

MARWIC

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

PENNSYLVANIA'S BI-COUNTY WIC PARTNERS WITH HEAD START FOR FARMERS' MARKET DAY 2015

By Laurie Huff, Outreach Coordinator
Bi-County WIC Program/HOPE Enterprises, Inc.

After much collaboration, Pennsylvania's Bi-County WIC and Lycoming/Clinton County Head Start joined forces once again to serve the community. On June 1, the two agencies set up colorful stands side by side, at the busy Williamsport Outdoor Grower's Market. Participants enrolled in both agencies were invited to bring their families to the event. Bi-County WIC staff issued Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons to qualifying families and provided them with recipes and nutrition education materials to help them use their fresh



GIVE-AWAYS — Head Start Wellness and Nutrition Initiative Coordinator Abbey Eschbach shares the mini muffins and the \$2 kid coupons with a family.

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MARYLAND'S COMMUNITY CLINIC, INC. WIC RECEIVES USDA LOVING SUPPORT AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

By Amy Resnik, MS, RD, CSP, LDN, IBCLC

The Community Clinic, Inc. (CCI)/Montgomery County WIC Agency is the first Maryland WIC Local Agency recognized with the USDA Loving Support Award of Excellence. This award, given to local WIC agencies who promote breastfeeding above and beyond the basic standard, was given to 55 local WIC agencies across the country. In order to qualify for this



AWARD-WINNING STAFF — Showing off their award are (left to right) Myrna Sandino, Monica Leiva, Karen Blanco, Rose Cohen, Charlene Pe-Gerharz, Jaime Van Lieu (USDA), Kelly Mannherz (USDA), Teresa Granados, Jessika James, Mayra Rios, Glenda Guevara, and Ana Reza.

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USDA, OMB OFFICIALS VISIT VIRGINIA'S MT. VERNON WIC OFFICE

By the Fairfax County Health Department

On May 11, Virginia's Mount Vernon WIC office received a visit from high-level officials from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The visitors included Debra R. Whitford, Director, USDA, Food and Nutrition Services, Supplemental Food Programs; Gena Kochan, USDA Office of General Counsel, Senior Counsel; and Kira Fatherree, Program Examiner for OMB.

The visitors were interested to learn about the WIC certification process, nutritional education, breastfeeding counseling/classes and the new EBT debit cards used to issue WIC benefits. Anna Kianianthra, Manager of the WIC Program, and Senior Public Health Nutritionist Anne Gaines gave a thorough tour of the facility and answered questions along the way. Kira Fatherree and Gena Kochan each got to shadow a WIC applicant through the certification process.

After the visit, USDA Director Debra R. Whitford thanked the WIC team in an email: "I know how busy things are at WIC clinics and I deeply appreciate the time, courtesies and knowledge shared by Anna and her staff. Both Kira and Gena were very impressed with the visit and now have a deeper understanding of how WIC works which will benefit WIC Programs nationwide. Again, many thanks to the Virginia WIC Program and particularly, Anna Kianianthra."

Fairfax County serves the highest number of clients in Virginia of the 34 districts in the state (17,500 clients). Between 2004-2012 WIC participation grew 76 percent in Fairfax County. There are nine WIC service delivery sites in Fairfax. ■



A TOUR OF WIC — Taking part in the tour of Mt. Vernon WIC are (clockwise from top right) Silvyva Nava, Nutritionist Assistant; Anna Kianianthra, manager of the WIC Program; Debra R. Whitford, Director, USDA, Food and Nutrition Services, Supplemental Food Programs; Gena Kochan, USDA Office of General Counsel, Senior Counsel. Not pictured is Kira Fatherree, Program Examiner for the OMB.

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By Justin Wohlsifer, MPA

Mid-Atlantic State WIC Program vendor management staff convened at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office (MARO) to discuss vendor management best practices, July 21 and 22.

The well attended, day-and-a-half meeting included presentations from MARO team members, representatives from Mid-Atlantic State WIC Offices, and members from The Food Trust, a Philadelphia-based nonprofit whose mission is to “Ensure that everyone has access to affordable, nutritious food and information to make healthy decisions.”

The meeting centered on strategies to advance WIC cost containment and strengthen Program Integrity. Attendees received tools to conduct inventory audits and to advance their compliance investigation outcomes. They also received information on how to assess their peer group system, an update on the results of the recent National Vendor Management Evaluation, including current trends and processes, and they learned techniques on how to capitalize on Program Integrity enhancement opportunities.

While meeting survey results showed overwhelming appreciation for all the presentations given, Virginia WIC’s Sheila Brewer’s “EBT Implementation and Rollout: Lessons Learned” received notable recognition. Her presentation provided key insights to the nuances of implementing an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), and she provided attendees with high-quality vendor and participant materials for replication in their respective States.

All the materials and tools presented at the meeting are now available for access on the MARO PartnerWeb Community (Mid-Atlantic Supplemental Food Programs). Should you have any questions regarding the meeting or need access to the Community, please contact Justin.Wohlsifer@fns.usda.gov. ■



LEARNING TOGETHER — MARO vendor management staff shared best practices at their recent meeting.

MD Community Clinic, Inc.
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honor, the agency must have a successful peer counseling program, exemplified through breastfeeding performance measures and community partnerships. CCI/Montgomery County WIC was the only local agency in Maryland to receive the award and the only local agency in the Mid-Atlantic Region to be recognized with this honor. Kelly Mannherz and Jaime Van Lieu traveled to Maryland from the Mid-Atlantic Office on August 13, to personally present the award to CCI WIC staff during one of CCI/Montgomery County WIC’s breastfeeding celebrations. Congratulations to CCI WIC staff for a job well done! ■



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GIVING BACK: TWO MONONGALIA COUNTY (WV) HEALTH DEPARTMENT WIC EMPLOYEES HELP “THE PERIOD OF PURPLE CRYING” CAMPAIGN

By Lauren Gerchufsky, MCHD WIC Nutritionist and Outreach Coordinator

Two creative and passionate Monongalia County (WV) Health Department WIC employees, Patricia Johnson and Mary Beth Lind, wondered why not use our talents to give back to the community! Through a partnership with Right from the Start, a home visiting program for pregnant women and infants until their first birthday, Patricia and Mary Beth knit and crocheted baby hats.

Patricia and Mary Beth have been knitting and crocheting since they were young children. After years of crocheting as a hobby, they have realized the benefits of donating their work to charity. Aside from helping others in need, it also gives them a chance to be more involved in supporting families within their community.

In their spare time, Patricia and Mary Beth crochet the hats, and then deliver them to the Right from the Start program in Taylor County for distribution. Right from the Start uses the hats as a supplement to their curriculum “The Period of Purple Crying.”

“The Period of Purple Crying” describes the developmental phase that some babies go through that is often referred to as colic; babies may resist soothing during these long periods of crying. The infant hats are given to mothers as a reminder to stay calm and relaxed. The ultimate goal is preventing any violent acts to stop the baby from crying.

Patricia and Mary Beth have been donating their crocheted infant hats for six months. So far 22 moms have received the hats for their infants during RFTS home visits. While Patricia and Mary Beth intend to continue their efforts, they encourage veteran crocheters to donate.

