

# MARWIC

T · I · M · E · S

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

## PENNSYLVANIA'S NORTH WIC DIRECTOR WINS NATIONAL WIC ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP AWARD

By Barbara Jinar, CLE, IBCLC  
Outreach Coordinator, Adagio Health WIC Program

**L**inda Marie Kilby, PhD, RD, LDN, the Executive Director of Pennsylvania's NORTH (North Central Organized Regionally for Total Health), Inc. was awarded the 2011 National WIC Association Leadership Award. This presentation took place at the 2011 Annual National WIC Conference in Portland, Oregon. The award was presented to her in front of her WIC colleagues at the recent National WIC Association Awards luncheon. Dr. Kilby received this award for providing effective leadership to more than 200 employees. She has capably led the organization in meeting the goals of the WIC Program since 1986. NORTH WIC participant enrollment has grown from 22,000 in 1986 to more than 69,000 in 2010 with an active participation of 14,011 women, 16,258 infants, and 32,977 children as of November 2010.

Dr. Kilby is a strong advocate for staff development. All WIC employees are trained to promote breastfeeding and to provide support to pregnant and breastfeeding women enrolled for benefits. Six members of her nutrition professional team are currently enrolled in the Lactation Counseling training and the agency has recently hired two IBCLC-trained nurses to work on a part-time basis to provide more in-depth education and support. Nutrition Managers and WIC Office Supervisors work as a team to supervise staff working in the 15 WIC offices in Philadelphia County. Monthly meetings provide these staff members with supervisory and managerial training to help them more effectively work with the staff and participants in each of the offices. Dr. Kilby provides dietetic interns, medical school students, interns and residents, physician assistants, and nursing and nutrition students the opportunity to observe and learn in Philadelphia's culturally diverse WIC clinics.

Dr. Kilby is active in the National WIC Association and has served on the Cultural Diversity Food Package Committee; presented at three NWA

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*AND THE WINNER IS... — Linda Marie Kilby, PhD, RD, LDN (right) was nominated for this award by Karen Virostek, MS, RD, LDN, Adagio Health WIC Director (left).*



*PENNSYLVANIA PRIDE — Dr. Kilby is surrounded by Pennsylvania WIC colleagues in Oregon where she received the NWA Leadership Award.*

## PUERTO RICO BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELOR CONDUCTS BREASTFEEDING ORIENTATION IN SIGN LANGUAGE FOR HEARING-IMPAIRED MOMS-TO-BE

By Ruby-Lucía Mercury,  
Breastfeeding Peer Counselor,  
Canovanas WIC Clinic

**O**n Friday, July 22 there was a breastfeeding class for a special population, three pregnant women whose common bond is that they are all hearing impaired.

The story began as one of them came looking for an appointment in the Canovanas WIC Clinic. She knew that I knew sign language; and she asked that I be the interpreter. I fulfilled the task and then invited her to spend time in our office to talk about breastfeeding. She was very pleased with the class, told me she learned a lot and clarified doubts. I gave her my phone number for her to contact me. Days later she sent

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*SIGN OF THE TIMES — Canovanas WIC Clinic Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Ruby-Lucía Mercury (right) conducts a breastfeeding orientation in sign language for three hearing-impaired moms-to-be.*

## FALL 2011

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**L**ocal leaders, top officials from the USDA, HHS, and *Let's Move!*, including Kevin Concannon, USDA Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Service; Dr. Howard Koh, HHS Assistant Secretary for Health; Dalton Paxman, HHS OASH Regional Administrator; Patricia Dombroski, USDA FNS Regional Administrator; Diana Limbacher, USDA FNS Deputy Regional Administrator; Robin Schepper, Former *Let's Move!* Executive Director; Joanne Grossi, HHS Region III Director; and Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rollin-Blake, and over 350 public

health professionals joined together at Baltimore's Inner Harbor for the first-ever, regional *Let's Move!* Mid-Atlantic Summit.

Sharing; Systems; Strategies; and "Shelebrate!" These four "S" words kicked off the three-day event. Designed to foster dialogue between regional organizations and stakeholders engaged in advancing the health and well-being of America's children, the summit allowed several hundred participants from a wide variety of backgrounds, including community health workers, teachers, chefs, child-care providers, and public health policy advocates to come together for three days to turn energy into action!

Through general and concurrent breakout sessions, four key strategies for moving forward activities and policies aligned with the First Lady's *Let's Move!* initiative were delivered: Policy and Priorities; Outreach and Organizing; Public/Private Collaborations; and Public Education & Awareness. Summit speakers detailed programs and organizations that lend themselves well to these goals, and combine comprehensive strategies with common sense to ensure we are putting America's youth on the path to a healthy future.

The breakout sessions were divided into three tracks: Early Childhood; Healthy Schools; and Healthy Communities, which allowed participants to choose the area that best reflected their day-to-day work and interests. Building off the concept of speed dating, the summit also incorporated a fresh approach to sharing information: Speed Sharing. Designed around face-to-face information sharing and rotating discussions with fellow public health professionals to commit to producing tangible, long-lasting results, this repurposed forum enabled participants to quickly exchange ideas and network with those outside the confines of their everyday work life.

And in the spirit of "walking the walk," attendees also received numerous opportunities to participate in activity breaks and health screenings. A personal trainer from Diamond Cut Fitness conducted morning walks around the harbor in addition to 10-minute, fun, low-impact group exercise activities during session



**TOP BRASS** — Dignitaries attending the summit are (left to right) Dalton Paxman, HHS OASH Regional Administrator; Diana Limbacher, USDA FNS Deputy Regional Administrator; Robin Schepper, Former *Let's Move!* Executive Director; Dr. Howard Koh, HHS Assistant Secretary for Health; Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rollin-Blake; Kevin Concannon, USDA Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Service; Joanne Grossi, HHS Region III Director; and Patricia Dombroski, USDA FNS Regional Administrator.



