The idea of WIC was born at the historic White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health in 1969, where pediatricians and poverty advocates shared concerns about hungry and undernourished pregnant women and young children. The WIC program was authorized by Congress in 1972 and launched its first pilot program in Pineville, Kentucky in January, 1974.

The early WIC years were a heady mix of experimentation, political activism and rapid expansion. It was exciting to be a part of the WIC movement and to see the early success of the program: declining hunger and anemia and better birth outcomes for millions of babies.

Forty years later, we plan to spend 2014 celebrating WIC’s achievements and learning from its history. Turning forty is also a good time to look forward and ask some tough questions. Is the current WIC business model outdated and in need of transformative change? How will the Affordable Care Act impact WIC’s core nutrition and breastfeeding services? Can we be just as effective working remotely with WIC participants online as we are in person? What if WIC managers were held accountable for health outcomes instead of caseloads?

As we grapple with these and other questions, the next forty years will prove to be equally exciting as the first forty. Explore this edition of the WIC Watch for inspiration. Then, let’s celebrate and innovate together!
We’re excited to celebrate WIC’s 40th Anniversary with you at our 22nd Annual Conference and Trade Show: WIC 4.0 – Upgrading for Health Equity. Dynamic plenary sessions and a variety of workshops in five professional education tracks will help us look back at our amazing history, but also look forward to an exciting future.

What does healthcare reform mean for WIC? How can WIC continue to play a strong role in reducing health disparities? With creativity and cooperation, let’s do a “WIC Upgrade” to our operating systems for the next 40 years!

Register now! Join us Sunday, April 6 - Wednesday, April 9, 2014 at the Town & Country Resort in San Diego. You’ll find more information under Events at www.calwic.org.

Coming Soon: WIC WORKS Webinars 2014

Need to stay current on topics related to WIC? What could be more convenient than learning via free webinars right from your office? In addition to the Wellness series described on page 8, we’ll continue offering our successful WIC WORKS Webinars this spring, starting on February 27 with WIC and the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). We’re planning future sessions to include:

- Breastfeeding-Friendly Community Clinics
- Nutrition Counseling as an ACA Preventive Service
- Milk Bank Donor Drives

…and more! Details are on our Events page at www.calwic.org. We hope you’ll join us!

2014 Regional Training:
MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

If you attended CWA’s Regional Breastfeeding “Summer Camp” last year, you know what valuable professional education you can expect at these upcoming training days:

- June 17 ..........Fresno
- June 24 ..........Sacramento
- July 15 ..........San Diego
- August 12 .....Santa Clara

Each full training day will address the expected breastfeeding challenges in the early days and weeks postpartum. Appropriate for WIC staff and peer counselors, hospital and public health nurses, community clinic staff, public health nutritionists, medical office staff, Head Start and Early Head Start, child care providers and maternal child health staff. Continuing education units will be provided for RD, IBCLC, CLE, RN. Stay tuned for more details!
Mission Accomplished!

In late 2011, CWA launched a grassroots Campaign to preserve and protect WIC funds from an onslaught of frightening Congressional proposals to reduce funding. The WE NEED WIC campaign engaged hundreds of community WIC supporters and helped get our message out in creative and low-budget ways, from paper plates to YouTube videos.

THANK YOU to all who jumped in to help with the Campaign in all its phases. You should be proud of the latest victory: full funding for WIC in the FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill! Future funding battles are sure to surface, but for now we can say “Mission Accomplished!”

Campaign Highlights

October - December 2011
- Campaign Kickoff in Bakersfield with a “Pep Talk” by Congressman George Miller.
- WIC agencies and community partners collected nearly 70,000 paper plates from WIC participants.
- 50 reality videos in support of the WIC program were created by WIC staff, participants, and other supporters and posted to the Campaign’s YouTube Channel.
- Press events at local clinics garnered amazing media coverage.
- Stacks of paper plates were shipped or personally delivered to every congressional district office.

March 2012
- More plates were personally delivered to each California Congressional office in Washington, DC by WIC Ambassadors.

August - November 2012
- Electoral Strategy rollout: WIC advocates reached out to all candidates in California congressional races with questions regarding their support for the WIC program, with responses posted to the CWA website.

January 2013 - October 2013
- We Need WIC Phase III: launched California’s WIC Business-Community Alliance with training events and an online contest.
- Local WIC advocates collected an incredible 500 endorsements from community supporters and local businesses.
- CWA effectively used compelling campaign video stories in daily Twitter feed to all California members of Congress during unprecedented government shutdown, getting mention on the House floor.
- California’s WIC Business-Community Alliance supported efforts to oppose government shutdown and WIC funding cuts.