“You may not even have to start a new project to donate to charity. If you’ve been knitting or crocheting for years, it’s likely you have more than a few extra projects hanging around that you don’t use anymore,” pointed out Mary Beth.

Patricia added, “Whether it’s a blanket or way too many beginner scarves, donate those and give them to someone who really needs them.” ■



KNITTING FOR GOOD — Patricia Johnson and Mary Beth Lind offer their talents for the benefit of young moms and infants participating in the Right From the State home visiting program.

VIRGINIA RAISES AWARENESS OF HIDDEN SUGARS

By the Fairfax County Health Department

Who can eat 34 teaspoons of sugar in a day? Sound gross? How about consuming 91 teaspoons of sugar in an hour? Who can do that?

In Virginia, 33 percent of kids aged 5 to 19 consume large amounts of sugar every day – by drinking sugar-sweetened beverages. On any given day, 1 in 2 Americans consume at least one sugary drink, consuming on average 400 calories a day from beverages alone. There are 34 teaspoons of sugar in a 20-ounce citrus soda and 91 teaspoons of sugar in a 64-ounce Big Gulp. Yet, according to the American Heart Association, men should consume no more than 9 teaspoons of sugar per day, 6 teaspoons or less for women and 3 teaspoons or less for children. Health effects from consuming large amounts of sugar include an increased risk for heart disease, type 2 diabetes and obesity.

Director of Community Health Development and Preparedness, Sharon Arndt, recently attended the “Weight of the State” Conference focused on childhood obesity prevention held in Richmond. While there, she learned about a statewide initiative aimed to raise awareness about the health effects of sugary drinks. In its third year, “Rev Your Bev” is a youth-led movement of the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth that encourages local organizations to host awareness events throughout Virginia. This year’s statewide event was held May 13. Organizations that registered events on the “Rev Your Bev” website received tools including beverage table tents, demonstration sugar cubes, posters, surveys and informational handouts.

According to Sharon, this was perfect timing since the Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax’s coalition meeting, also slated for May 13, focused on addressing current issues in children’s health in the Fairfax Community. Clinical Public Health Intern Jamie Madji staffed the “Rev Your Bev” display and asked participants to take a short survey testing their knowledge on sugary beverages.

In addition, Public Health Nutritionist Christina Jaimés (WIC Annandale office) registered her “Rev Your Bev” event and will continue to use the tools her office received to educate WIC clients on the effects of consuming sugary drinks. ■



TOO SWEET — This poster tells the true tale of sugar in everyday beverages.

MARO HOSTS NUTRITION AND BREASTFEEDING MEETING FOR STATE AGENCY STAFF

By Kelly Mannherz, MS, CLC, MARO Nutritionist

MARO WIC staff hosted a meeting on June 17 and 18 at the Maryland WIC Training Center for approximately 30 WIC State Agency nutrition and breastfeeding staff from the Mid-Atlantic Region. The training provided the opportunity for State Agencies to get to know the MARO WIC staff, a few members of the National Office staff, as well as other State Agency nutrition and breastfeeding staff from the Region. A portion of the meeting focused on sharing best practices related to nutrition, breastfeeding, peer counseling, managing food lists, and preparing for the implementation of EBT. State Agencies also shared child retention strategies, including the Maryland WIC Program which presented their “Stick with WIC” transit campaign and Pennsylvania which shared details of their collaboration with the Head Start program. New Jersey WIC staff hosted a round-table discussion regarding Monitoring Evaluations of Local Agencies which allowed for States to compare and contrast their policies and procedures in this pivotal area. States were also given the opportunity to share nutrition and breastfeeding education materials as well as their authorized food lists and outreach materials.

Staff from the National WIC Office presented a session on “Managing Peer Counseling Programs” effectively and in compliance with the Federal Regulations, which was very well received. Information about the Substance Use Prevention Resource Guide was also shown along with a demonstration of how to use this new and improved tool. Additionally, the Branch Chief of the Special Nutrition Evaluation Branch presented an overview of the wide range of research studies going on within the WIC Program along with some preliminary results. MARO staff presented on the WIC Nutrition Services Standards and the new National UPC Database which will be helpful to State Agencies moving forward as they develop authorized product lists. Jim Harmon, the Director of MARO’s Special Nutrition Programs Division, discussed the importance of the Management Evaluation review process conducted by MARO, which was followed with a Q&A session where State Agencies could ask MARO any questions they had about the review and corrective action plan process. MARO is hoping to offer more face-to-face meetings in the future at the request of the State Agency nutrition and breastfeeding staff and due to the positive feedback received about this meeting. ■

NEW JERSEY’S NORTH HUDSON WIC PROGRAM CELEBRATES THE EIGHTH ANNUAL HEALTH FAIR, “SUMMER SAFARI”

On June 26, NJ’s North Hudson Community Action Corporation WIC Program held its eighth annual Health Fair. It was a jungle safari-themed health fair, complete with games, food, music, laughter and good health. To further capture the safari theme, the entire WIC staff wore staff-made safari t-shirts as they geared up for an official day of fun in the sun!

Members of the nutrition staff prepared educational and fun games for participants to play. Participants arranged safari images from slices of fruits before snacking on them. Throughout the day, nutritionists prepared cheese quesadillas and fruit salad for participants to enjoy. The fruit-infused water was a big hit at last year’s health fair, so the nutritionists decided to serve it again as a healthy alternative to juice.

On this hot summer day, there were various safari-themed activities available to promote healthy eating, physical fitness, and breastfeeding. Participants fished for fruit; apples, clementines and mini bananas were theirs to eat if they were able to catch it. They had their faces painted or posed with fun props to take silly pictures at our jungle photo booth. Others spun the nutrition wheel and received safari-themed prizes if they answered questions correctly. There was also a clown who made balloon animals and danced with the kids to encourage physical activity.

Members of the enthusiastic breastfeeding staff offered educational and fun breastfeeding-themed games, along with useful breastfeeding information and recommendations. They had wonderful free raffles and giveaways consisting of donated car seats, gift certificates from local vendors, and baskets filled with infant goodies.

We are thankful for contributions from Amerigroup, Partnership for Maternal and Child Health of NJ, Whole Foods, our local 7-Eleven store and General Mills for their generous donations that made this day possible. ■



GROUP SHOT — NHCAC WIC Staff at the 8th Annual WIC Health Fair.

PUERTO RICO WIC CELEBRATES “BREASTFEEDING AND WORK: MAKING IT POSSIBLE”

As part of the World Breastfeeding Week celebration, Puerto Rico WIC’s clinic in Jajuya hosted an event on August 11, at the UMET facilities. The activity was directed to all pregnant and breastfeeding WIC mothers. We were honored to collaborate with the Healthy Family Program from UMET.

The day began with a session titled, “Parenting Skills,” presented by Ms. Montesinos, LND. She was followed by Ms. Pellicier, an attorney, who made an excellent presentation concerning “Laws and Breastfeeding,” during which she emphasized the rights mothers have at the time of childbirth, postpartum, and when they return to work.

Mrs. Colón talked about the doula during labor, postpartum, and how to achieve a humanized childbirth at the hospital. For the closing session, Mrs. Nichole Oliveras, from Programa Separe, educated the group about the humanized childbirth and the types of procedures that may affect the start and duration of breastfeeding. Representative from The Program of Healthy Families were present and offered information on cloth diapers.