**FULL HOUSE** — USDA FNS Deputy Regional Administrator Diana Limbacher shares her thoughts with the attendees.

breaks. The Medical Reserve Corps was also onsite to offer four simultaneous health screenings throughout the three days.

The summit was just the beginning. Participants, as well as those unable to attend, now continue to carry the ball forward via the *Let's Move!* Mid-Atlantic Google Group and website: <https://sites.google.com/site/letsmovemidatlantic/>. The group and site are the one-stop access points for accessing the presentations delivered at the summit, as well as the names of organizations and participants present, including links to their websites. Potential funding and grant opportunities are also available. Those interested are strongly encouraged to use this forum to share information, build coalitions, develop strategies for action, and, most importantly, "shelebrate" your passion and energy towards working together to reduce childhood obesity! ■



**REACH FOR THE STARS** — Among those taking a stretching break are (front, left to right) Robin Schepper, Former *Let's Move!* Executive Director; Patricia Dombroski, USDA FNS Regional Administrator; and Kevin Concannon, USDA Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Service.



**LADY OF THE CITY** — Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rollin-Blake addresses the crowd.



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Please submit articles or story ideas for MARWIC TIMES to your State Editor at the State WIC Office Address.

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## BREASTFEEDING MATTERS IN MARYLAND

By Sherri Sabol, RD, LDN, CLC, Chief, Breastfeeding Services Unit, Maryland WIC Program

The local agencies throughout Maryland planned and conducted activities that met the theme of World Breastfeeding Week, "Breastfeeding...a 3-D Experience...Talk to Me" and Breastfeeding Month, "Breastfeeding Support: Stay Connected!" Although breastfeeding is a special time between mother and baby, a strong support network makes all the difference in mothers achieving their breastfeeding goals. There is a third dimension, whether it be that of support from WIC staff, health care professionals, family, friends or the community at large. Whether that support is via face-to-face conversation, telephone, texting or internet access/other social media, our participants have a wide range of ways to access information today. Our goal is to find ways to provide support via many different avenues so we meet the unique needs of each of our participants.

This year, our local agencies throughout Maryland celebrated World Breastfeeding Week and Breastfeeding Month with many events including Breastfeeding Picnics, Breastfeeding Fairs, Breastfeeding Celebrations and Breastfeeding Walks. Each of these events focused on supporting our breastfeeding moms and celebrating their choice of giving their babies the best start in life.

Two events participated in the "Big Latch On" sponsored by La Leche League. The "Big Latch On" is an annual simultaneous breastfeeding event, when groups of nursing mothers come together and nurse at a designated day and time. The event lasts for one minute and the total number of participants is added up by witnesses to see whether a new record can be set. At the 2nd Annual Baltimore City Walk and Community Fair, Milk for Thought's Big Pink Bus was greeted by a group of cheering breastfeeding moms, babies, fathers and advocates. Milk for Thought is an organization travelling cross country over a six-week period to witness breastfeeding celebrations. The goal of Milk for Thought is to empower pregnant and breastfeeding moms by connecting them with breastfeeding support in their local area.

A special thank you goes out to each and every one of you for your commitment to supporting our breastfeeding moms and babies. Stay Connected!!! ■



**TIME OUT** — Taking a break from the action are Baltimore City staff (left to right) Michaela Tompkins-Davis, Ellen Gold, Renee Brown, Tiasha Taylor, Jessica Payton, Mary Kalscheur, and (kneeling in front) Amy Resnik from the Maryland State WIC Office.



**ENJOYING THE DAY** — Stopping for a photo are (left to right) Nicole Miller and Cindy Bowers from the Frederick County WIC Program and Maryland State WIC Director Jackie Marlette-Boras.



**WHAT A GROUP** — Latch on America Tour Bus and Baltimore City 2nd Annual Breastfeeding Walk attendees smile for the camera.

## CERTIFIED LACTATION SPECIALIST COURSE A MILESTONE FOR DC WIC

From June 16 - 20, District of Columbia WIC offered the five-day Certified Lactation Specialist (CLS) training course to WIC technicians, peer counselors, nutritionists, LA coordinators and SA staff. The course was open to all DC WIC staff interested in enhancing breastfeeding education skills and its primary goal was to prepare staff to counsel and teach breastfeeding mothers. The CLS training provided 46 contact hours to cover all content areas of the IBLCE blueprint. Board Certified Lactation Consultants Jan Barger, Linda Kutner, and Carole Peterson instructed WIC staff in assessment, evaluation, counseling and treatment the breastfeeding dyad. Since the CLS course, all staff have also been trained in the Ten Steps to a Breastfeeding Friendly WIC Clinic.

Feedback from these trainings has been excellent. WIC nutritionists and peer counselors were able to begin using their skills immediately; they have reported greater confidence in assisting mothers with initiating breastfeeding. The training has also enhanced their skills in lactation management, and DC WIC staff is well prepared to support and advise mothers in overcoming a variety of lactation challenges. ■



**PROPER INSTRUCTOR** — Jan Barger, RN, MA, IBCLC, FILCA; and Linda Kutner, RN, MA, IBCLC, FILCA discuss proper positioning for breastfeeding. Jan has worked in maternal-child health since 1972. Linda has worked in the pediatric and lactation field since 1967 and was the coordinator for the IBLCE/BSC research project for IBCLC certification.



