

# MARWIC

T · I · M · E · S

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

## DC WIC LACTATION CENTER FEATURED IN THE WASHINGTON POST

**H**ats off to the East of the River Lactation Center, which is a part of the Children's Hospital WIC clinic at Good Hope Road in Washington, DC. They were recently featured on the front page of *The Washington Post* Metro section. The article showcased the positive efforts of the lactation center to increase breastfeeding rates in the African-American population. The East of the River Lactation Center, in Southeast DC, was funded by a USDA Operational Adjustment grant.



*PICTURE PERFECT* — Appearing in *The Washington Post* story is Lactation Consultant Lynnette Halfken demonstrating how to express breast milk.



*IN THE NEWS* — Photographed for *The Washington Post* is Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Jamilah Muhayman talking to a WIC client.

Acknowledging that breastfeeding rates of black mothers lag behind other racial and ethnic groups, Dr. Sahira Long, Pediatrician at the Good Hope Road primary care clinic and President of the DC Breastfeeding

*Continued on page 2*

## WIC PARTICIPANT'S DAD JOSÉ MORENO SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ON BREASTFEEDING

By Elizabeth Santos, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Guaynabo WIC Clinic

Elizabeth Santos, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor in Guaynabo WIC Clinic shares with us the testimony of a nursing father of the clinic, José Moreno.

**B**eing a nursing father is a nice experience and you feel safe and well because your child will get lots of nutrients and substances that other food does not provide. As we begin, the process was not easy, requiring dedication to the first meeting of the baby will stick and was able to get breast milk. As a parent I felt very proud that throughout this process I help to take the baby in the nights to my wife for latch on. I help also in burping after breastfeeding. I want her to not feel alone, breastfeeding is the job of both. Breastfeeding is very important in the life of my baby; I see it grow strong and healthy. For me it was a unique experience that assures me that my child will grow up healthy." ■

## WIC OFFICE OPENS AT VIRGINIA'S FORT BELVOIR MILITARY BASE

**C**ongratulations to Anna Kaniyantra, Fairfax County (VA) WIC Coordinator and the WIC team for successfully securing a new WIC office at Fort Belvoir. This office will serve the military community. Services began in December 2011, most recently military-based clinic located in Alexandria on Fort Belvoir Post, which took over 24 months of coordination and collaboration between state, local and military entities. This is truly collaboration of many but with one mission in mind, servicing our communities with excellence! ■



*CROWD PLEASER* — Roberta Hodsdon, Director of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Programs for the Mid-Atlantic Region, addresses the crowd.



*GROUP EFFORT* — Some of those responsible for the new Fort Belvoir WIC office are (left to right) Colonel John Strycula, Fort Belvoir Garrison Commander; Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayensu, Fairfax County Health Director; Michael Welch, Director, Division of Community Nutrition, Virginia Department of Health; Michelle Lake, Information & Referral Program Manager, Army Community Services, Fort Belvoir; Dr. Diane Helentjaris, Director, Office of Family Health Services, Virginia Department of Health; Anna Kaniyantra, WIC Program Coordinator, Fairfax County Health Department; Robin G. Johnson, Army Community Service Director; Command Sergeant Major Gabriel Berhane, Fort Belvoir; Roberta Hodsdon, Director Supplemental Food Programs, Mid-Atlantic Region, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

## SPRING 2012

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By Justin Wohlsifer, MPA

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service regional office in Robbinsville, NJ was the site of the Fiscal Year 2012 Mid-Atlantic Regional WIC State Directors' Meeting, held February 7-9. The meeting's theme, "Building a Brighter Future," set the stage for an exciting year to come.

Kicking off the meeting was a warm welcome by Patricia Dombroski, Regional Administrator, followed by an update and discussion of the national issues currently facing the Supplemental Food Programs from the SFP Director, Debra Whitford. Later, Senior Program Specialist Connie Kramer-Walker presented a detailed presentation, WIC Funding and Participation, which was followed by an update and discussion presented by Senior Program Specialist Robert Logan and Program Specialist Brian Buszko on MIS and EBT.

The second day encompassed an enlightening presentation by Loren Bell, Institute Fellow, and Linnea Sallack Senior Associate at the Altarum Institute, which detailed the Mid-Atlantic States' WIC Program operations and characteristics. Next, Roberta Hodsdon,

MARO's WIC Director, gave an update on MARO WIC priorities for FY 2012. On the meeting's second day, guests were greeted by Debbie Mansfield, Financial Management Unit Director, with a detailed accounting of the current undertakings in the financial management department. Later, Kirk Groomes, Financial Management Specialist, gave a presentation of the WIC Data Mining Pilot Project currently underway at MARO. The second day concluded with an exciting National Studies Update, presented by Sylvia Nah, Program Specialist, and the first of two sharing sessions, affording States a unique face-to-face opportunity to exchange ideas and success stories.

The meeting's final day began with a Nutrition Services Update by Aracelis Lopez, SFP Nutritionist, Joni Garcia, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Nutritionist, and Marta Kelly, from FNS' National Office. The subsequent State sharing session facilitated lively discussion among State representatives on the many innovative initiatives underway throughout the region.

The latter half of the final day began with a civil rights presentation, *Reasonable Accommodation for Program Participants*, given by MARO's Civil Rights Director Ellen Shannon. Eric Ratchford, MARO's Director of Field Operations, and Justin Wohlsifer, Program Specialist, discussed current enhancements underway to improve Program integrity and the current WIC-SNAP reciprocal disqualification procedures. Wrapping up the day's events was an educational and entertaining video presentation on the Use of Social Media

in WIC, presented by Carol Smith, Senior Program Specialist. The meeting concluded with warm thank you and wrap-up from Roberta Hodsdon. ■



TAKING A BREAK — Attendees at the annual WIC State Directors' Meeting in Robbinsville, New Jersey, enjoy an active stretch break.



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**DC WIC Lactation Center Featured in The Washington Post continued from page 1**

Coalition, was quoted in the article, speaking about the barriers that mothers face in breastfeeding, such as lack of knowledge, are magnified among blacks in the high-poverty neighborhoods. "There are myths that are passed on – that it is painful, or that it will be difficult to get the baby to go to anyone other than the mother," said Long. "If that mother is the first to breastfeed in their family, then they won't get the family or community support."