After all educational talks were finished, a snack was provided to all participants. Certificates of appreciation were then handed to employers who support breastfeeding. Mothers who successfully breastfed for six months or more were recognized as well, and each received a certificate. Infants who were breastfed for over a year were asked to come forward with their mothers, and the infants were given a graduation hat, followed by the graduation ceremony. ■



GRADUATION DAY — Graduation of breastfeeding mothers and breastfed infants 1 year and older.

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2015 CELEBRATIONS AT NEW JERSEY’S GATEWAY CAP WIC

Two celebrations were held by New Jersey’s Gateway CAP WIC during World Breastfeeding Week.

The first celebration was held at the Salvation Army Kroc Center in Camden, NJ on August 1. The event was co-sponsored by Gateway Community Action Partnership’s WIC Program and the Southern New Jersey Perinatal Cooperative.



NON-STOP FUN — A variety of activities were showcased at two World Breastfeeding Week events hosted by NJ’s Gateway CAP WIC.

Camden’s celebration featured 20 informational vendors, numerous social service agencies, K-Love (a local radio station), the Camden Adventure Aquarium and Amerihealth.

Food samples were given out by Campbell’s Soup in conjunction with Price Rite Supermarkets, and other donated food was served. Children and adults did Zumba along with a vibrant instructor, got their faces painted and were entertained by a local group of performers. Participants who visited each vendor to learn about various community services were eligible to win donated prizes in a series of drawings held throughout the day.

On August 8, a similar celebration was held at the Cumberland Mall in Vineland. This festival featured face painting for children, participants receiving valuable information from various vendors, and lots of take-home give-away items for participants. Prize drawings were also held and there were numerous lucky winners.

The mall location helped raise community awareness on the importance of breastfeeding and about agencies such as Gateway and the WIC Program, both of which help families with young children save, nourish, and grow healthy.

Prior to these two celebrations, breastfeeding participants at Gateway WIC offices were surveyed about their breastfeeding experiences. Two special prize drawings were held for those who filled out the surveys during World Breastfeeding Week. Information gained from these surveys will help us promote breastfeeding through our office displays and sharing their feelings and attitudes about breastfeeding with other WIC clients. Some participant responses to the survey question “the best thing about breastfeeding my baby is...” included “the convenience,” “the closeness and bond,” “how healthy he is,” and “the enjoyment for mother and baby.”

Gateway WIC supports and encourages breastfeeding every day, year round, but these special activities once a year improve visibility of breastfeeding and breastfeeding families to our staff, our participants and the entire community. ■

MICHELLE TAYLOR NAMED DELAWARE WIC BREASTFEEDING COORDINATOR FOR NEW CASTLE COUNTY

I graduated in 2004 with a Bachelor of Science in Food, Nutrition, and Dietetics, the same year I started my career as a WIC Nutritionist in Delaware. Over the last 11 years, I have had the pleasure of working in almost every WIC clinic in the state of Delaware; however I spent the last five years in the Hudson State Service Center WIC Clinic.



Michelle Taylor

I have breastfed my four daughters who have grown into healthy, intelligent young adults. This personal experience has allowed me to know and understand the importance of breastfeeding children and led me to become certified as an IBCLC.

In December 2014, I took on a new role in the State Agency as WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator for New Castle County. In this role and as a member of the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners, I am charged with educating and supporting parents and families to encourage informed decision-making about infant and child feeding.

I look forward to working with the Delaware’s WIC Peer Counselors where I hope to utilize a pragmatic problem-solving approach that is sensitive to the learner’s culture, questions and concerns. Further, I will strive to provide anticipatory guidance to promote optimal breastfeeding practices and minimize the potential for breastfeeding problems. Most importantly I plan to provide positive feedback and emotional support for continued breastfeeding and share current evidence-based information while collaborating with other health care professionals.

The work we do in WIC has the ability to save lives and I am so proud to do my part in this community of mother, infants, and children. ■

MARYLAND'S COMMUNITY CLINIC, INC. WIC SAYS, "BREASTFEEDING AND WORK, LET'S MAKE IT WORK!"

By Rose Cohen, RD, LDN, IBCLC
CCI-WIC Breastfeeding Services Manager

Maryland's Community Clinic, Inc. (CCI) WIC hosted its annual breastfeeding celebrations in the WIC centers. Each event had its own unique twist. This year, we were fortunate to have a State representative at each event. While every event was special, we were particularly excited and honored when special guests from the USDA came and presented CCI-WIC with the first ever Loving Support Award of Excellence.

To honor WIC's working mothers within the parameters of this year's World Breastfeeding Week theme "Breastfeeding and Work, Let's make it Work!" we made packets for our moms. The packets contained business cards for mothers to distribute to their employers, cards for mothers to proudly show their breastfeeding pride, business cards with the laws of License to Breastfeed in Public and License to Pump, and stickers for working mothers to put on their bottles of breast milk that say "Liquid Love" and "Mommy leaves her love for me."

At the celebrations, moms were able to share their breastfeeding experiences and win special prizes. We were thrilled that every event was successful with an amazing turnout and all had a great time! ■

VIRGIN ISLANDS WIC AWARDED FOR EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL GUARD

By Lorna Concepcion, MS, RD

The Virgin Islands Department of Health received several awards from the Employer Support of the Guard (ESGR) through the WIC Division. We were celebrated for being considered an excellent employer of National guardswoman SFC Charlene Bastian-Chinnery, who began her tenure with WIC as a clerk in the WIC clinic and has been promoted to System Analyst II with the VI WIC Program upon completion of her Masters Degree. Charlene is an Iraqi war veteran and has worked with VI WIC for over 28 years. VI WIC received the following awards on behalf of the VI Department of Health:

ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARD — Recognizes employers at the local level who have gone above and beyond the legal requirements of USERRA by providing their Guard and Reserve employees additional, non-mandated benefits such as differential or full pay to offset lost wages.

PRO PATRIA AWARD — Presented annually by each ESGR State Committee to one small, one large and one public sector employer in their state or territory. Recipients have demonstrated the greatest support of the Guard and Reserve employees through their leadership and practices, including adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard Reserves. This is the highest level award that may be bestowed by a State ESGR committee.

2015 FREEDOM AWARD SEMI-FINALISTS AWARD — The Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the WU Government to employers for their outstanding support of employees serving in the Guard and Reserve. Each year Guard and Reserve employees or a family member acting on their behalf, have the opportunity to nominate their employer for the Freedom award. SFC Charlene Bastian-Chinnery submitted the nomination for this award.

Virgin Islands WIC and staff were celebrated for their awards with an article in the *DOH This Week* newsletter. ■



READ ALL ABOUT IT — Virgin Islands WIC staff was celebrated in the DOH newsletter.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WIC HOSTS THIRD ANNUAL BREASTFEEDING EVENT

The District of Columbia WIC State Agency hosted its third Annual DC Breastfeeding Event this August in honor of National Breastfeeding Month. The event was held at the beautiful Mead Center for American Theater located in the Southwest waterfront in Washington, DC. The event celebrated breastfeeding families, featured the important role of family in breastfeeding and encouraged workplace support for mothers who are breastfeeding and returning to work. The event included exhibits, plenary and break-out educational sessions, and inspiring testimonials by breastfeeding WIC moms.