**PRESENTING THE LATEST INFORMATION** — Carole Peterson, MS, IBCLC presents current breastfeeding research. Carole has 17 years of experience as a WIC clinic lactation consultant. She is currently the Breastfeeding Coordinator for the North Central Indiana Regional Lactation Center and is a member of the Expert Panel for the USDA/FNS WIC Peer Counselor Curriculum Update.

## WEST VIRGINIA'S WETZEL/TYLER WIC FAMILIES ATTEND BABY SHOWER

By Tammy Amos, Outreach Coordinator, Wheeling-Ohio, WV WIC

Wetzel County Center for Children and Families (WCCCF) held their first Baby Safety Shower on Friday, April 29. Invitations had been made available to participants of the Wetzel/Tyler WIC Program. Pre-registration was needed. There were 16 families represented and 31 total in attendance.

Guest speakers were Michelle Romanic, Ohio County MIHOW, on proper installation of car seats; Mary Klug, Wetzel/Tyler Parents As Teachers, with coupon clipping and ways to save money; and Regina Reynolds, Wetzel/Tyler WIC peer counselor, with the Advantages of Breastfeeding. All speakers presented valuable information and those in attendance appreciated the information. Several attending also commented that they had not really considered breastfeeding until they learned so much from Regina's presentation. Marsha Croasmun, WCCCF staff, stated that she had learned things about breastfeeding that she was never aware of. Great job, Regina.

There was a light luncheon provided, numerous door and game prizes, along with a \$25 gift certificate for each family in attendance. The reception room was beautifully decorated and inviting. Agencies that participated with information booths were: Tammy Amos, Outreach Coordinator Wetzel/Tyler WIC; Melinda Graham, Birth to Three; Connie Deluney, WVU Children with Special Health Care Needs; and Kim Fruner, Early Head Start. The entire event was deemed a success by all who attended. ■



**TELLING IT LIKE IT IS** — Wetzel/Tyler Peer Counselor Regina Reynolds makes an impression with her presentation on the importance of breastfeeding and unknown facts that the participants and other attending agencies found impressive.



**WIC ON DISPLAY** — Wheeling-Ohio Outreach Coordinator Tammy Amos (right), with Wetzel/Tyler Peer Counselor Regina Reynolds staffed the display at the Wetzel County Center for Children and Families Baby Shower.

## PA North WIC Director continued from page 1

Annual Education Conferences and is currently the president of the Pennsylvania Association of WIC Directors (PAWD) for the third time. Dr. Kilby served three separate terms as PAWD Treasurer and Secretary and actively participated in the planning for Pennsylvania's web-based WIC computer system, the first in the country. She continues to be a vanguard for best practices in computer applications, clinic procedures, staff-participant ratios, productivity standards, and advance planning for PA EBT system. Dr. Kilby is a leader among the PA local agency directors and mentors all new directors. She is also serving as member of the American Public Health Association committee to review abstracts for the 2011 annual conference.

In Philadelphia, Dr. Kilby serves on several local committees: Healthy Start Advisory Board, Philadelphia Department of Health; Maternal Mortality Review Board, Philadelphia Department of Health; Postpartum Smoking Cessation, Fox Chase Cancer Center; Community Outreach Committee, Temple University School of Dentistry; North 22nd Street Merchants Association; and Albert Einstein Medical Center Pediatric Advisory Board.

Dr. Kilby received her BA in Home Economics from Columbia Union College, Takoma Park, MD; completed her Dietetic Internship at Howard University, Washington, DC; obtained her MS in Health Administration from St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia, PA and recently received her PhD in Public Health from Walden University, Minneapolis, MN. She has received a variety of honors including ADA's Young Dietitian of the Year, NWA Appreciation for Outstanding Service and several Certificates of Appreciation Awards from USDA and PA.

Congratulations to Dr. Kilby on receiving this outstanding award. ■

## NEW JERSEY'S MIDDLESEX COUNTY WIC INSTALLS KIOSK TO ENHANCE NUTRITION EDUCATION

New Jersey's Middlesex County WIC Program, managed by the Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey and under the director of Program Managers Robin McRoberts, MS, MBA, RD and Judy Wajih, MA, RD, CHES, installed a kiosk in June at the location serving the highest number of participants – New Brunswick.

The staff members – nutritionists, DTR and generalists – welcomed the new tool with open arms. Participants used the kiosk with the help of the DTR. During the day, the most requested lessons at the kiosk were about vegetables and fruits and Iron. The first participant to use the kiosk was Concepcion Angel, mother of two, who remarked, "The Iron lesson was easy to understand and it benefits parents because we can learn at our own pace. The colorful pictures hold my attention and enable me to more easily comprehend the lesson."

Nutritionists were pleased to have this tool that will help them during busy times such as check pick-up and certification days, and especially when participants arrive without appointments. ■



**GATHER 'ROUND** — Surrounding the kiosk are (left to right) WIC Nutritionists Corrine Santos-Hernandez, MHA; Simranjit Kaur, Tanzeela Qureshi and Sarah Reilly.



**LEARNING AT HER OWN PACE** — Concepcion Angel is completing her nutrition education about Iron, helped by Julia Sotomayor, DTR, while her children, Isaias and Giovanni, attentively look on.

**DELAWARE WIC CELEBRATES  
WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK**

To commemorate World Breastfeeding Week, the Delaware WIC Program held an Open House at Dover Downs Hotel and Casino on August 4. This annual event engages and promotes communication on various levels among key players in lactation and celebrates Delaware's successes while identifying opportunities for growth.

Guided by the theme, "Talk to me! Breastfeeding – a 3D Experience," Dr. Karyl Rattay, DPH Director, opened the event by addressing the breastfeeding milestones in the Delaware WIC Program. Since the implementation of the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program, rates have increased in breastfeeding from 34% in 2005 to 64% in 2010; while exclusive breastfeeding rates increased from 34% in 2005 to 43% in 2010. The Delaware WIC Program has also set up a dozen breastfeeding rooms throughout the state and developed the DPH breastfeeding policy, currently in the final stages of approval.