Kevin Concannon, USDA Undersecretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services was also quoted in the article. He spoke about the enhanced food package provided to women enrolled in WIC who exclusively breast feed as well as other ways WIC gives breastfeeding women support, through peer counselor sessions, the distribution of breast pumps and nutrition counseling by nutritionists.

Jamilah Muhayman, the center's breastfeeding peer counselor; and Lynnette Hafken, lactation consultant, were the "stars" featured in the article. Lynnette was pictured training a woman on how to manually express breast milk. Jamilah, described as "...more like a cousin or sister promoting a good cause than an authority figure," was also pictured and the article told the story of how Jamilah encouraged a breastfeeding mom who was uneasy about breastfeeding in public to try using a pump so she could also provide breast milk in a bottle.

Other key personnel who contribute to this center's efforts include Nutritionists Lisa Brown and Kathryn Dowling; and Health Techs Francisco Flores-Matias, Santos Benitez and Jamila Gibson.

This article is a great acknowledgement of the efforts of the WIC Program to support breastfeeding. It is also the kind of publicity we need to improve the public image of WIC and increase public awareness of breastfeeding benefits. ■

## WEST VIRGINIA'S VALLEY HEALTH CABELL WIC TEAMS WITH WVU EXTENSION AGENT TO EDUCATE WIC PARTICIPANTS

By Denise Eagan MA, RD, LD  
Susan Helo, and Jenna Rose, MA, RD, LD  
Cabell WIC Nutritionists

**B**renda Porter, WVU Extension Agent, presented two different classes for participants who attend child nutrition education classes at Cabell WIC in Huntington, WV. One class was on food preservation, during which Brenda shared information about freezing, canning, and dehydrating foods. Brenda provided tips to participants such as, deciding which type of canning method to use and how to determine how much storage space is needed for canned items once processed. Brenda discussed both canning methods (pressure canning and hot water bath). At the end of the session, participants sampled the canned peach salsa.

The second class presentation was "Meatless Meals." Brenda provided a cooking demonstration and made Hearty Vegetable-Bean Soup. As she made the soup, she talked about using dry or canned beans and spices and seasonings rather than salt in cooking. Participants enjoyed tasting samples of the soup. The aroma from the soup brought staff to the kitchen to try a sample also. Brenda provided each participant with recipes and tips for preparing beans; she also discussed removing salt from canned beans, and gave information about meal planning.

With the ease and popularity of on-line nutrition education, fewer WIC participants attend nutrition education classes. Partnerships with other agencies provide WIC participants with a new and fresh perspective on a variety of nutrition topics. These special topic classes help keep WIC participants interested and wanting to come to nutrition education classes. We appreciate community partners such as WVU Extension and the services they provide to our WIC participants. ■



Brenda Porter, WVU Extension Agent presents her class on food preservation.

## PENNSYLVANIA WIC NAMES NEW DIRECTOR

By Bonnie J. Mellott, Public Health Program Administrator, PA WIC State Agency

**M**s. Mary King-Maxey was named the Director of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Division of Woman, Infants and Children (WIC) Program, effective December 19, 2011.

Mary began her career with the Department of Health in 1996 as a WIC Program Representative. After five years in WIC, she was promoted to a program administrator and was part of the team that created the Health and Human Services Call Center. Most recently, Mary served as the Manager of the Newborn Hearing Screening Program and Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Coordinator for the State of Pennsylvania. As manager, she was instrumental in modifying follow-up practices to improve the state's lost to follow-up rate from 21% to 5.5%. (The lost to follow-up rate is based on the number of infants that do not pass their screening and then receive no additional screenings or services and the state program is unable to locate them to encourage additional testing.) Nationally, the rate is about 40-50%. The program also launched a new website during her tenure, [www.paearlyhearing.org](http://www.paearlyhearing.org), which won "Website of the Year" at the International Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Conference.

Ms. King-Maxey has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with a concentration in counseling and child development from Shippensburg University. She is happily married with two children, a boy, age 12, and a girl, age 2. ■



MARY KING-MAXEY

## VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL JERSEY WIC PROGRAM TEACHES PARENTS HOW TO SHOP

**T**he Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey WIC Program, under the direction of managers Robin McRoberts and Judith Wajih, are looking for ways to ensure more families have the opportunity to learn how to make healthy food choices on a limited budget. With this in mind, they decided to support and participate in the activity "Shopping Matters for WIC Parents" as part of the goal to end childhood hunger in America promoted by the national nonprofit organization Share Our Strength's Cooking Matters.

The first two "Shopping Matters for WIC parents" events — grocery store tours — were conducted in the Middlesex County cities of Carteret and Perth Amboy on February 9 and 10, respectively. Eleven families, under the guidance of WIC Nutritionist Apryl Hamid and DTR Julia Sotomayor, visited Shoprite supermarkets and learned first-hand how to make affordable choices on foods available in the WIC food package.

WIC parents experienced an aisle-by-aisle tour while asking questions and identifying whole grain foods (bread, tortillas, and brown rice), breakfast cereals, and proteins (such as fat-reduced milk, cheeses, eggs, beans, and peanut butter). Learning about portion size, calcium and vitamin D content in whole milk versus reduced-fat milk, and compared unit prices was fun and interesting for them. A young mother said candidly, "tell me how to do it, I want my children to eat healthy and stay healthy." Other comments were: "I am going to practice portion size, perhaps that is the key to reduce my hunger and therefore my weight," "I can prepare new dishes now, and combining them with my traditional dishes during the week, I will keep my family happy and healthy." As an incentive to participate in the tour, two \$50 gift certificates were drawn among the participants. The happy winners were Miguel M. Rivas and Marileidy Marmol.