With more than 150 people in attendance, we were happy to welcome Mid-Atlantic Regional Office staff, Kelly Mannherz, Nutritionist and Jamie VanLeiu, WIC Branch Chief, to the help celebrate the day. Mudiwah Kadeshe, Vice President of the District of Columbia Breastfeeding Coalition and Mistress of Ceremonies of the event, opened the program and introduced the Department of Health, Community Health Administration, Senior Deputy Director, Dr. Anjali Talwalkar, as the first speaker. Dr. Talwalkar reported on progress and accomplishments to support breastfeeding in the District, but emphasized that disparities persist. The benefits of breastfeeding are not being realized by all moms and babies, particularly by African-American residents with lower income and education.

A highlight of the morning plenary sessions was the "Workplace Support Panel." Panelists included DC WIC State Director Christie Dorsey, who spoke of her experience juggling a career, being a mother and wife, and breastfeeding her three daughters. She also educated the audience on the multiple ways the WIC Program promotes and encourages breastfeeding. Autumn Saxton-Ross, Program Director for the National Collaborative for Health Equity, discussed her personal experiences of breastfeeding and going back to work. Sharon Swinburne, representing the DC Breastfeeding Coalition, spoke on the Coalition's workplace support awards presented each year in partnership with the Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition to local businesses. It was also announced that this year the Department of Health will be collaborating with the DC Breastfeeding Coalition on acknowledging employers for their breastfeeding support in the workplace.

The program continued with break-out sessions in the afternoon on the topics of "Community Engagement in Breastfeeding," presented by Yeshimabeit Milner, Field Manager of the Praxis Project, and "Common Barriers and Solutions," presented by Judith Campbell, RN and IBCLC at Children's National Health System. The audience reconvened for the rest of the afternoon to hear a lively testimonial by radio personality, Alfredas, a mother of three who is currently breastfeeding her one-year-old child. The last plenary session, "Breastfeeding is a Family Affair: Fathers' Supporting Breastfeeding Panel," was a collection of fathers and public figures who stressed the importance of family support in breastfeeding. The panelists included Robert Lee, National WIC Association, who discussed ways WIC can include fathers in their strategies to support breastfeeding. Brian Dorsey, a breastfeeding supporter and husband of Christie Dorsey, discussed his own experiences supporting Christie while she was breastfeeding their daughter. Kendall Brooks, a young WIC father, provided testimonial on his feelings toward breastfeeding as well as the need for community support. Ambrose Lane Jr., Chairman for the Ward 7 Health Alliance Network, expressed the need for community support of breastfeeding in Ward 7 and for all fathers. To close the program, Amelia Peterson-Kosecki, Bureau Chief of the Nutrition and Physical Fitness Bureau in the DC Department of Health, reiterated the main points of the program and gave thanks to the attendees and organizers of the event. Overall, the third Annual DC Breastfeeding Event was an overwhelmingly successful endeavor and the messages provided will inspire those in attendance to go out into the community and promote breastfeeding to all! ■

NEW JERSEY'S PASSAIC WIC CELEBRATES WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK

The Passaic WIC Program held its annual World Breastfeeding party on August 17 to celebrate the "Breastfeeding: Make It Work" theme. The party was planned and organized by Passaic WIC's IBCLC Ana Aguilar and Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Subha Murthy. Over 40 moms, family members and their exclusively breastfed babies attended. The clients enjoyed a new larger location courtesy of the Passaic Senior Center. This year clients enjoyed refreshments, prizes, face painting for the children and games. Araceli Pintle, Passaic's Health Educator, presented a Child Safety class. In addition, Subha shared her experiences as a WIC client, mom of three exclusively breastfed babies and her work as a WIC Peer Counselor.

We would like to extend special thanks to Amerigroup for sponsoring the refreshments and fruit baskets for raffle and Acelleron for donating a breast pump and breastfeeding cover-up for raffle. The Passaic WIC Program would also like to acknowledge and thank the entire WIC staff for their dedication in promoting and supporting breastfeeding. ■



FOR YOU — IBCLC Ana Aguilar (left) presents a certificate to WIC client Bianka Shahine.

"SOUTHERN MARYLAND REGIONAL HUNGER SUMMIT"

FOCUS ON LOCAL, NATIONAL HUNGER ISSUES

By Connie Riddick, MPH, IBCLC, Coordinator Southern MD WIC

On August 11, Connie Riddick, Program Coordinator for the Southern MD WIC agency, participated in the "Southern Maryland Regional Hunger Summit." Held at the College of Southern Maryland, several organizations in the region came together to discuss the unfortunate problem of child hunger being faced in our local area, state, and across the country.

Statistics show that child hunger affects one in every five children in America. The Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry Program connects children in need with nutritious food and resources on how to cook healthy, affordable meals.

Working in WIC, we serve many families that are food insecure. The work we do along with many of our partner agencies helps to serve and nourish one of the most vulnerable populations in our community - our children.

When many of the children we serve "graduate from WIC" at the age of five, and they go on to school, some families may wonder how they will continue to supplement their children's nutrition needs. This is where the other USDA Child Nutrition Programs come into play. The School Breakfast, Lunch, After School and Summer Food Service programs continue to help feed many children from low-income families every day.

The Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry program works with private citizens, government officials, business leaders, and others to connect families to various nutrition programs and to help encourage partnerships that minimize childhood hunger and make ending childhood hunger a national priority. While we all serve many, we could serve even more, as those in need underutilize many of the available programs for which they are potentially eligible.

To learn more about current initiatives with the Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry Program, visit <http://md.nokidhungry.org>.

In addition, the site has information detailing The Hunger-Free Summer for Kids Act. Introduced by five US Senators, The Act proposes alternative options like meal delivery or a monthly grocery credit (based on the WIC EBT model) that would allow states to reach more children during the summer months. The Act reportedly would help to reach millions more hungry children, particularly those who cannot easily access a Summer Meals site, such as those living in rural or remote communities. ■

CAPITAL AREA MARYLAND HOSTS REGIONAL HUNGER SUMMIT

By Maria J. Valencia-Carunungan
WIC Director, Howard County

On August 6, Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry Maryland organized the "Capital Area Maryland Regional Hunger Summit," held at University of Maryland, College Park. The summit brought together key stakeholders from Anne Arundel, Howard, Montgomery and Prince George's counties and engaged in collaborative planning to maximize access to school breakfast, summer meals, after-school meals, and nutrition education.

"Everything that we eat affects our health;" "Some kids don't have breakfast;" "It's hard to focus when you are hungry," were some of the key messages mentioned during the opening remarks by several regional delegates. The fact is one out of five kids struggle with hunger and three in five Maryland teachers say students regularly come to school hungry.

The event had three breakout sessions in the morning discussing breakfast, summer meals and after school programs. In the afternoon, Share our Strength discussed the Cooking Matters at the store campaign and encouraged organizations to sign up. There was an activity for the attendees on how to read labels and shopping tips.

