *The Parkersburg News and Sentinel*, featured the new vending machine on the front page of the Regio section of the weekly paper in August. Local news station WTAP also featured a segment of MOV WIC Director Jennifer Habeb, demonstrating how the vending machine works by inserting a token and entering the code assigned to the book selection. ■



MOV WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator Tammy Moyers, CLS staffing the World Breastfeeding Event.



A veggie bug created with celery, cream cheese, tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers, and rosemary for the antennae.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WIC WELCOMES NUTRITION COORDINATOR PAIGE ZAITLIN

By Melissa Seyoum, Public Health Nutritionist, DC WIC

Paige Zaitlin, MS, MPH, RD, LDN, is the new State Agency Nutrition Coordinator for the DC WIC Program. Paige has worked as a registered dietitian for more than 10 years, practicing in both Maryland and in the District of Columbia.

Her experience with DC WIC began in 2014 when she served as a local agency WIC Nutritionist and later became a WIC Director in 2019.

Paige has also worked internationally in Uganda and Timor-Leste. Paige completed her undergraduate degree at Cornell University and holds two master's degrees: one in public health (MPH) from The George Washington University and the other in nutritional sciences (MS) from Tufts University, where she also completed her dietetic internship.

She is passionate about providing WIC services and lactation education to WIC participants in the District, as she recently became a mother herself. In her free time, she enjoys being outdoors, reading, and traveling. ■



Paige Zaitlin, MS, MPH, RD, LDN

WEST VIRGINIA WIC PROMOTES NATIONAL ENROLLMENT WEEK

WIC National Enrollment Week occurred on October 10-14. This nationwide event provided an excellent opportunity for current WIC staff to forge ahead in their efforts of promoting the mission of WIC and focus on program recruitment.

During this inaugural nationwide event, local and state WIC agencies worked diligently to share resources and information related to the WIC Program, including education related to nutrition services, breastfeeding support, as well as eligibility! WIC encouraged moms, dad, parents, grandparents, foster parents, aunts, uncles, and guardians of all to apply for WIC during Enrollment Week by contacting their local agency.

As grocery prices continue to rise in the United States, agencies across the country highlighted the importance of WIC enrollment to ensure a diet supplemented with nutritious and balanced foods.

During this event, West Virginia WIC relied heavily on new outreach techniques to reach populations that may have evaded past enrollment. At the State Agency level, West Virginia WIC prepared and operated an outreach table at West Virginia State University. This table served as an opportunity for future and eligible participants and students to ask questions, seek information, and engage one-on-one with informative WIC representatives.

However, enrollment efforts do not pause after National Enrollment Week. West Virginia WIC would like to remind eligible participants that families can make appointments to see their local WIC staff to apply or visit <https://wwwichousehold.wvdhhr.org/> to fill out the application form online! ■



Offering enrollment information are (left to right) Shannon Henry, Intern, and Jamie Wilkinson, Outreach and Special Projects Manager.

WEST VIRGINIA WIC PROMOTES AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

Last November, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58), which established the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). This program aids in bringing broadband internet to low-income households with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Individuals and families that receive federal health benefits, including WIC, are automatically eligible for the ACP!

Low-income households are provided an internet discount of up to \$30 per month on internet service plans that are offered by participating service providers. Further, qualified homes are also eligible for a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if the household contributes more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

WIC participants applying for the ACP may need to show documentation proving current WIC participation, such as an approval letter, statement of benefits, or another official letter or document.

Aside from being WIC participants, a household qualifies for the ACP if they:

- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year
- Participate in one of the following assistance programs:
 - The National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast program
 - SNAP
 - Medicaid
 - Federal Public Housing Assistance
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Veterans Pension or Survivor Benefits
 - Lifeline

If you think you may qualify and are interested in enrolling, there are just two steps! Visit AffordableConnectivity.gov to apply or print out a mail-in application. Then, contact your preferred participating provider to select a plan and have the discount applied to.

If you need to talk to someone about your eligibility or application status, call the ACP Support Center at (877) 384-2575. ■



MARWIC TIMES Calendar

The deadline for the Spring issue of MARWIC Times is February 3, 2023. Submit articles, photos and calendar events to your State editor. 5" x 7" digital photos (saved in JPEG/PDF format) preferred. All photographs must include a detailed caption.