Each participant received a shopping bag, calculator, and handout donated by Share Our Strength's Cooking Matters initiative; others items bought with the mini grant obtained by the WIC Program were sample cereals made with whole wheat, measurement cups, and colorful plastic bowls. A recipe book for each participant, "Platillos Latinos," was donated by the Middlesex County Public Health Department. Additionally, the Healthfirst N.J. insurance company made a donation of more than 200 shopping bags and bilingual bookmarks. ■



AND THE WINNER IS — Miguel M. Rivas and his daughter display their gift card after the first tour at Carteret Shoprite.



SHOPPING MADE SIMPLE — Tour facilitators DTR Julia Sotomayor and WIC Nutritionist Apryl Hamid are set to lead another tour through the store.

## GRATEFUL PUERTO RICO WIC PARTICIPANT SAYS THANKS

By Jacqueline Henriquez, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, Clinica WIC Lares

*Moments like this are when I get motivated to keep going on and I feel satisfied with my work as a breastfeeding peer counselor. It is an endless source of joy knowing that with my support can be of help to a WIC participant mother. Our breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program goes beyond the call of duty and sometimes you become more involved in some cases. This is the case of Sandra Flores Tellado and how she felt after she became a participant of our Program.*

**F**or about 10 years, since I was 16, I was homeless and using drugs. One day a woman I didn't know talked to me about God and introduced me to a Pastor who helped me a lot. I had told God I wanted to become a mother so that I could change my life. He allowed me, always by my side. Many good people helped me in my time of need.

"One day I went to the WIC Program I was greeted with love and respect. There I met my peer counselor, Jacqueline. I told her that my doctor had said that because I had been an addict I couldn't breastfeed my baby. She explained to me that if I was not sick, and I was clean, I was able to breastfeed with no risk to the child. The experience was incredible and it helped me become a loving and dedicated mother. My counselor became my friend and was always patient and offered kind words." ■



*MAKING A DIFFERENCE — Sharing a moment are Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Jacqueline Henriquez (right) with WIC participant Sandra Flores-Tellado and her child.*

## NEW JERSEY'S NORTH HUDSON WIC THROWS BOTTLE WEANING PARTY

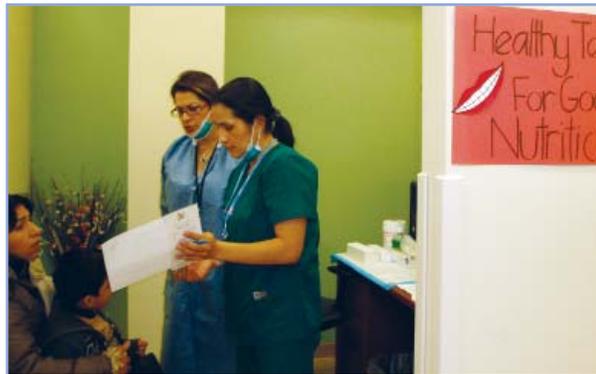
By Karen Lazarowitz, RD, WIC Coordinator

**N**ew Jersey's North Hudson Community Action Corporation (NHCAC) WIC Program kicked off the new year with a "Bottle Weaning Party." This was a fun way to support mothers and children in the transition from baby bottles to cups. The nutritionists prepared beautiful invitations sent to the WIC participants' homes explaining the event. The party attendees were welcomed into a vibrantly decorated room filled with posters and sippy cups.

WIC Nutritionists Betty Rojas and Lillian Rivera led the WIC participants in a facilitated discussion about weaning from bottles and introducing the cup. At the end of the discussion, the children were welcomed to put his/her bottle in the "bottle bin" to receive a new sippy cup. The children, thrilled to take part in the activity, marched right up to the bin to dispose of their bottles.

Many of the parents and children also opted to get free oral screenings offered

by the NHCAC Dental Department. Dr. Rabiero, NHCAC dentist, was present to check participants' teeth and educate them about proper dental care. The event turned out to be a great success with many participants attending and being appreciative of the information, free sippy cup and dental screening. ■



*DENTAL CARING — NHCAC Dentist Dr. Mercedes Rabiero and Dental Assistant Doris DeLatorre provide dental health information to a WIC participant.*



*BYE, BYE BOTTLE — Chief Nutritionist Alina Gonzalez, Nutritionists Betty Rojas and Lillian Rivera, and WIC Coordinator Karen Lazarowitz are with the WIC children who exchanged their baby bottles for new sippy cups.*

## MEET DELAWARE WIC PROGRAM'S NEW SOUTHERN HEALTH SERVICES WIC SUPERVISOR

By Elizabeth Tschiffely, MS, RD, LDN

**I** graduated from Marywood University in the spring of 1998 with a bachelor's degree in human nutrition, following the completion of a coordinated undergraduate program (CUP) in nutrition and dietetics. I began my career as a clinical dietitian at Peninsula Regional Medical Center in Salisbury, Maryland and my 14-year career thus far has afforded me various and extensive opportunities in clinical and community nutrition, research, and long-term care, as well as private practice and business management.

Having lived in Maryland for some time, I moved closer to the beaches of Delaware in the winter of 2004. I was awarded a master's degree from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in 2005 with a concentration in clinical nutrition. I was also appointed to the Delaware State Board of Nutrition in 2008 by Governor Minner and served as secretary of that body for three years before being elected to president in June of 2011, where I continue to serve under Governor Markell in that post striving to protect the public by monitoring and enforcing the regulations that govern state licensure for dietitians and nutritionists. Having most recently been a business owner and nutrition consultant to long-term care facilities throughout the state of Delaware, I was awarded my current position of WIC nutrition supervisor for Southern Health Services in the fall of 2011.

In my current position, I have had the opportunity to interact with people, both staff and clients, from all walks of life, with various backgrounds, education, expectations, and life experiences. It excites me to be joining public health at such a critical time in its history as public health moves forward with its strategic vision and plan, delving more into the prevention of childhood obesity and constantly striving to promote good nutrition for women and children, which will have a profound and far-reaching impact on our society and our nation. ■

## MARYLAND WIC HAS FUN WITH TOFU

By Janice Besecker, Coordinator  
Washington County WIC Program

There are many reasons to eat tofu; mainly it tastes good! Just look at the picture!

The kids who sampled the orange-banana-crushed pineapple smoothie begged for more. They even made mom promise to make the recipe at home.