The closing remarks were given by Congresswoman Edwards. She thanked everyone for all the hard work and stated that there is still a lot to be done to assure that kids are eating healthy. She said, "Parents of these children should not be blamed because they work hard to feed their kids." The summit was a success, bringing together different organizations to help end hunger in Maryland. ■

OLAF AND ELSA ATTEND PENNSYLVANIA'S LEBANON FAMILY WIC FARM TO TABLE FAIR DAY

By Sara Wingert, Nutrition Specialist
Lebanon Family Health Services WIC Program

Lebanon Family Health Services WIC Program, Lebanon, PA, had invited special guests for their Farm to Table Fair Day on June 30. Olaf and Elsa greeted WIC families as they arrived at the event and offered photo ops. This event was held to encourage participants to pick up and use Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) vouchers.

Risser-Marvel Farm Market set up a stand inside the office so families could immediately redeem their FMNP vouchers. The Lebanon County Dairy Princesses were also special guests and they handed out cheese sticks to all who attended. Other activities held throughout the day included face painting, games, and food demonstrations. We are happy to report over 200 families picked up FMNP vouchers during the event! ■



FAMILY PORTRAIT — Posing for a family photo are (left to right) Elyssabe Flores, Elsa (Tara Rivera), Joana Flores, Elianahis Flores, Olaf (Thomas Morrow), Einilette Flores and Evelyn Flores.

A MORNING OF PAMPERING FOR ROANOKE CITY, VIRGINIA BREASTFEEDING MOMS

The Roanoke City, Virginia WIC team held a party to recognize WIC mothers who successfully completed six months to a full year of exclusive breastfeeding. Nineteen exclusively breastfeeding moms, plus one grandmother and 13 children attended this bi-yearly event.



MOMMY & ME — A WIC participant and her child enjoy the day.

The party's theme was a "Morning of Recognition and Pampering." Crystal Craver, Nutrition Assistant, led a session on relaxation techniques and then taught a nutrition class on how to make smoothies using WIC food items. Each mom then had the option to make her own smoothie.

A local beauty school provided a manicure and a chair massage to each mother who was present at the event. Local businesses donated over \$3,000 worth of prizes/gift certificates for gift bags and door prizes. Each child made a craft at the craft table and took home a gift bag. A great time was had by all!

Special recognition goes to Michelle Hayden, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, for organizing the event. Helping her with the activities were Donna Gaither, Breastfeeding Program Coordinator; Lynn Fryer and Samaria Pope, Breastfeeding Peer Counselors; Crystal Craver, Nutrition Assistant; and Kathy Stadler-Thompson, WIC Supervisor Senior. ■

VIRGINIA'S HAMPTON WIC PARTICIPATES IN LITTLE HEROES AT HOME EVENT

On April 4, Virginia's Hampton WIC participated in the Little Heroes at Home 2015 Military Child Event at the Hampton Roads Convention Center. The event was in honor of local military children. This fun-filled "Candy Land"-themed celebration featured family-friendly activities, line dancing, entertainment, DJ, crafts, giveaways and much more. Children also had an opportunity to take a photo with the Easter Bunny and Candy Land characters. ■



AT THE READY — Denise Williams, Nutritionist Supervisor Senior, Hampton WIC (right), works with Artenser Parker, Nutritionist Assistant, at the event.

PUERTO RICO WIC INTRODUCES ITS NEW HEADQUARTERS

By Rayna Hichez Coste, LND

On June 1, Puerto Rico WIC headquarters began to operate on a regular basis after moving to their new facilities. The major reason for this decision was to make better use of our budget concerning expenses (rent was definitely one of them). After an exhausted analysis, we decided to move our setting and found the most suitable place to relocate. The new offices are now at a Puerto Rico government building located at #268 Ave. Luis Muñoz Rivera, World Plaza Building, 6th Floor, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico. The building globalizes a variety of public services provided to the general public, so we consider it as the perfect spot.

The move allows us to save 14% from our annual budget (saving over a quarter million dollars per year), which permits us to invest the savings in other areas of need within the program. All employees cooperated with the move and adapted easily to their new environment. We are happy to announce that with the move, we now offer new benefits to our staff, including free access to the building's parking area, which is in a more secure area. Additionally, all WIC offices are on the same floor, which enables employees from different departments to more easily interact, making our team closer with better bonding and fulfilling our mission and vision. ■



MOVING DAY — Everyone pulled their weight to make moving day a success.

60 FAMILIES RUN, WALK, BREASTFEED AT MARYLAND'S HARFORD/CECIL ANNUAL EVENT

By Marge Kleinberg, IBCLC

We had picture perfect weather for our annual breastfeeding celebration, a collaborative effort between the Harford/Cecil WIC Program and University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health. More than 60 families attended the family-oriented event, which included a kid's fun run, stroller/"baby-wearing" walk and the Global Big Latch On. Vendors included the Harford Dental Clinic, Harford County Public Library, Health Links with a car seat demo, Babywearing, Harford Holistic Moms Network, La Leche League, and many other mother/baby-oriented local businesses.

The day's events were largely successful thanks to our involved staff, volunteers, and local vendors. Pam Parris, an Upper Chesapeake Health volunteer, put in many hours organizing and preparing for the event. Our announcer, Jessica Rosenberger, RD, IBCLC, kept the activities moving right along. Registration stayed on track thanks to Lisa Chassagne, RN, IBCLC of Upper Chesapeake, former WIC Peer Counselor Angie Chrisikos, and former WIC Certifier Shana Skeffrey. Nikolina Bartholow, Lindsey Kozak and Glo Fleteau, RN, IBCLC organized and counted the breastfeeding moms for the Global Big Latch On.

After the Latch On, Stroller Strides led the warm up for the short walk around the grounds of the John Carroll School in Bel Air, MD. One of the walkers this year was State WIC representative Amy Resnik, IBCLC. Representatives from My Gym led the stretches for the Kid's Fun Run, while WIC staff Jess Donnelly, Brittany Fry and Melanie Rojas worked the fun run.

WIC Peer Counselor Sara Gonzalez kept the kids entertained with an obstacle course and face painting. Local restaurant, Magerk's Pub, donated bananas, water and pretzels, and WIC provided Smoothie King treats to cool off from the eventful day. Nikolina, Lindsey and Kelli Zentkovich, RD, LDN poured smoothies and kept the snack table stocked. The event ended on a high note when the winning door prizes were distributed with the help of some youngsters and everyone was able to visit with all the vendors. ■

CELEBRATING BREASTFEEDING ONE LATCH AT A TIME WITH PENNSYLVANIA'S MEADVILLE WIC

By Harmony Motter, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, PA Crawford County WIC Program

July 31, marked the Meadville WIC Program's fourth consecutive year as a registered site to hold "The Big Latch On." This event, which grows in popularity each year, is a means for breastfeeding women to join forces in support of all aspects of breastfeeding despite the existing cultural challenges these women often experience. At this event, held in recognition of World Breastfeeding Week, breastfeeding moms were able to meet with and talk to other moms who may face similar circumstances as their own.

"The Big Latch On" event was held at Roche Park in Meadville, PA at 10 am on July 31, and included 41 breastfeeding moms, five supportive dads, and 38 babies, who latched on for the one-minute count from 10:30-10:31 am. This global event was hosted by WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors Lori Gallagher and Harmony Motter, with assistance from WIC staff and volunteers.