Jennifer Goldbronn of the Baby Behavior Project in California delivered the keynote address. This seminar provided information concerning normal infant behavior which may result in better compliance with infant-feeding recommendations among WIC participants with fewer infants whose weight-for-age exceeded the 95th percentile. Baby Behavior education may also be important in efforts to prevent childhood obesity by empowering parents to better understand the reasons for their infants' behavior and to reduce parents' unrealistic expectations that may lead to inappropriate feeding.

Physical activity was also incorporated before lunch with a session of Jazzercise led by Marianne Magee, a certified instructor.

The Delaware WIC Program Community Breastfeeding Partnerships sponsored displays providing free breastfeeding literature including: the Bayhealth Foundation (Kent General Hospital and Milford Memorial Hospital), the Westside Family Healthcare Center, the Latin American Community Center, the private practice of Obstetrician Dr. Cecil Gordon Jr., and Christiana Health Care Systems. In addition, Medela sponsored five gifts that were raffled during the event.

Kudos to Ida Lawson and Desiree Garcia for this excellent celebration! ■

**PENNSYLVANIA LOCAL WIC AGENCIES RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE**

By Bonnie J. Mellott, Education/Outreach Coordinator, PA WIC State Agency

Pennsylvania WIC State Agency applauds their 24 local WIC agencies for their commitment to provide the best service possible to WIC families, during a climate where they are doing more with less. PA WIC recognized four local agencies and five local agency WIC staff for outstanding performance during the WIC Directors meeting in June.

- North Central PA Regional Planning and Development Commission (NCPRPDC) WIC Program ranked in the top five for six of the eight health indicators among the 24 local WIC agencies on the 2009 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance Report.

- United Neighborhood Facilities Health Care Corporation (UNFHCC) – Erie County WIC Program was the local WIC agency which showed the most progress in improving breastfeeding incidence and lowering supplemental formula issuance, based on trend data since May 2000.

- Home Nursing Agency WIC Program was recognized for an exemplary Local Agency Program Review for fiscal years

2009/2010 with no corrective actions needed in the Program Monitoring Section.

- Bi-County WIC Program was also recognized for an exemplary Local Agency Program Review for fiscal years 2009/2010 with no corrective actions needed in the Program Monitoring Section.

- The State Agency Retail Store Program Integrity Unit looked at the fiscal years 2009/2010 Local Agency Management Reviews and acknowledged the local agencies with no corrective actions needed. Awards were presented to the following WIC staff (not available for photos), who are instrumental in training and working with the local agency retail stores:

- Darla Hubert, Retail Store Coordinator, Mon Valley Community Health Services, Inc.
- Debbie Wilson, Retail Store Coordinator, Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc.
- Dottie Bowman, Retail Store Coordinator, Hamilton Health Center, Inc.
- John Merola, Retail Store Coordinator, Adagio Health
- Nancy Hampson, Retail Store Specialist, Community Action Southwest

All award winners received a Certificate of Excellence and a Positive Promotions, Inc. pin stating "Making a Difference in The Lives of Others." Thank you all for your dedication and commitment to WIC families! Your efforts make a difference! ■



**UNITED NEIGHBORHOOD FACILITIES HEALTH CARE CORPORATION (UNFHCC) – ERIE COUNTY WIC PROGRAM** — (left to right) Theresa Wirtner, CLC, UNFHCC Nutrition Ed/Breastfeeding Coordinator; Shirley H. Sword, MS, RD, LDN, PA State Agency Acting Director; and Debora Jamison, UNFHCC WIC Director.



**NORTH CENTRAL PA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (NCPRPDC) WIC PROGRAM** — (left to right) Julie Kasnierski, RN, NCPRPDC WIC Director; Shirley H. Sword, MS, RD, LDN, PA State Agency Acting Director; and Rebecca Brickley, CLC, NCPRPDC Nutrition Ed Coordinator.



**BI-COUNTY WIC PROGRAM** — (left to right) Shirley H. Sword, MS, RD, LDN, PA State Agency Acting Director and Nancy B. Bittner, Bi-County WIC Program Director.



**HOME NURSING AGENCY WIC PROGRAM** — (left to right) Shirley H. Sword, MS, RD, LDN, PA State Agency Acting Director and Diana Wallace, RN, Home Nursing Agency WIC Director.

**MARWIC TIMES Calendar**

- The deadline for the Winter issue of MARWIC TIMES is October 21, 2011. Please submit articles, photos and calendar events to your State editor. No Polaroid pictures. 5" x 7" digital photos (saved as JPGs, please) preferred. All photographs must include a detailed caption.

## USE OF SUPPLEMENTS CONTAINING FOLIC ACID AMONG PUERTO RICO WIC PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS IN 2010

By Vilma E. Ortiz Santiago, State Plan and Policy and Procedures, PR WIC Program

### Background

Birth defects are one of the leading causes of infant mortality in both the mainland United States (1) and Puerto Rico (2). Neural tube defects (NTDs) are serious birth defects of the spine and brain; two of the most common NTDs are spina bifida and anencephaly. In order to reduce the risk for having a pregnancy affected by NTDs, the US Public Health Service (1992), the Puerto Rico Department of Health (1994) and the Food and Nutrition Board of the Institute of Medicine (1998) recommended that all women of childbearing age capable of

becoming pregnant consume 400 mcg of folic acid daily (3).