Those who attended this taste-testing class learned about tofu, and tried a new food and recipe. Moreover, the younger WIC partakers had fun jiggling and moving to the noise of the blender. Tofu smoothie mustaches added to the enjoyment.

Ironically, the little ones were the role models for the adults. The children bravely drank the smoothie, while the grown-ups scrunched up their noses at the word "tofu." Hesitant or eager, eventually all WIC participants enjoyed the cool, refreshing orange-banana-pineapple tofu smoothie drink during the hot summer months. ■

### Pineapple – Orange Smoothie

Puree all ingredients in a blender until smooth.  
Serve immediately.

- 1 (10.5-ounce) package silken tofu
- 1 (12 ounce) can frozen orange juice concentrate
- 1 (8 ounce) can crushed pineapple, chilled
- 1 medium banana

Serves 4



YUM! –The smiles say it all!

## PENNSYLVANIA'S MATERNAL AND FAMILY HEALTH SERVICES LAUNCHES HEALTH EDUCATION AND REFERRAL KIOSK

By Jodi Phillips, Marketing Associate  
Maternal and Family Health Services, Inc.

Maternal and Family Health Services, Inc. (MFHS) in Wilkes-Barre, PA has launched a new bilingual health education and referral kiosk that provides WIC participants with useful information on how to better understand the Program and utilize all that WIC has to offer. The interactive tool is available at health centers throughout MFHS's 16-county service area, as well as online through a web-based application.

Designed to enhance continued client participation, the kiosk answers questions that participants may have during the beginning stages of enrollment in the WIC Program.

The kiosk has many features beneficial to participants of the WIC Program. These features include a list of what to bring to your first WIC visit, some tips on what to expect once you arrive, a virtual grocery store tour that guides the participant on how to shop for WIC-approved foods, as well as how to redeem their WIC food vouchers and information on how to reap the health benefits of participating in the WIC Program.

In addition to providing participants with information on the WIC Program, the kiosk also serves as a useful educational tool about making positive health choices, as well as a referral system to other programs offered by MFHS. Program outlines and eligibility requirements can be viewed through the "Do I Qualify?" section of the kiosk, which helps participants discover all the programs they may be eligible for, along with steps on how to enroll.

To learn more about all that MFHS has to offer and to experience the web-based kiosk, you may visit [www.mfhs.org](http://www.mfhs.org). ■



THE KIOSK

## PUERTO RICO WIC STAFFS HEALTHY "TRULLAS"

In an atmosphere of joy and celebration, but mostly making prevention the best tradition, was evident at Healthy "Trullas," sponsored by the Department of Health and the Department of Public Housing of the Puerto Rico Government at various sites on the island.

The Puerto Rico WIC Program participated with an education and promotion station. The staff attending the event included the nutritionist and breastfeeding peer counselor at the closest WIC clinic, several WIC Regional Directors and the Outreach Nutritionist.

The purpose of the Healthy "Trullas" is a health and environment of Christmas celebration is what the Healthy "Trullas" have become in the municipalities of San Juan, Mayaguez, Bayamon, Manati and Carolina. "Christmas is a propitious time to celebrate life and that we can preserve our health care through prevention. Everyone is concerned about the welfare of our citizens and we must begin to care for the most important thing we have, our health," said Secretary of the Department of Health, Lorenzo Gonzalez Feliciano.

Among the services offered during the festival were mammograms, clinical, glucose, immunizations, and HIV testing and counseling about the My Health plan. The Healthy "Trullas" have managed to provide its services to thousands of Puerto Rican families today as they enjoy better health. To achieve the success shown so far, Healthy "Trullas" have the assistance of government agencies such as the Department of Recreation and Sports with basketball clinics and Zumba; the Police of Puerto Rico who stressed the message "Not one more bullet," as well as private entities such as Walgreens, Caribbean and Preventive Services, John Dewey College, and others.

"The Healthy 'Trullas' have served to unite our people and different agencies. We have all worked together to bring contentment, celebration and above all, community health," said Gonzalez Feliciano. The Administration of Mental Health and Addiction, WIC and the Office of Preparedness and Response Coordination for Public Health, and other government agencies also joined the event.

For his part, Secretary of the Department of Public Housing, lawyer Miguel B. Vivoni Hernandez, described the successful efforts that have been made in several residential communities, which have proven to be committed to the health of its families.

"Residents have responded dramatically to this type of initiative that aims to raise awareness in primary families about the importance of maintaining good health. Once again, the administration reaches the people it serves with offers with which it seeks to ensure their welfare," said Vivoni. ■



A VIP VISIT — Puerto Rico Governor Luis Fortuño visits WIC Station in Trullas Saludables in Manati.



HELP FOR ALL — Staffing the WIC table at Trullas Saludables in Mayaguez are (left to right) Carolina WIC Clinic Breastfeeding Counselor Ayvelee Rivera and Rio Piedras WIC Clinic Nutritionist Edel Guzman.

## PENNSYLVANIA WIC'S BERNIE KECKLER HAS RETIRED

By Bonnie J. Mellott, Public Health Program Administrator, PA WIC Program

**B**ernard E. Keckler retired from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on December 31.

After receiving an accounting degree from Penn State University in February 1974, Mr. Keckler, United States Air Force Veteran, started employment with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – Department of Public Welfare's



BERNIE KECKLER

Comptroller's office on July 1, 1974. He worked at the position until coming to the Pennsylvania WIC Program in April of 1981. Mr. Keckler, known as "Bernie" by all, is the longest term employee within the Division of WIC and the void left by his departure will never be filled.

Throughout the years of Bernie's employment with the WIC Program, his knowledge and strong work ethic gained the respect of all those with whom he came in contact. WIC local agency staff counted on him to always have answers to problems they encountered with their contracting, budgeting or processing of invoices. Bernie often worked weekends without being asked to assure timely processing of WIC local agency grants. He was involved in the development, implementation and monitoring of every WIC banking contract throughout his tenure with WIC. Bernie was also involved in the development and implementation of each infant formula rebate contract awarded to the Pennsylvania WIC Program. During his tenure with WIC, he personally handled securing receipt of \$1.012 billion in infant formula rebates through the billing process. This funding allowed services to 19,684,556 additional WIC participants who, without Bernie's efforts, would not have been served.