The event featured guest speaker Mariah Post, La Leche League Leader of Meadville. Mrs. Post spoke on the overall benefits of breastfeeding and overcoming breastfeeding challenges. Children of all ages were entertained with face painting by Squeeze the Clown. Refreshments were available and included "Boobie" cupcakes. About 25 local businesses donated a variety of door prizes including a half-hour hot stone massage, \$50 restaurant gift certificates, and free tickets to the local theatre.

The event has grown over the years and has been moved from our office conference room to an outside public park/playground. The total results for the 2015 "Big Latch On" were 617 locations in 27 countries with 34,368 in attendance which included 14,459 breastfeeding moms and a new global latch on record — 14,889 babies latched! ■



WHAT A GROUP — There were 41 breastfeeding mothers in attendance and 38 babies latched at the 2015 Big Latch On.

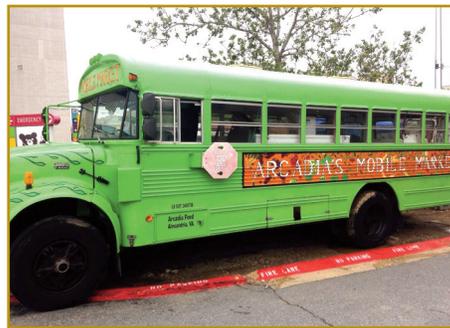
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WIC PROMOTES FARMERS' MARKETS AND THE PRODUCE PLUS PROGRAM

In the District of Columbia, WIC participants can increase their purchasing power at Farmers' Markets with Produce Plus checks to use in addition to their WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks. Locally funded, the DC Produce Plus Program (PPP) incentivizes consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the farmers' market season. Any DC resident participating in WIC, SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, or SSI is eligible to receive two \$5 checks once per day per market visit, as well as Military Active Duty and Reservist Classes E5 and below.

On June 3, the WIC Program at Children's National Health System kicked-off the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and the Produce Plus Program with a special event in partnership with the District of Columbia's Arcadia Mobile Market and DC Greens, a local non-profit organization working to support a healthy food environment. The event was led by WIC staff that included Nutritionist Kimberly Thompson MS, RD, LD and Clinical Technicians Toni Henderson-Jones and Courtney Monroe at the Sheikh-Zayed Campus. Children's National Health System is one of 19 weekly stops for the Arcadia Mobile Market, which serves neighborhoods where fresh produce is hard to come by. The DC Greens outreach team prepared healthy summer recipes that included seasonal fruits and vegetables from local farmers. WIC participants enjoyed the cooking demonstration and learned how to best utilize their FMNP and PPP checks to create healthy recipes. Families also received cookbooks and recipe cards at the event. The event was a great success and the Children's National Health System WIC Program looks forward to continuing local outreach events with other community organizations in the District of Columbia.

The DC WIC State Agency, in collaboration with the SNAP Ed program, celebrated National Farmers' Market week with a "Get Fresh Festival" on August 5 at the Columbia Heights Farmers' Market in Northwest DC. This vibrant neighborhood is home to a diverse population and the farmers' market is on a bustling corner close to a Metro station. Many residents begin to line up to receive Produce Plus checks as much as an hour before the market opens. WIC staff from Children's National Health Systems, Mary's Center, and Unity Healthcare greeted people and provided information about the program. SNAP Ed staff brought interactive games and activities on nutrition for the children and collaborated with Chef Herb Holden from the University of the District of Columbia to prepare a colorful and delicious vegetable stir-fry for people to sample.

DC WIC was pleased to welcome Connie Kramer-Walker from the MARO office to this fun event. We will be promoting eating a variety of fruits and veggies, as well as the WIC and SNAP Ed programs, at more "Get Fresh Festivals" at farmers' markets this season. Join us if you can! ■



FOOD TO GO — Arcadia Mobile Market at Children's National Health System provides fresh produce, cooking demos and nutrition education.

AND THE WINNER IS MARYLAND'S HOWARD COUNTY WIC "BREASTFEEDING IS A FAMILY AFFAIR" AD

By Kimberly Zisman
Nutrition Program Trainee, Howard County

Maryland's Howard County WIC teamed up with Herrmann advertising to create a breastfeeding campaign. The advertisements promoted our campaign for positive father and/or male support and participation in breastfeeding, as "Breastfeeding is a Family Affair." These remarkable advertisements were on display in the Columbia Mall, public transportation, and large posters within the health department and clinic. Herrmann Marketing annually nominates advertisements for national awards.

This year, the 2015 National Communicator Awards granted the "Design and Print Campaign" award to the Howard County Health Department for the design of our breastfeeding campaign advertisements, accompanied by a highly impressive silver trophy. ■



AWARD-WINNING — Catch a glimpse of the winning ad and its trophy. Congratulations to Howard County WIC.

**BREASTFEEDING CELEBRATED AT PUERTO RICO WIC'S
JUANA DÍAZ CLINIC**

As part of the World Breastfeeding Week celebration, the Puerto Rico WIC Program in Juana Díaz hosted an event on August 4 that was directed at all pregnant and breastfeeding mothers who are participants from our program. We had the honor to count Dr. Roberto Burgos, a specialist in Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Mrs. Elimarys Martínez, Lactation Counselor, among the presenters. They offered an excellent presentation which emphasized the importance of having an accessible and desirable labor or, as we like to call, "Gentle Labor." We understand it is imperative to understand the discussion of "Gentle Labor" in order to reach the goal of many mothers to have a natural labor and above all, breastfeed their newborns' successfully.

Having a good start while breastfeeding after labor is crucial, since they are the first days when mom and baby create their bonding, and by this becomes less challenging the process of breastfeeding. The entire staff in Juan Díaz clinic made sure all the participants and their guests received all the information emphasizing the initiative of breastfeeding at home and in their daily activities. The activity was one of great achievement and PR WIC team in general, is very proud of the efforts made by the staff. We want to recognize this great team from Juana Díaz Clinic for making this activity one of great success where the lives of more than 40 people were impacted. ■



BEST FOR BREASTFEEDING — PR WIC staff at the event are (standing, left to right) Lcda. Tamara Cintrón, Clinic Supervisor; Elimarys Martínez, Lactation Counselor; Betty Rivera, Clerk; Betsaida García, RN; Nahir Rivera, Clerk; Lcda. Viviana Guzmán, Operational Nutritionist; (sitting, left to right) Nitza Vega, Clerk, Elba Ortiz, Clerk; Teresita Droz, RN; center, sitting Nail Correa, Maintenance.

**PENNSYLVANIA'S MFHS NORRISTOWN WIC TEAM
HOSTS OPEN HOUSE**

Congratulations to PA's Maternal & Family Health Services (MFHS) Norristown WIC Team on hosting their first open house in their new location. Awareness with our partners and legislators is where it starts! #MFHSproud ■

TEAMWORK — MFHS Norristown WIC Center staff (front row, left to right) Linda Hernandez, Program Assistant; Melissa Gescek, Nutritionist/CPA; Cathy Rosario, Program Assistant; and Amy Walsh, Nutritionist/CPA; (back row, left to right) Midge Smithburg,



Senior Operations Manager; Sue Uhl, Senior Operations Manager; Jennifer McGlynn, Nutritionist/CPA; Kristen Barrett, Office Coordinator/Nutritionist; Michelle Goreski, Nutritionist/CPA; Shannon Hayward, Director of WIC Administration; and Bette Saxton, Executive Director/CEO.