Visit the We Need WIC webpage at http://calwic.org/policy-center/we-need-wic for more details and links to examples of the above highlights. Feel free to share them with your supporters!
Federal Budget

Good news! In mid-January, Congress finally hammered out a FY 2014 Omnibus Funding Bill which protects WIC from sequester cuts and is largely favorable for continuing food and nutrition services and program improvements. WIC received $6.716 billion, including $60 million for breastfeeding peer counselors and related activities, $14 million for infrastructure, and $30 million for MIS.

The WIC contingency fund got a bit shortchanged in the process, while certain “low-risk” grocers may be able to expedite their state vendor applications upon termination of federally-mandated moratoriums (initial on-site visits could be waived).

After weeks of contentious appropriations debate over white potatoes, a convoluted “Explanatory Statement” was inserted in the funding bill that “expects” USDA to include potatoes in the WIC food packages, but would allow Secretary Vilsack to opt out by submitting a rationale to appropriators within 15 days. WIC advocates are urging him to stand firm.

State Policy

Faced with another sizeable budget surplus after years of deficits, Governor Brown unveiled a budget proposal that continues to restrain spending in order to create a prudent reserve. But some legislators and advocates think the proposal could have gone a little further in restoring critical poverty-fighting investments that were lost during the dark years. The Legislature will now spend the next six months trying to meet the Governor somewhere in the middle.

CDPH has finalized one set of new regulations strengthening the WIC vendor authorization system, and in December released another new set revamping vendor peer groups and pricing. Once the comment period is over, the WIC Division will implement the new system and be able to lift the current moratorium. To read the regulations, look on the State WIC website at www.wicworks.ca.gov.

This year CWA will focus on strategies to implement groundbreaking hospital breastfeeding legislation. With newly-created resources and survey tools, we’ll work with grassroots monitors to track progress on SB 502, the Infant Feeding Act that implemented in January of this year, and SB 402, the Hospital Breastfeeding Equity bill that was signed last year and fully implements by 2025.

WIC Ambassador (and one-time WIC participant) Bertha Gonzalez and CWA Legislative Co-Chair Michelle Turner advocate for WIC in Washington, DC.

STAY TUNED: Get regular policy updates via the CWA Flash, our biweekly e-newsletter! Sign up at www.calwic.org, send your email address by text message (text CALWIC to 22828 to get started), or email Margaret at maumann@calwic.org.
Breastfeeding News

Growing the Lactation Profession

As a supporter of the Grow Our Own Lactation Consultant/IBCLC Preparation Course, CWA congratulates these IBCLCs recently “grown” from the program:

From the Visalia Class 2010-2011:
Kelley Holt—Central Valley Indian Health WIC
Callie Medeiros—Children’s Hospital of the Central Valley

From the Temecula Class 2011-2012:
Cecile Cerillo—North Cnty Health Services WIC

From the Fresno Class 2012-2013:
Jennifer Burton—Children’s Hospital of the Central Valley
Kathy Cantu—Fresno Kaiser Hospital
Paola Cassidy—Clinica Sierra Vista WIC Bakersfield
Tonya Hill—Fresno Kaiser Hospital
Kelly Kaminsky—Community Regional Medical Ctr Fresno
Pat Martinez—Children’s Hospital of the Central Valley & Fresno Kaiser Hospital
Kendra Norris—Fresno Kaiser Hospital
Alexis Rodriguez—Clinica Sierra Vista WIC Bakersfield (Delano)
Terry Shigyo—Fresno Kaiser Hospital
Alice Volundad—United Health Centers WIC Fresno
Denise Winslow—Fresno Kaiser Hospital

A class is currently in session at Loma Linda University and another is being planned for September 2014 in Southern California. For more information about Grow Our Own, visit www.lovingsupport.org.

Lactation Support in California Community Clinics

What’s needed so that more mothers initiate and maintain breastfeeding, especially exclusive breastfeeding? Moms need stronger lactation support and an effective continuum of care throughout their communities.

Working through the California Obesity Prevention Program at CDPH under a 2013 CDC obesity prevention grant, CWA and the California Breastfeeding Coalition worked with 15 clinics (see the Winter 2013 WIC Watch, page 6) to institute policies and practices to improve pre- and postnatal lactation support, including:

- clinic breastfeeding task force
- staff education and training
- breastfeeding counseling
- worksite lactation accommodation
- referral systems with hospitals and WIC
- sustainable use of, and billing by, IBCLCs
- data collection
- use of Electronic Medical Records

From their experience, it’s clear that community clinics can engage many strategies to be effective partners in the breastfeeding continuum of care. In a few months, a full report will detail the many successful strategies and innovations clinics implemented.