Bernie, we thank you for over 30 years of service to the Pennsylvania WIC Program and the combination of your over 42½ years to the citizens of our nation! ■

### Bernie is Retiring

*By Larry Mellott (with a little help from current and former PA WIC State Agency staff)*

Bernie, Bernie, Bernie, where do we begin? Your countless stories, your fashion sense, or maybe with your grin. It won't be hard to remember you, it will be harder to forget the man we all have come to know as WIC's longest employee yet. From the Welfare Office you came to us, in April of '81. Looking back 30 years, we see what all you've done. The food rebates that you secured accounted to over a billion, which added people served by WIC to nearly 20 million. Your sense of humor will be missed, and your chats at lunch were fun. Because of you we're hesitant with sales of 'Two for One.' That's not a well known story but a funny one by far about the office drinking water and the office Water Czar. You're our Mr. Wilson, that neighbor across the fence, the one with all the wisdom and all the common sense. You're a hard-working stand-up guy, dedicated to what you do. With a fascination for recycled paper, and Lady Gaga too. So...come on in to see us soon then ride the bus around. And even stop by Hoss's then check-out Linglestown. Congratulations Bernie, we will miss you when you go. You've touched a part in all of us, more than you'll ever know.

## HEY! THAT'S "MyPLATE" AT LANCASTER, PA WIC

By Erin Strickland, Outreach Coordinator

**W**ith its bright colors and simplistic design, *MyPlate* came in with a bang. After the June 2 announcement of the new *MyPlate*, WIC nutritionists and nutrition educators everywhere were challenged to present this new tool to their clients. Many educators were happy to see a more simplified, easy-to-explain version of the USDA's Food Guide.

The WIC Program of Lancaster County (PA) took this opportunity to begin offering new incentives to support *MyPlate*. The incentives are being used to promote staying on the program, and keeping regular appointments. Each new incentive is designed to aid in counseling a specific age group. Colorful placemats are given to participating 2-year-olds to encourage sitting up at family mealtimes; 3-year-olds receive a *MyPlate* portion plate to encourage good portion sizes and eating a variety of foods. And last, but not least, 4-year-olds are receiving fun, stretchy bracelets to help them keep track of the fruits and vegetables they eat each day.

Parents like the incentives because they help them reinforce the recommendations while at home. And WIC staff like them because it gives them a fun tool to use in counseling. "I love the plate! It helps children visualize the different foods that they need at every meal. I actually think that kids will get better at saying 'Mommy, I don't have a fruit,'" commented Janelle Neff, RN, WIC nutritionist. *MyPlate* focuses on filling half your plate with fruits and veggies, adding in some lean protein, and making at least half of your grains whole. The incentive items will be an ongoing project for Lancaster County WIC to encourage families to stick with WIC! ■



THAT'S MY PLATE — Siblings Harmony Penepacker, age 2, and Barry Penepacker, age 3, receive their incentive items at their recertification appointments.

THE GANG'S ALL HERE — The 24 PA WIC local agency directors celebrated Bernie Keckler's (front row, center) retirement at their directors' meeting in October 2011.



## SANTA VISITS VIRGINIA'S PEMBROKE WIC OFFICE

By Becky Kear

Virginia's Pembroke WIC office had been decorated for Christmas with snowflakes, Christmas trees, and a fireplace with stockings hanging, and lights twinkling. And who should appear but Santa! Santa paid an unexpected visit to the Pembroke WIC office in Virginia Beach in December. What a surprise it was! The kids and parents got to visit with Santa and have their pictures taken. We took several pictures of each child/family. An instant photo was given to them to take home and a digital photo was posted on the Virginia Beach WIC Program Facebook page.

Each child received a little book from Santa. ("The Berenstain Bears...Too Much TV" for the older children and "Let's Eat" picture book for the toddlers). Even the moms and dads attending the breastfeeding class were treated to a visit from Santa and received a little book for their baby. They had their pictures taken too!

This was such a hit; we plan to do it again next year.

Santa's visit was coordinated by OSS Supervisor Becky Kear, Breastfeeding Consultant Charlene Cattoi, and Charlene's son, Kory Moody, a student at Virginia Wesleyan College, who made an excellent Santa. ■



EVERYONE LOVES SANTA — WIC participants of all ages enjoyed their visit with Santa at Virginia Beach's Pembroke WIC office.

JOLLY TIME FOR ALL — Gathering around Santa are (front row, left to right) Gila Brock, Pi'ilani Andino, Madeleine Siviter; (middle row) Becky Kear and Charlene Cattoi; and (back row) Joy Monton, Lisa Anderson, Ashley Hall and Rita Iraheta.

## NEW JERSEY'S BURLINGTON COUNTY WIC PROGRAM OUTREACH TRAVELS NEW JERSEY TRANSIT

New Jersey's Burlington County WIC Program started an eight-week, comprehensive outreach initiative to residents throughout Burlington County and surrounding areas. The outreach ads are posted in train cars on the New Jersey River Line which runs from Trenton to Camden. Alternating train cars have posters with tear-off pads in English and Spanish that commuters can take. Platform banners are displayed on the station platforms for the commuters while waiting for the trains. Posters are also displayed on the stations which are adjacent to the train and bus stops.

The bus commuters have enjoyed the posters in the buses with tear-offs. The buses also advertise Burlington County WIC Program information on the bus taillights.

The Burlington WIC staff consistently maintains their outreach contact with residents through various fairs. This fiscal year, staff participated in the annual Burlington County Farm Fair, Westampton Day, and Latino Services Health Fair; provided information for Burlington County Back-to-School Day, Project TEACH which is an alternative high school for pregnant teens and teen moms, and the South Jersey Medical Center's Baby Shower.