**CELEBRATING MOMS AND MOMS-TO-BE IS A COMMUNITY AFFAIR
IN GRANT COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA**

Learning. Sharing. And a little fun. All three took place on April 30, as the Grant County Partners in Prevention hosted a community-wide baby shower. The baby shower was held at the Main Street United Methodist Church in downtown Petersburg, WV, and was open to first-time expectant mothers and mothers of infants less than six months of age.

The West Virginia University Grant County Extension Service and the Grant County Family Issues Task Force developed the idea as part of its child abuse prevention efforts. In addition to traditional baby shower games, mothers-to-be were treated to valuable educational information ranging from topics like car seat safety to safe sleep and shaken baby syndrome.

"We know that moms-to-be have many questions about their pregnancies. How they build or use support around them during their pregnancies plays an important role to help ensure they have healthy babies," said Kassidy Haslacker, Grant County Family and Nutrition Extension Agent. "We want to make local moms feel special today, but we also want to make sure they leave with plenty of information they can use while preparing for or raising their family."

Lucky participants received prizes such as a high chair, car seat and a pack-n-play, while everyone received a diaper bag with necessities, and a potted flower. The Ladies Circle of Main Street United Methodist Church even prepared and served a light meal.

Educational presentations were given by a variety of community-based organizations, including the Grant County Health Department, WV Tobacco Prevention Coalition, Pregnancy Crisis Center, Burlington Family Services, Parents as Teachers, WIC and the Family Resource Network.

Celebrating moms and moms-to-be in Grant County not only strengthens community supports, and protective factors for families, but instills the village it takes to raise a child. ■



REGISTRATION A SUCCESS — WIC Nutrition Assistant Tanya Wright is pictured with WVU Grant County Extension Agent Kassidy Haslacker as they prepare for the Community Baby Shower. WIC registered the participants for the Community Baby Shower through the Grant County WIC clinic.

PA's Bi-County Partners With Head Start continued from page 1

produce.

Head Start staff also discussed the "Mindful Harvest" program which teaches the importance of growing a garden. They educated clients about the value of planting, growing, and harvesting their own vegetables and fruits. They offered sample tastings of delicious mini-muffins made with fresh fruits and gave each child a \$2 token to use for their own special purchase at the market. Participants were encouraged by both agencies to shop for fresh, locally grown produce.

It was a fun day for all and a great success as agency staff from both programs worked together to heighten the awareness of WIC and Head Start, what they offer to the community, and the importance of healthy foods. There was an excellent partnership for this event! ■



WORKING TOGETHER — Joining forces were (seated, left to right) Nancy Bittner, WIC Director; and Betsy Huff, IBCLC, WIC Nutrition Ed/Breastfeeding Coordinator, (standing, left to right) Abbey Eschbach, Head Start; Laurie Huff, WIC Outreach/Breastfeeding Coordinator; Jamey Williams, AmeriCorps volunteer; Sally Rizzo, Head Start; Sam Reed, volunteer face painter; and Dakota Pace, volunteer face painter.

WEST VIRGINIA'S MID-OHIO VALLEY HEALTH DEPARTMENT WIC COLLABORATES FOR CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH

By Jennifer Habeb, Outreach Coordinator

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. It is a time to work together to prevent child abuse and neglect, and to promote the social and emotional well-being of children and families.

The Children's Listening Place Child Advocacy Center in Parkersburg, WV hosted a child abuse and prevention event on April 24. The community was invited to participate with local family support service agencies offering educational materials and outreach. A ceremony honoring seven local children who lost their lives as a result of abuse was hosted at the city building. Balloons were released to honor all the children who have been abused in Wood County throughout the past year.

The mayor, as well as representatives of local law enforcement and Child Protective Services, was in attendance. Awards were presented to individuals for their dedication in preventing child abuse. For example, two Parkersburg police detectives were awarded for their dedication and hard work which led to the arrest of a man who was wanted in the investigation of the death of a one-year-old child.

By participating in child abuse prevention efforts, the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department (MOVHD) WIC Program acknowledged the various things that citizens can do, and are reinforced through WIC nutrition services and customer service, to make children feel happy and healthy, and a part of a community. Just making a meaningful step – smile at a child when you go to meet them in the waiting area – can make that child feel like their self-worth is as good as everyone else which is a protective factor to prevent child abuse. ■



THE POWER OF FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES — Representatives of local agencies that can support young families, and are front-line defense in the prevention of child abuse, collaborate to honor the lives of child abuse victims. Pictured (left to right) are Amanda Lieving with The Arc of the Mid-Ohio Valley; Sheila Dayton and Jennifer Shinsky with Region 2 WV Birth to Three; Jennifer Habeb with MOVHD WIC; Shannon Hedrick with Region 2 WV Birth to Three; and Julie Deems with Unicare.

FARM TO PARTICIPANT INITIATIVE LAUNCHED IN MARYLAND'S HOWARD COUNTY

By Kimberly Zisman- Nutrition Program Trainee Howard County

MD's Howard County's Columbia Clinic hosted its very own farmers' market this year in which one local fruit and vegetable farmer set up their produce stand in the office parking lot. Howard County WIC Director Maria Carunungan worked steadily with the Health Department's local health coalition to justify the need for a farmers' market located right outside the office's door.

With previous years of sub-par redemption rates of Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons, we collectively brainstormed ideas to increase redemption. Bringing a farmers' market to the office came to fruition. Now participants have an opportunity to redeem their coupons conveniently before or after scheduled appointments. The first farmers' market kicked off on June 15 and continued on site every Monday, 11am - 3pm through September.

With wide varieties of delectable and locally grown fruits and vegetables, the convenience has proven to be a success with our county's participants. Not to mention, participants could redeem fruit and vegetable checks at this location as well, which served as another added bonus. ■



HOME GROWN — WIC participants now have the convenience of a farmers' market on-site at Howard County's Columbia WIC Clinic.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM NEW JERSEY'S BURLINGTON COUNTY WIC



KUDOS – Congratulations to Dr. Deepti Das, PhD, Burlington County WIC Coordinator. Dr. Das was recognized by Burlington County for Women of Leadership in honor of Women's History Month. Burlington County recognized Dr. Das' dedication and hard work.



READING IN BED — The Burlington WIC Program is again the lucky recipient of Book and Pajama donations from the Tabernacle Elementary School and the Moorestown Elementary School. The WIC clients look forward to the giveaways every year. The children enjoy the books during their visit to the WIC Office and take home a pair of new pajamas.



REACHING OUT — WIC staff have participated in various Health and Wellness Fairs such as the Annual Burlington County Farm Fair, South Jersey Medical Center Community Baby Shower, Burlington County Community Action Program's "Get Out Day-Healthy Parks, Healthy People National Get Outdoors" and their annual Health Fair, and McGuire/Fort Dix Joint Base Annual Baby Expo.

COOKING MATTERS STORE TOURS BIG HIT AT MARYLAND'S HARFORD/CECIL WIC

By Kelli Zentkovich, RD, LDN

This summer, Maryland's Harford/ Cecil County WIC Program kicked off a year of offering Cooking Matters at the Store tours for WIC parents. The Program partnered with Share Our Strength and the Maryland "No Kid Hungry Campaign," accepting a grant allowing WIC participants to receive grocery store tours and \$10 towards purchasing healthy foods.