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides nutritious food, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referral to health care and social services for low-income, nutritionally at risk, pregnant, and postpartum women, and for infants and children under the age of five. The Puerto Rico Birth Defects Surveillance and Prevention System (BDSS) established a partnership with the WIC Program for promoting utilization of data in public health action for birth defects

prevention. The WIC Program has been a vehicle for dissemination of folic acid and other birth defects prevention messages. The BDSS shares with WIC directors and nutritionists updated folic acid and birth defects prevention information through presentations and statistical annual reports. Also, the BDSS provides educational materials to be distributed in the WIC Program Clinics. A survey was conducted in 2010 to assess the prevalence of folic acid supplements consumption among program WIC participants.

### Methods

A short questionnaire was designed to collect data using four folic acid use and knowledge questions included in the Puerto Rico Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), plus two questions to determine the women's perception of when to take folic acid and if they took folic acid at least one month prior to pregnancy. The questionnaire was administered twice, in June 2010 and in November 2010, to all the non-pregnant participants of the Program WIC that visited the Clinics during those months. The participants were assured that the information provided was confidential. The survey was completed by themselves without writing any personal identifiers. The completed questionnaires were brought to the BDSS office. The data was entered to an MS Access database to be compiled and then analyzed.

### Results

A total of 6,628 surveys completed were received at the BDSS Office. **Table 1** shows

**Table 1- Percent of Participants per Health Region**

Region	Surveys		Total
	June 2010	November 2010	
CAGUAS	872 29.4%	1019 27.8%	1891 28.5%
BAYAMON	729 24.6%	582 15.9%	1311 19.8%
PONCE	671 22.6%	759 20.7%	1430 21.6%
FAJARDO	101 3.4%	164 4.5%	265 4.0%
MAYAGUEZ	214 7.2%	297 8.1%	511 7.7%
ARECIBO	274 9.2%	462 12.6%	736 11.1%
METROPOLITAN	108 3.6%	376 10.3%	484 7.3%
Total	2969 100.0%	3659 100.0%	6628 100.0%

the percent of participation per health region.

The results of this study by intervention are summarized in **Table 2**. This study had a low response rate (18% in the June 2010 intervention and 22% in the November 2010 intervention), but the results of both interventions were consistent. The mean age of the participants was 26 years old. When asked if they have heard about folic acid, 97-98% responded affirmatively and 30% of the participants reported to take it daily. Regarding folic acid knowledge: 44% of the participants stated that the vitamin was for all women 10 to 50 years old, 31% for woman before they get pregnant, and 62-65% knew that folic acid helps for NTD prevention.

It's still a concern that 24% of the women surveyed believe that the folic acid vitamin is to be used after one is pregnant, 1% think is not necessary to take it and 37% of the participants are still not clear of the benefits of the vitamins or why they should take it.

### Limitations

This study had a low response rate and the results may not be representative of the WIC Program entire population. Also, any alteration in the implementation of the study at the Regions would be reflected in the results of the study.

### Conclusions

Approximately one third of the women surveyed consumed folic acid supplements daily. As expected, the daily folic acid supplements intake reported by the WIC Program participants is a little bit higher than the one reported by the 2008 Puerto Rico BRFSS – non-preg-

**Table 2 - Summary of WIC Program Folic Acid Surveys Results**

Description	June 20, 2010	November 2010
Sample (n)	2,970	3,659
Response Rate	18% (2,970/16,419)	22% (3,659/16,451)
Participant's age	Mean: 26 Median: 25	Mean: 26 Median: 25
Have you heard about folic acid vitamin? <i>Yes</i>	97%	98%
Did you take any vitamin pills or supplements that contain folic acid daily? <i>Yes</i>	30%	30%
When should a woman take folic acid? <i>From 10 to 50 years old.</i>	44%	44.4%
Some health experts recommend that women take 400 mcg of folic acid vitamin daily <i>to prevent birth defects.</i>	65%	62%
Did you take any vitamin pills or supplements that contain folic acid daily <u>at least one month before getting pregnant?</u> <i>Yes, daily.</i>	33%	36%

nant women 18-44 years old (30% vs. 20%), and the results from the bi-annual PRAMS-like survey of the Department's of Health's Mother, Child and Adolescents Health Care (MCH) Division, where 20.4% of the mothers interviewed in 2010, reported to have consumed folic acid daily at least one month prior pregnancy. However, the intake reported by the WIC Program participants is still lower than the reported by the women of childbearing age in the mainland United States (30% vs. 40%) (5).

Although most women surveyed have heard about folic acid vitamin, there is still uncertainty about when and who should take folic acid vitamin and what benefits does it have. Therefore more efforts to promote the use of folic acid and to increase birth defects prevention knowledge among the WIC Program participants are needed. ■

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## UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA ART STUDENTS DESIGN AND PAINT MURAL FOR FAYETTE COUNTY WIC OFFICE

By Betty Zackal, RN, FCCAA, Inc. WIC Director

Pennsylvania's Fayette County Community Action Agency (FCCAA), Inc. WIC Program had a wall in their new office space that would be perfect for a mural! So, WIC Director Betty Zackal, RN, contacted a local high school art teacher to see if she had students able to design and paint a WIC art mural as a community service project. The art teacher, Rebecca Gartley, took the challenge to the High School Art Club.

Before the students began the design work, Ms. Gartley informed the students about the mission of the WIC Program and who the program helps. Then the art students started designing individual ideas for the mural. Katie Burgess, a member of the Uniontown Senior High School's Art Club, designed the mural selected for the project. She thought it would be great to have images of animated fruits and vegetables exercising. D'Lavell Eilam and Sara Christopher, two other art students, joined Katie to paint the mural at the Uniontown WIC office. All the students said it was great to do something for the community.