To support breastfeeding, Burlington WIC celebrated World Breastfeeding Week. The theme was "Keeping Connected" to promote communication between the lactation staff and clients via the 800 warm-line, and e-mails. Activities included two bulletin boards of photos of breastfeeding moms and babies and a table display in the clinic. A table display was also in the Health Department corridor. Clients received giveaways that included onesies that stated, "I'm Breastfed and It Shows," in English and Spanish, and Bounty gift bags with free samples of Lansinoh cream and coupons for breastfeeding supplies. ■

RIDING THE RAILS — Check out one of Burlington WIC's outreach posters that are hung in commuter train cars.

## WEST VIRGINIA'S MID-OHIO VALLEY HEALTH PARTICIPATES IN POCKET PARK

By June Rhodes, MOVHD WIC Director

On September 17, Virginia's Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department participated in the Parkersburg "Pocket Park" day. In conjunction with Nation Park Day, Parkersburg held an event to create parks in downtown. Participating businesses were given a parking space on Market Street to turn into a park. Market Street was shut down to vehicle traffic from 5th Street to 7th Street and parking spaces were turned into a park. The MOVHD park was titled "A Hoppin'n Place."

We had a bike rack which looked like a frog, a small picnic table, hula hoops, and a hopscotch game made with sidewalk chalk on the street. For all people who played hopscotch, they received a prize furnished by Change the Future WV.

The day was filled with people taking advantage of the chance to come downtown and walk in the park. There were people on bikes, skateboards, people with pets and strollers all enjoying the ability to walk and

participate in healthy lifestyle activities. People were jumping rope, hula-hooping, playing hopscotch, being fitted for bike helmets, and even dancing in the streets. Employees from Change the Future WV and WIC participated in the "Hoppin'n Place" to encourage people to hopscotch of which young and old alike enjoyed. June Rhodes, WIC Director, even discovered that she can still hula hoop after all these years. ■



*CHECK HER OUT — June Rhodes, MOVHD WIC Director, enjoys using the hula hoop at Park Day.*



*HOOPS FOR YOU — Nutritionist Deb Dennis fits activity in her day by using the hula hoop.*



*A WALK IN THE PARK — Area residents enjoy participating in Park Day activities.*

## PENNSYLVANIA WIC'S COMMUNITY ACTION SOUTHWEST'S WINNING TEAM

By Leisa Shawley, Information Technology Manager/Outreach Coordinator  
Community Action Southwest

Every year at Christmas time, Pennsylvania's Community Action Southwest WIC Program has a Holiday Staff meeting. In addition to the usual WIC business covered, we make time for fun. We share memories, laugh, enjoy a special lunch and have a gift exchange. Jessica Shuber, Assistant WIC Director, usually leads us in some games to test our knowledge of Christmas trivia.

This year staff was challenged to compete in a race that challenged their dexterity, concentration, physical stamina and team work. They participated in a relay race to see which team was able to transport a cotton ball on a plastic spoon most quickly. Our staff always appreciates a challenge and this one proved to be a good one! ■



*WINNERS ONE AND ALL — The winning team includes (back row) Joan McCrory, Health Professional; Nancy Hampson, Retail Store Specialist; Vicki Nedrow, Health Professional; Kathy Fonner, Clinic Specialist; Cheryl Piroch, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor; (front row) Jeanne Encapera, Clinic Specialist; and Leisa Shawley, IT Manager and Outreach Coordinator.*

## WEST VIRGINIA'S SHENANDOAH WIC DOES "TRUNK OR TREAT"

On October 31, 1000-1500 kids in Halloween costumes gathered at the Martinsburg (WV) K-Mart parking lot eager to trick-or-treat. "Trunk-or-Treat," hosted by 365 Church in Martinsburg, offers a safe place for kids to trick-or-treat. Cars come with their trunks full of treats. Shenandoah WIC was very excited to be a part of this event; they wanted to do something extra special just for the kids. They decorated the mobile clinic full of Halloween decorations. Kids would enter through one door, walk through the haunted mobile, receive their goodie bag, and exit through another door. The event was a huge success for 365 Church and Shenandoah WIC. Nearly 1000 goodie bags, each filled with outreach items, were given away. People responded very well to the haunted mobile and are excited to have Shenandoah WIC participate again. ■



*GHOULISH FUN — Shenandoah WIC staff get into the Halloween spirit.*

## CHRISTMAS AT NEW JERSEY'S VNACJ WIC: WHERE NUTRITION MEETS DELICIOUS

December 21, 2011 was a happy scene of 40 children who received their gifts from jolly Santa Claus, Christmas cake, and a small cup of 1% reduced-fat milk. Healthfirst NJ and the Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey WIC clinic in Perth Amboy came together to embrace the community and remain loyal to their mission, which transformed our clinic into a place of warmth, peace, and goodwill. The season of joy was there!

In just two hours, children took pictures with Santa Claus, received trucks, cars, guitars or dolls and then made time to taste the delicious cake baked by WIC's staff, substituting 1% reduced-fat milk for the water called for in the recipe. The soft, fluffy, red and green cake was welcomed by parents whose comments ranged from "I never thought of such substitution; I will bake with milk from now on," to



*JOB WELL DONE — Perth Amboy WIC staff and Healthfirst NJ representative visit with Santa.*

"I like new ideas and this one is easy to put in action."

Christmas at WIC was celebrated by parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles who came with the children to experience for the first time this well-coordinated event that was made possible by the dynamic Healthfirst NJ marketing representative Gladys Cartagena; the DTR for the WIC Program Julia Sotomayor; CPAs Amy Buhosky, Apryl Hamid, Kathy English; Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Miriam Zokner; and our helpful and committed generalists.

In the Belford WIC office in Monmouth County, WIC children and their older siblings were remembered by the community in the Middletown Woman's Club gift drive. For the tenth year, club members put gift tags in local banks to collect gifts for VNACJ WIC families. Over 160 gifts arrived at the Belford WIC office the week before Christmas for distribution during Christmas week. It looked like a gift factory explosion in the WIC office with all the brightly wrapped packages. Children were thrilled to unwrap their gifts and the mothers were pleased that their older children were not forgotten.