Another document will outline the Steps, Guidance, and Evaluation Criteria for implementing breastfeeding-friendly community clinics and medical offices. Developed by a volunteer statewide panel of breastfeeding advocates and health providers, this will be a valuable resource for improving lactation support.

Doris Linares, IBCLC, assists Maribel Cortes and baby Julian at Northeast Valley Health Corporation Clinic in San Fernando.

Grow Our Own graduating class Fresno 2012-2013.
New WIC Class Package: Happy Mealtimes

Happy Mealtimes, a new WIC class package, is now available! In response to local agencies’ requests, the State WIC Nutrition Education section worked with the Education Committee to develop the new class. Topics include:

- normal eating behavior for young children
- reasons for “picky eating”
- tips to help kids eat healthier while making mealtimes more relaxed and enjoyable.

The class is not required but is available for you to offer to participants. The class code is GA19. Materials include a lesson plan, PowerPoint presentation, facilitator’s guide, and new/revised handouts, all in English and Spanish. The lesson plan highlights participant-centered education (PCE) principles and techniques, including start with strengths, explore/offer/explore, practice, and summarize.

A recent PWPC letter provides details on downloading the class materials and ordering the handouts. Many thanks to Education Committee members for their input, collaboration, and field testing of the class and the handouts!

Questions? Contact Poppy Strode at margaret.strode@cdph.ca.gov.

Participant-Centered Education: Tailored for Platinum Service

California WIC has developed its own brand of Participant-Centered Education (PCE), tailored specifically for our participants and staff. As a key component of our initiative to offer Platinum Services, California WIC has been promoting this educational approach for over 15 years with multiple workshops, training designs, lesson plans, and participant education and staff development resources. And we’ve demonstrated how well PCE works for our participants!

Local agencies can now send their staff to several state-led PCE trainings, including Individual Education, Group Education, and PCE Mentoring, offered in different regions across the state. A course about Designing Classes and Trainings is being offered by videoconference.

Additionally, over 20 in-service modules are posted online for local agency trainers or other staff to lead, each covering one or more PCE competencies. Tools for observing and mentoring staff are posted online as well. You can find all this and more at the new Training and Career Development webpage described below.

Let us know what you think: contact the State PCE Team at WICPCE@cdph.ca.gov. We welcome your feedback!

Training and Career Development Webpage Now Updated

Check out the recently updated homepage for Training and Career Development: from the WIC Main Page at www.wicworks.ca.gov, click on WIC Local Agencies under Professional Resources, and click on the Statewide Training and Career Development link under Education and Training. From there you can link to information on the programs described above, including: Participant-Centered Education; Local Vendor Liaison; and, under Platinum WIC - Participant-Centered Services, the Academy for Participant-centered Leadership.
Local Vendor Liaisons: Trained and Ready to Help!

Over 200 Local Vendor Liaisons (LVL) deliver top-notch technical assistance to WIC authorized vendors throughout California, thanks in part to recently-established protocols and performance standards. In 2013, technical assistance training and bi-monthly webinar sessions enabled LVLs to provide relevant education and support to WIC vendors. Training focused on establishing new resources that LVLs can share with vendors to promote the stocking of quality fresh produce, and helped LVLs understand and reinforce confidentiality and conflict-of-interest requirements at the local level.

In addition, the new online LVL Main Page offers LVL resource materials to help conduct and document vendor technical assistance, and answer questions from and provide training to vendors and local agency staff. As they are developed over time, these materials will represent the LVL Training and Resource Manual. You can access them through the new Training and Career Development webpage described on page 6.

Want more information? Contact the State WIC LVL Coordinator at WICLVL@cdph.ca.gov.

Academy for Participant-Centered Leadership: Happy 3rd Birthday, APL!

September 2013 saw the completion of the third year of the Academy for Participant-Centered Leadership (APL) program. Thirty-one WIC staff, representing 14 local WIC programs, met in Sacramento to present their Platinum Services projects and reflect on what they had gained from their experience.

If you missed the presentation about these impressive projects at CWA’s Fall Management Conference, you can view highlights online at the new Training and Career Development webpage (see below). This recently updated webpage (see page 6) also includes the APL program schedule and overview, brief descriptions of APL projects from previous years, and the tools used by APL trainees to plan their projects.

The APL Class of 2014 is already under way. Twenty-one trainees representing 11 local WIC agencies and two representing the State WIC Division attended their first workshop in October. For more information, contact the State APL Team at WICAPLProgram@cdph.ca.gov.