Rebecca Gartley, Uniontown High School art teacher, coordinated the community service project with FCCAA WIC Director Betty Zackal, and it was a huge success! ■



*WIC WORK OF ART — Uniontown Senior High School Art Club members (left to right) D'Lavell Eilam, Katie Burgess and Sara Christopher painting the WIC mural.*

## NEWS FROM VIRGIN ISLANDS WIC

By Lorna Concepcion, MS, RD

### Virgin Islands WIC Gear Up For EBT

The Virgin Islands WIC Program recently held meetings with its vendors in both districts to inform them of the upcoming plans to introduce the EBT system in the Virgin Islands. VI WIC, which uses the WIC on the Web (WOW) electronic system developed by the Maryland WIC Program, is working together with Maryland WIC to implement its EBT system.

Accordingly, Maryland EBT Project Manager Joe Ferrara, along with Maryland Vendor Manager James Butler, led the session for the vendors. Most of the vendors were pleased that this system would be implemented as it was generally felt that it would improve the receipt of WIC benefits.

### Virgin Island WIC to Introduce Kiosks for Nutrition Education

VI WIC hopes to introduce kiosks to provide nutrition education for its clients in the upcoming fiscal year. The initiative was patterned off of New Jersey WIC's Ed on Line and it was funded through Operational Adjustment funds. This is one way that the Virgin Islands is attempting to help participants receive their secondary nutrition education contacts. Technicians from Source Technologies, the hardware (kiosk) supplier, were down in the VI installing the hardware.

One young WIC participant, Adonte Heskey, was so fascinated by the kiosks that he kept coming around the kiosks until he was allowed to test the screen. No doubt we know he is surely in the technology age. VI WIC is working on the final software applications, provided through Advanced Software Development Corporation, so that the kiosks can be launched within the new fiscal year. ■



*ME FIRST!! — Curious WIC participant Adonte Heskey could not wait to try the kiosk as Rudy Ratajc looks on.*



*EBT ON THE WAY — Maryland EBT Project Manager Joe Ferrara (rear, left) and Maryland Vendor Manager James Butler (rear, right) lead an introductory meeting with Virgin Islands WIC vendor representatives.*



*READY, SET, GO — Bob O'Neil of Source Technologies performs a demo on the kiosk.*

## FIRST SATELLITE WIC CLINIC IN PUERTO RICO OPENS

On July 6, the Secretary of the Department of Health of Puerto Rico Government, Dr. Lorenzo Gonzalez Feliciano, inaugurated alternate offices of the WIC and Medicaid Programs in Plaza Las Americas Mall (in the same site of the Registration Demographic that have provided services in the Mall). This effort is continuing with the public policy of transforming the services of the Government for greater access, convenience and flexibility to the population.

"Through these alternate offices operating in the same schedule of the Mall, we do you justice to thousands of people who by their styles and times of life today is more convenient for them receiving services from these new offices during extended hours and with ample parking," said the Secretary. "In addition, we take appropriate measures to ensure the security and confidentiality of the population during the process to access these services."

The Secretary announced the opening of the first Satellite WIC Clinic, which will be used by families that cannot attend the regular hours of the WIC Clinics in Puerto Rico.

The objective of expediting and facilitating the provision of services, and making possible for applicants/participants to receive the Program benefits within the mandatory period of time, the hours of operation are extended during the mall service hours from Monday to Saturday, 9 am to 9 pm, and on Sundays, 11 am to 7 pm. ■



**TAKING A TOUR** — Dr. Lorenzo Gonzalez, Secretary Puerto Rico Department of Health (center) and Carmen Caballero, WIC Acting Director (right) inspect areas of the Satellite WIC Clinic.



**WELCOME** — Addressing the group from the podium is Margarita Casalduc Department of Health Communications Office Director. Sitting at the table are Dr. Lorenzo Gonzalez, Department of Health Secretary; Wanda Llovet, Registration Demographic Director; Carmen Caballero, WIC Acting Director; and Miguel Negron, Medicaid Director.

## HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT PENNSYLVANIA'S SOUTH CENTRAL COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM WIC

By Alicia Miller, Outreach Coordinator, SCCAP, Inc.

### Gettysburg WIC Honors Breastfeeding Mothers

At the Gettysburg WIC office, May and June were a busy time. On the morning of May 27, we held our first annual Breastfeeding Mothers Recognition Luncheon. Speakers for our event included a professional from our community who shared her experience with working and breastfeeding; our director gave positive affirmation to our hard-working breastfeeding mothers; a father of a breastfeeding family shared words of admiration, and a local Nurse Midwife was honored for 25 years of breastfeeding support to our community. A local fellowship hall was generous enough to provide space for our celebration, and many businesses in the community kindly donated products and services to give to our mothers to make them feel important, appreciated and recognized for their amazing accomplishment of breastfeeding for at least one year. Great job ladies!



**SALUTE TO MOMS** — Adams County Peer Counselors Elizabeth Spicer (left) and Elizabeth Parone (right) enjoy the Breastfeeding Mothers Recognition Luncheon with Elizabeth's daughters Bella and Sydney.

### Farmers' Market Festival

June 7 was our second Annual Farmers' Market Festival. Nutrition Assistant Tracy Lochbaum donned her peapod costume and thrilled arriving children as she guided families into the festival entrance. From 9 am until 3 pm, local farm stands set up in the WIC parking lot, and were available for participants to shop for local produce with the farmers' market coupons they had received that day from WIC. The WIC office had issued 225 sets of checks for 153 families at the festival.



**SMOOTH MOVES** — Pat Meyers, RN/CPA from the Gettysburg WIC office demonstrates how to make nutritious smoothies with WIC foods.