*FUN FOR ALL — Nutritionist Apryl Hamid and our WIC children.*



Thank you to everyone who made Christmas more joyful for our WIC families. ■



*TWICE THE JOY — Santa embraces these happy children at VNACJ's Perth Amboy WIC clinic.*

## MARWIC TIMES Calendar

- The deadline for the Summer issue of MARWIC TIMES is May 14, 2012. 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 photos must include a detailed caption.

## WVU EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER RICH SHERMAN HELPS WIC PARTICIPANTS WITH CONTAINER GARDENING

By Denise Eagan, MA, RD, LD, and Nutrition Education Liaison

Last spring, Rich Sherman, WV Extension Agent and Master Gardener, from West Virginia University Extension Services presented a program on container gardening at the Valley Health Cabell County WIC Program. Participants and their children learned container gardening can be an opportunity to grow plants in a variety of containers from small to large. The plants can be grown indoors or outside. The containers can have a specific theme, such as an assortment of herbs for seasoning recipes, vegetables assortments for Italian sauces, or they can be planted for ornamental beauty or just wanting to grow vegetables for their meals.

Rich also shared how to determine the depth to plant seeds and helped participants plant their seeds. Each participant planted several seeds and eagerly took their pods home with them to be nurtured and planted. This class showed participants that gardening can be simple and fun. ■



*WV Extension Agent Rick Sherman watches as a WIC participant plants seeds in a newspaper pod.*

## DC WIC CELEBRATES FOOD DAY

On October 24, District of Columbia WIC staff celebrated Food Day for District residents. Food Day was created to promote the benefits of fresh, locally grown food. DC WIC partnered with the National WIC Association, the District of Columbia Metro Area Dietetic Association and Central Harvest to host a special farmers' market at the Woodrow Wilson Plaza to celebrate the benefits of fresh, locally grown food. DC WIC staff provided nutrition education activities, food demonstrations and breastfeeding education. The witch's slaw, prepared by DC WIC State Agency nutritionists, was a crowd pleaser! In addition to DC WIC, event exhibitors included the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education, and the University of the District of Columbia. Children and adults sampled wonderful local produce, enjoyed cooking demonstrations and tasted food prepared by some of DC's best chefs.

In local agency clinics, WIC staff, NWA and other community partners hosted events to promote local farmers and fresh produce for sustainability and health. Local partners included Everybody Eats, a community café in DC that serves nutritious food on a pay-what-you-can model, and DC Central Kitchen, an organization that provides job training and meal distribution to address problems of poverty, hunger and homelessness. Annette Ryan, visionary of Everybody Eats, visited our Minnesota Avenue clinic to prepare and distribute samples of homemade applesauce for WIC participants.

DC Central Kitchen students worked with WIC staff at Howard University Hospital and Comprehensive Care Clinic to prepare a "Power Salad" recipe for WIC participants. Upper Cardozo Clinic and state agency staff teamed up to demonstrate preparation of two seasonal recipes: mashed sweet potatoes and broccoli salad. Food samples and recipe cards were distributed for all of the featured recipes. In our Good Hope Road Clinic, Capital Area Food Bank provided an urban gardening workshop so participants could plant their own vegetables.

Thank you to all of our staff and community partners for their hard work, which made DC WIC's Food Day celebration a huge success. ■



*TIME OUT — Taking a break are (left to right) Santos Benitez, Francisco Flores, Paulette Thompson, Brittney Berling, Sara Beckwith and Corixa Bran-Paz.*



*FOOD DAY FOR ALL — DC WIC staff provide cooking demonstrations, food samples and nutrition education at the Central Harvest on the Plaza Farmers' Market.*



*YUM — Rene Simms (left) and Tovah Wolf prepared mashed sweet potatoes and broccoli salad for participants at the Upper Cardozo WIC clinic*

## LOCAL WIC CLINICS HOST CONVENTION OF PREGNANT AND LACTATING MOTHERS IN PUERTO RICO'S SOUTHEAST ZONE

By Dimari Rivera, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, Yabucoa WIC Clinic

Puerto Rico WIC Clinics of Yabucoa and Naguabo came together to celebrate the Second Convention of Pregnant and Lactating mothers in the Southeast zone. The activity celebrated the achievements of nursing mothers with a graduation in which over 300 people attended.

A symbolic graduation ceremony was performed. The mothers who breastfed their babies paraded with their accompanying support during the breastfeeding process. The graduates included mothers, children and husbands to overcome the challenge of breastfeeding and gained



*GOOD TIMES FOR ALL — Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Dimari Rivera Yabucoa, one of the coordinators of the convention, is surrounded by participants.*

knowledge about long-term benefits by supporting the natural and free breastfeeding.

The Convention had more than 30 exhibitors displaying products and services for families and their breastfed infants. Workshops on breastfeeding, childbirth classes and introduction of foods to 6 months were offered. There was a fashion show with clothes and accessories for pregnant women, nursing mothers and for girls.

Private companies and government agencies that promote breastfeeding in the community participated by offering products and services free of charge to attendees. Resources such as doulas, midwives, image and beauty specialists, chiropractors, nutritionists, and others, were present. The community enjoyed the activity that promoted breastfeeding as an integral part of the WIC nutritional goal of Puerto Rico. ■

## PENNSYLVANIA FCCAA WIC PROVIDES WARMTH AND COMFORT DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON!

By Betty Zackal, WIC Director, Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc.

Especially during the holiday season, Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc. (FCCAA) WIC Program distributed warm, cuddly blankets donated by the local chapter of Project Linus along with Teddy bears that are a part of their local agency outreach program. The mission of Project Linus is to provide love, a sense of security, warmth, and comfort to children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need through the gifts of new, homemade, washable blankets and afghans, lovingly crafted by volunteer blanketers.