The store tours offer WIC participants nutrition information, tips on saving money, help with purchasing WIC foods, and other resources to assist with grocery shopping and cooking healthy meals at home. After attending the tour, the participants have the opportunity to participate in the "\$10 Challenge," which allows them to practice their newly learned skills. Nutrition program trainees Lindsey Kozak and Nikolina Bartholow, along with Kelli Zentkovich, RD, LDN, plan and lead the store tours.

Harford County has already held three successful tours and has four upcoming tours planned for fall! ■

PENNSYLVANIA'S LANCASTER WIC HOSTS MOBILE MARKET MONDAY

By Natalie Oster, Nutrition/Outreach Coordinator

Pennsylvania's Community Action Program of Lancaster County WIC Program nutritionists were surprised when WIC participants brought back unused Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks. When asked why they didn't use the checks, WIC participants explained that "I didn't have the chance to get to the farmers' market," or "I wasn't sure what I could get with the checks," and "I forgot I had them." While Lancaster County is traditionally rich in agricultural, access to fresh produce is limited in South East Lancaster City. We wanted our families to be able to take advantage of the program that provides vouchers to buy fresh, in-season, PA- grown produce. In efforts to help improve consumption of produce and redeem FMNP checks, we partnered with a local farmer. We decided if WIC participants couldn't get to the market, we would bring the market to them. Initially, the farm stand was scheduled to be outside on the CAP lawn, three times a month during FMNP walk-in days. After participants picked up the FMNP checks, families could step right outside our doors, enjoy the Farmers' Market experience, and redeem their checks for fresh local produce.

The initiative was a big hit not only for our WIC families but also for our community members and staff. Neighborhood families and staff loved the convenience of the fresh produce and everyone was asking the farmer, "When will you be back again?" One WIC participant stated, "This is the best! I don't have a car and I would have had a hard time getting out to use my checks."

We heard the enthusiasm and this summer we started a program called "Mobile Market Mondays." The Lancaster County WIC Program, in partnership with a local farmer, hosted an on-site farm stand every Monday throughout the summer at the South Queen Street location.

"Having access to fresh fruits and vegetables is so important for families we serve, and I am excited that a local farmer is able to make his produce available in our community on a weekly basis," said Kim Sullenberger, WIC Director at the Community Action Program. ■



FARM FRESH — WIC participants love the variety of fruits and vegetables.

ARTIST AND FORMER WIC PARTICIPANT SHOWS HER APPRECIATION 30 YEARS LATER AT NEW JERSEY'S VNAHG PERTH AMBOY WIC

By Kathleen Schlesinger, VNAHG of Central NJ, WIC Site Supervisor

The Visiting Nurse Association Health Group (VNAHG) of Central New Jersey WIC Program hosted a mural painting event on June 17, honoring the late WIC Nutritionist Enid Blank. Jacqueline Baker, a former WIC participant and current local abstract artist of Perth Amboy, NJ, found a unique and inspiring way to honor Enid Blank, who made an everlasting impact on Jacqueline's life.

A mural painting event was held at the recently expanded Perth Amboy, VNAHG WIC location. The afternoon event was a huge success. Ten WIC participants under the age of five, along with their caregivers plus WIC employees, all helped to create a meaningful mural by painting their handprints, footprints, plus images of many different vegetables and fruits. The abstract mural reflected the community's "hands on" team work and the importance of the WIC Program to the public. The finished mural painting is now mounted and on display in the waiting room of the Perth Amboy location.

The joyful crowd extended their appreciation and gratitude through written comments such as "the event was beautiful," "it was so nice seeing my daughter paint for the very first

time;" "I enjoyed the time with my one-year-old and I hope the WIC Program has more kid's events in the future." Another WIC participant stated, "I found the idea of painting the hands and feet of my children wonderful because this event makes for a nice memory."

The event included the generous contributions of Home Depot which donated painting materials and supplies used for the mural, and the local business Bargain Man which donated 20 plain white t-shirts. WIC Supervisor Kathleen Schlesinger donated the KID Safe paints.

On August 6, Jacqueline Baker unveiled the painting she created in honor of the late Enid. In attendance was Perth Amboy Mayor Wilda Diaz, who presented Jacqueline with a Mayoral Citation in recognition of the painting and mural. Mayor Diaz stated, "I am honored to be here to recognize Jacqueline Baker and to remember Enid Blank." The mayor added, "the WIC Program goes a long way to help families who are going through tough times and people need to hear about WIC and the impact it has on people's lives even if it was more than thirty years ago." She continued by saying, "We appreciate and are thankful for



ARTIST IN RESIDENCE — WIC participants with painter Jacqueline Baker (center).

WIC's support economically, emotionally and nutritionally."

Along with the mayor was Enid's longtime friend and former VNAHG colleague, Joan Miller, MS, RD (retired), who attended the ceremony and shared emotional and touching stories. Refreshments were served and coffee was donated by WIC Generalist Betty Crespo.

The event truly symbolized the importance, impact and significance of the WIC Program to the people of the community and how it has touched so many lives through the years. The event was a joyous celebration which represented the caring, compassion and kindness of our WIC staff reinforcing our patience and expertise in serving the community. ■

HAMPTON, VIRGINIA WIC PROGRAM HOSTS BREASTFEEDING CELEBRATION

On August 6, 2015, the Hampton, Virginia WIC Program held its third annual community Breastfeeding Celebration at the Healthy Families Partnership in downtown Hampton, VA. The theme for this year's event was "Breastfeeding and Work: Let's Make it Work." The goal for the event was to promote breastfeeding as the gold standard in infant feeding and increase breastfeeding rates in the Hampton WIC Program and the City of Hampton.

A variety of groups participated and provided information about breastfeeding and community services to the 19 moms and moms-to-be who attended the event. Amber Chandler from Breastfeeding Mamas engaged the moms in a game of Breastfeeding Trivia, and Ashley Denney from Hampton Parks and Recreation talked about exercising and staying in shape before, during, and after pregnancy. The event concluded with a raffle drawing for a variety of prizes including a Boppy pillow and a Babies R Us gift card.

The Hampton Health District representatives included WIC Nutritionist Assistant Susan Lucas-Webb, Ruby Gatling from the car seat program, Megan DeWitt from the CINCH Breastfeeding Workgroup, Dental Hygienist Tracie Hill, WIC Nutritionist/Breastfeeding Coordinator Liz Burroughs, and our WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, Siobahn Rogers and Katie Foote. Representatives from Healthy Start, Southeastern Virginia Health System, Smart Beginnings, Langley AFB Lactation Consultant, Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia, the CHKD Milk Bank, Anthem Health Keepers Plus, Hampton Parks & Recreation, and Breastfeeding Mamas were also in attendance. ■



TEACHABLE MOMENT — WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors Katie Foote (left) and Siobhan Rogers share breastfeeding information with a mom and her baby.



BREAST IS BEST — Spreading the message about breastfeeding are (left to right) Katie Foote, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor; Siobhan Rogers, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor; and Liz Burroughs, WIC Nutritionist/Breastfeeding Coordinator

The deadline for the winter issue of MARWIC TIMES is October 22, 2015. Submit articles, photos/captions and calendar events to your State editor.



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