Many activities were available, including a booth for children encouraging them to try games to learn the benefit and fun of physical activity. Ribbons were awarded to all who participated. Face painting, coloring and food prep demonstrations were also provided. Both the cereal snack and fruit smoothie featured at the demo showcased WIC foods, and both were easy to prepare and fun to eat. Bags containing fun and informative hand outs were provided to each family. Each bag also contained a fun physical activity DVD for toddlers, the book "The Two Bite Club," and applesauce samples generously donated by Motts. Included in the festivities was a representative of New York Life Insurance, who set up a booth where parents could have their children fingerprinted and have child identification cards made up for free. He was a busy man the entire day! Everyone - participants and staff alike - had a great time at the festival! ■

## PENNSYLVANIA'S FAYETTE COUNTY WIC AGENCY HOLDS ANNUAL FAMILY FUN FEST

By Betty Zackal, RN, FCCAA, Inc., WIC Director

Fayette County Community Action Agency (FCCAA), Inc. WIC Program in Uniontown, PA presented "The Incredible Egg" as their theme for the 13th Annual Family Fun Fest held at the Fayette County Fairgrounds on June 18. Kim Hawk, Administrator for FCCAA, brought her chicken, Daisy, for the children to see and touch. WIC staff members Amy Griffiths, Nutritionist; Pam Muha, WIC receptionist; and Betty Zackal, WIC Director, assisted children in making an "Egg-tra special, egg-mazing" Father's Day card with stickers, glitter, and egg-shaped cut-outs. Handouts supplied by the American Egg Board were distributed explaining the vitamins and minerals in the "egg-cellent" food with its nutritional value.

More than 2,500 children and adults attended the event and they enjoyed table presentations from over 36 service organizations. Live entertainment of children's music, an array of children's activities and free food completed the day of great family fun. And our "Daisy" was a hit with the kids! ■



*FUN WITH WIC — Tony Lewis (left) is enjoying the activities at the WIC display with the assistance of (right to left) FCCAA WIC Nutritionist Amy Griffiths and FCCAA WIC Receptionist Pam Muha.*



*WHO'S A CHICKEN? — FCCAA Administrator Kim Hawk holds her chicken, Daisy, while Yelena Griffiths (daughter of WIC Nutritionist Amy Griffiths) looks on.*

## MARYLAND'S GREATER BADEN WIC BENEFITS FROM COOKING MATTERS PARTNERSHIP

By Jackie Melton, RD, Coordinator, Greater Baden WIC Program

In April, Maryland's Greater Baden Medical Services (GBMS) WIC Program received a small grant from Share our Strength's Cooking Matters. The funding was used to support Back to Basics cooking demonstrations and classes. The project was designed to equip GBMS WIC clients with the basic skills to prepare healthy meals and snacks. Clients were introduced to low-fat methods of cooking, label reading, portion control, and the use of herbs and spices to enhance the taste of foods.

The demonstrations were conducted by Chef Nadine Bailey-Joyner, who enthusiastically shared her recipes and culinary ideas for seven weeks at check pick-up appointments. The feedback from the demonstrations was fantastic. Clients gave testimonials on how they were able to make changes in their diets that impact their entire family. Other comments included "the food was tasty," "recipes were easy to follow," and "my child really loved the chicken fajitas and the fruit smoothie!" And they are still asking "When will we have another cooking class?"

Our clients are still able to benefit from Chef Nadine's expertise, because she finished out the project by conducting six cooking demonstrations and tours at our local WIC approved Farmers' Market.

A job well done by the GBMS WIC staff for making this project run smoothly during check pick-up appointments and assisting Chef Nadine at the Farmers' Market. ■



*COOKING 101 — Helping in the kitchen are (left to right) Donnita Baccous, Chef Nadine Bailey-Joyner, Greater Baden WIC Coordinator Jacqueline Melton, and Lekeshia Brown.*

## FOOD BANK OF SOUTH JERSEY HITS THE ROAD FOR WIC CLIENTS

By Kathleen Mahmoud, Gloucester County WIC Program Coordinator

Recognizing the need for assistance with online Supplemental Nutrition Program Assistance (SNAP) applications, staff from the Food Bank of South Jersey (FBSJ) has been traveling to local WIC agencies in Camden, Gloucester, Salem, and Burlington counties. The agencies have been collaborating with the FBSJ for over a year by providing free space for Food Bank staff to help WIC clients and low-income seniors complete online SNAP applications at several WIC service sites. In the past year, the income guidelines for SNAP have increased significantly, and made more WIC participants eligible for program benefits. The joint effort helped to overcome the barriers of lack of access to a computer or frustration with completing the lengthy and seemingly complex process, and has resulted in scores of applicants getting the SNAP food dollars they need to feed themselves and their families. ■



*HIT THE ROAD — Food Bank of South Jersey staff travel in this brightly decorated car to local WIC agencies to assist participants with SNAP applications.*

## PENNSYLVANIA'S LANCASTER COUNTY WIC PROMOTES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH WITH NUTRITIOUS FOOD

By Erin Strickland, Outreach Coordinator  
CAP Lancaster Inc. WIC Program

As with most other nutrition education programs, Pennsylvania's Lancaster County WIC office uses the month of March as a time to promote and celebrate healthy eating. To bring attention to the topic this year, Community Action Program (CAP) held a mini-fair in the lobby for the public, employees, and WIC clients. If people did not notice the array of tables and games set up throughout the lobby, they certainly noticed the delicious aroma of the food demonstration that was held. WIC Nutritionist Monica Blevens chopped, mixed and cooked up a nutritious and mouth-watering vegetable stir-fry with whole grain rice throughout the day. Staff, clients and general public stopped to sample the easy-to-do recipe and were not disappointed! WIC-allowable foods were on display and Monica provided tips on making the traditional "fried rice" recipe healthier by using sesame oil and baking, instead of frying.