The Fayette County Chapter of Project Linus serves a four-county area and has now delivered over 1500 blankets to children in these counties in the short time this chapter has been in existence. Fayette County WIC Program is grateful to be affiliated with Project Linus, which is a 100% volunteer organization. ■



*COZY — Cheyenne Hatfield, 4, daughter of Kristy Hatfield of Uniontown, was elated with the soft, warm Project Linus blanket and FCCAA Teddy Bear given while she waited in the WIC waiting room enjoying the festive Christmas tree.*

## PUERTO RICO WIC's SANTA JUANITA CLINIC HOSTS BREASTFEEDING ENCOUNTER

By Karla Flores, Nutritionist, Santa Juanita WIC Clinic

Puerto Rico's Santa Juanita WIC Clinic offered to pregnant women participating in the clinic a Breastfeeding Conference. The topics discussed were myths, benefits for the baby/mother/environment, preparation before giving birth, breastfeeding - medicines, placement and breastfeeding positions.

Approximately 40 pregnant women from the WIC clinic participated. The staff who participated were Karla Flores, WIC Clinic Nutritionist and Certified Educator of Lactation; Lydia Cortes, Certified Educator of Lactation; and Ibi Marys Ocasio, breastfeeding peer counselor. ■



*ALL SMILES — Conference attendees with their gifts.*

## NEW JERSEY STATE WIC GIVES BACK

By Cindy Weiss-Fisher, Coordinator, Primary and Preventive Health Services, NJ WIC

New Jersey WIC's Talaya Michael, Technical Assistant 3, Community Affairs, suggested that in addition to having a State WIC holiday party this year, staff could also collect non-perishables to donate to a local food pantry. "I know times are tough for all of us, but we still have it better than most," said Talaya.

Talaya enjoys planning the annual holiday party and thought it would be a good idea to "give back" to our community in Trenton, NJ. The food drive started around Thanksgiving and continued until the State WIC Holiday party on December 15. The donations were given to the Catholic Charities Diocese of Trenton, Emergency and Community Services.

Talaya decorated two large boxes with holiday paper; she was surprised and excited to see how fast the first box was filled with food.

Talaya packed up the food into smaller boxes for easier transport to Catholic Charities down the street from the State WIC office. Talaya said, "When I walked inside the Catholic Charities lobby to sign in I saw a couple of people I grew up with waiting for food donations. When I came up with this idea, I didn't do it with the thought that I might be helping someone I knew. Acts of kindness touch everyone, those we know and those we don't." ■



*SEASON OF GIVING — Talaya Michael and NJ WIC Director Mary Mickles show off generous donations that were collected during the holidays.*



*BOUNTIFUL BOUNTY — Boxes of food and other necessities were collected and donated to Catholic Charities.*

## JEFFREY WIBBERLEY RETIRES FROM COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM OF LANCASTER COUNTY (PA)

By Brian Sweigart, Communications Officer, CAP-Lancaster

Jeffrey Wibberley, Director of Special Projects, with the Community Action Program (CAP) of Lancaster County, Inc. retired on January 1 after a 39-plus-year career with the agency. During his tenure, Wibberley helped thousands of low-income individuals and families through various programs that he was instrumental in bringing to the community. One of the most impactful of these programs is the Special Formula Distribution Center. The distribution operation, established by the Pennsylvania WIC Program in partnership with CAP of Lancaster County in 1996, ships specialized infant formula to the homes of 5,000 high-risk WIC infants in the states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia and New Jersey. In addition to nurturing the lives of

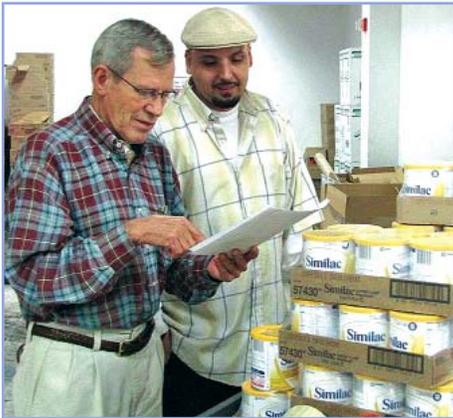
thousands of infants since 1996, the distribution center has saved participating states millions of dollars while insuring that parents have timely access to the specialized formula regardless of where they live in the six states served by the program.

Shirley Sword, Chief, Nutrition Services, PA State WIC Agency stated, "Jeff has been at the helm of running the Special Formula Distribution Center and his dedication and service to WIC families will be missed!"

The CAP of Lancaster County Board of Directors recognized Jeff for his 39 years of service to the agency at its meeting on December 7, 2011. Board President Ed Rasmuson announced through proclamation that Room 220 in CAP's main office building would be named the "Jeffrey R. Wibberley Boardroom" in honor of Wibberley's many contributions to the agency and the community.

When Wibberley was asked what he would miss the most about CAP of Lancaster County, he said, "I will miss the people I have worked with all or parts of the last 39 years, and I will miss the opportunity to creatively face new challenges on a daily basis."

Mark Esterbrook, CAP of Lancaster County CEO stated, "Jeffrey's fingerprint is on the creation of nearly every program at CAP and the nearly 35,000 people served each year in Lancaster County. I know I speak for everyone at CAP when I say thank you, Jeff, for your heartfelt service to this agency and the community we serve!" ■



ONE LAST TASK — Jeff Wibberley (left) and Miguel "Pete" Oyola prepare an order of baby formula for shipment.

## 2011 THE YEAR TO GROW AND GLOW FOR NEW JERSEY WIC SERVICES

By Mary Turbek, RN, IBCLC

2011 was the year for breastfeeding training in the Garden State! All New Jersey WIC staff honed their breastfeeding and team-building skills during the year-long, four-part training. The format for the state-wide training was conceived as a collaboration of local agency and State staff. The trainers included local agency and State staff, and professional trainers and counselors. The interactive sessions were lively and interesting discussions abounded. Creative games were devised to capture interest and to have fun while learning about breastfeeding and about each other. Pre- and post-training surveys of WIC staff showed improvement, especially in talking about breastfeeding to family members and about working and breastfeeding. The more negative the pre-training scores of the staff, the more improvement post-training. Even better, WIC participants noticed a change in the staff talking about breastfeeding and working! ■



LEARNING CAN BE FUN — Ocean County WIC staff playing Breastfeeding Jenga! are (left to right) Nicole Ferrante, Breanne Delprete, Christine Lin, and Cristina Luibil.



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