Jessica Hildebrandt, MS, RD, Healthy Beginnings Plus Dietitian, also joined the event and provided creative ways to grocery shop on a budget and still select healthy foods. Jessica leads grocery store tours for a grant-run program called "Shopping Matters for WIC Parents." The program focuses on comparing unit prices, buying in-season produce, and avoiding the costly "pre-prepared" foods by washing, chopping and mixing on your own. Doing this prep work and individually packaging at home can save bundles.

Fruit and vegetable face-painting was a huge success, with both children and parents participating. At the physical activity game table, children were able to win Frisbees and water bottles to take home. Children enjoyed the "Kids Corner," where they danced, exercised and giggled along with Sesame Street's "Healthy Habits for Kids." Other activities included coloring and learning the difference between "sometimes vs. anytime" foods.

All the participants and staff had a wonderful time and appreciated the information provided. It's easy to get everyone excited about nutrition by using food, fun, and games! ■

### **PR Breastfeeding** continued from page 1

me messages indicating that she had two pregnant friends (also deaf) asking for orientation and if they could go through the clinic.

"Sure!" was my answer and we agreed on the date and time.

The expectant mothers came to class with a lot of joy, full of jokes, questions and doubts (about the whole process of pregnancy) and I presented the breastfeeding flip chart, clarifying the doubts that arose at the time. The breastfeeding class lasted longer than a normal class, which is expected since the communication occurs in different ways. They took advantage of the fact that I could speak to them in their language and tried to ask everything they could think of.

After the class, we commented on the need for this to be done more often, to recognize the needs of people with hearing impairments and for ways to reach them. They know that they have an ally in the WIC clinic of Canovanas! ■



**HEALTHY FRY-COOK** — Nutritionist/Retail Store Coordinator Monica Blevens cooks up a stir-fry at the food demo table.

## PUERTO RICO WIC EXPERIENCES MID-ATLANTIC WIC ASSESSMENT PROJECT

By Alma L. Ortega, Outreach Nutritionist

The Puerto Rico WIC Program recently hosted the Altarum Institute staff as part of the Mid-Atlantic WIC Assessment Project. The visit was from May 9-10 for the State Assessment. The team for the State and Local assessments was comprised of Loren Bell, Karen Bertram, Naomi Tein and Gloria Aponte.

The first step was the assessment for meeting high quality services, and conducting analysis of participant-to-staff ratios for the State agency. These will help to address our program challenges and strengths to accomplish the program's priorities.

The Puerto Rico WIC Program appreciates the visit from the Altarum staff and looks forward to the results of their recommendations. ■



**LET ME SHOW YOU** — Puerto Rico WIC Program Nutrition and Breastfeeding Director Grisel Maldonado shows nutrition education material during the visit.



**LET ME TELL YOU** — Jeanette Canino, the former interim Nutrition Director, is interviewed by Gloria Aponte.

## NEW JERSEY'S NORTH HUDSON WIC PROGRAM HOSTS 4TH ANNUAL HEALTH FAIR, "CATCH THE RAINBOW OF GOOD HEALTH"

By Alina Gonzalez

On a hot summer day in July, New Jersey's North Hudson WIC Program led WIC participants and the community at large to "Catch the Rainbow of Good Health." The outdoor event which took place on Friday, July 22 with record temperatures of 109°, included activities for children, adults and the elderly.

Health fair participants experienced the colors, the taste and the health benefits of fruits and vegetables through activities that took them from earth to the table. "Salad-in-a-pot" was a seeding activity in which adults and children enjoyed potting their own vegetables to take home and watch them grow. "Tasty and Healthy" gave fair attendees the opportunity to taste the cooling freshness of fruit and vegetable salads prepared by the WIC Program staff and those contributed by our local farmer and sponsors.

The fruit and vegetable purchasing experience was made possible by the presence of the Farmers' Market on the block and by a tiny mini grocery stand and shopping carts that the little ones used to select their make-believe fruits. By decorating hats and bags, having ones face painted or by being tattooed with a fruit and vegetable theme, many experienced the colors that vegetables and fruits bring to a healthy life.

Yes! On this hot summer day, some people chose to get physical and engage in the various activities that promoted physical activity. The "Hoola, Hoola, Hoola Hoop" contest, the "Jumping Rope" contest, "Shoot



*A FAIR TO REMEMBER — Under the hot summer sun, fair attendees enjoyed the refreshing fruit and vegetable salads.*

the Bean in the Loop" and "Running for Good Food" had their share of participating children and adults. Everyone took off with a prize making the experience worthwhile. After the games, water and juice contributed by local vendors and sponsors helped cool off the restless competitors.

For those who needed a challenge more in tune with the weather, the Breastfeeding table was the place to be. "Tell us what you know," a game developed by the Breastfeeding staff, did just that; it challenged us without the sweat.

Blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol screenings were the logical things to have done after stopping at "Target your Weight." While the North Hudson Health Center staff provided free screenings, WIC Nutritionists were available to offer tips and information

about weight loss, low-fat cooking, cholesterol, diabetes and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Fair attendees also had access to skin cancer screening and women's health and fire safety information.

We would like to acknowledge the NHCAC Health Center and social services programs along with other community services, programs and organizations and the North Hudson Fire Department for their presence and contributions which made this event a successful one.

Finally, we thank for their contributions of food and drinks our local 7-11 store, Asprocolas Acres, Trader Joe's, Amerigroup, Health First, General Mills, Kelloggs and Juicy Juice for their contributions of cool drinks and food. ■



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