2013 APL Graduates gathered to celebrate!
Keeping Current with WWW Certification

Is your agency WWW Certified? Has your agency been a certified Well WIC Worksite for at least three years? If you answered YES to both of these questions, it’s time for your agency to get recertified!

Complete these four easy steps to be on your way to Recertification.

1. Complete a WIC Worksite Wellness Recertification Form/Check off List

2. Provide a summary of at least three wellness activities and one success story

3. Attend a CWA-hosted Wellness Webinar (more details below)

4. Choose one from the following:
   a. Represent your agency on a WIC Worksite Wellness Workshop Panel at the next Annual Conference;
   b. Participate in Local Agency Sharing at the next Annual Conference;
   c. Share your agency’s Worksite Wellness Best Practices on a CWA-hosted Wellness Webinar; or
   d. Serve as a mentor to another agency that is currently going through the WIC Worksite Wellness certification process.

Once these steps have been completed, agencies will receive a Re-Certification Award (framed paper award) to show their completion. For more information on getting recertified or to download a Recertification Form, visit http://calwic.org/focus-areas/wic-worxsite-wellness/certification.

Wellness Webinars: Just for You!

Why leave the office for valuable seminars when you can participate and learn right from your computer? Join us for CWA’s Worksite Wellness Webinar Series, three 60-minute webinars focused on the physical, emotional, and environmental aspects of staying healthy at work. Each webinar provides one free CEU for RDs and recertification credit for Well WIC Worksites.

JANUARY 29: Let’s Get Physical: Supporting Nutrition & Physical Activity at Work

Staff from the Public Health Institute/CDPH and San Mateo WIC shared best practices and tools specific to nutrition and physical activity promotion at low-wage worksites.

FEBRUARY 19: Managing Stress & Promoting Emotional Wellness

Join mental health professional Denise Dempsey to learn about Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and other techniques for staying well emotionally, at work and at home.

MARCH 5: Working Wellness into the Office Environment

Does your office recycle? Do you have space for stretching and eating lunch? Are there bike racks near your office? Join expert speakers and local WIC agency staff to learn how our work environments impact health, and how you can promote positive change.

You’ll find details and registration links for all webinars on our website at http://calwic.org/events/wic-works-webinars. If you miss a session, you can listen to a recording; however, you may earn CEUs or credit only by participating live. Stay well!
Local Agency News

Got Breastmilk? Sacramento Area Moms Provide for Babies in Need

Last December the Breastfeeding Coalition of Greater Sacramento hosted their second annual Breast Milk Donation Drive in Sacramento. Teaming up with the Mothers’ Milk Bank of San Jose, Dr. Richard Pan, Chair of the California Assembly Health Committee, Community Resource Project WIC, Sacramento County WIC, and Sutter Memorial Hospital, the Coalition drew in breastfeeding moms throughout Sacramento to register as milk bank donors.

At the one-day event, moms brought in more than 2,400 ounces of frozen breastmilk, which the Milk Bank will process and distribute to infants who are critically ill, premature, or otherwise in need.

Milk donation drives help generate awareness in the community about the need for breastmilk donations and the critical role human milk plays in the survival of infants in need. To help meet the Milk Bank’s increasing need for donated breastmilk, the Sacramento Coalition will continue to collect breastmilk from registered donors throughout the year.

Several significant donors who participated in the event were WIC participants who have benefitted from lactation support offered at Sacramento area WIC clinics. The event also generated extensive media coverage: three major television networks and the Sacramento Bee.

Why not host a breastmilk donation drive in your area? Find out more from Mother’s Milk Bank at (877) 375-6645 or www.mothersmilk.org. WIC and other moms can help fulfill a critical need.
Career Corner

CNC Scholar, Maggie Diaz

I’m a firm believer that in order to invest in our country we must invest in our future: children.” So says Anne Garrett Memorial Scholarship recipient Margaret (Maggie) Diaz, known for her passion for giving back to her community, advocating on behalf of children, and speaking up for parents who may be too afraid. Maggie’s mother once relied on WIC services in a time of need, receiving healthy food, breastfeeding support, and valuable nutrition information for her family.

When asked about her career goals, Maggie says, “After six years of experience as a Nutritionist at PHFE WIC, I’ve realized that public policy is essential to ensuring the long-term growth and stability of the WIC program. Representing WIC on a legislative level is my ultimate goal.” Toward that goal, she completed the PHFE-WIC Dietetic Internship (DI) with support from CWA’s California Nutrition Corps scholarship. She’s currently studying for the dietetic registration exam.

Maggie’s also gaining further management experience, having been promoted last June to Supervisor of the Maple WIC Center. Not one to rest long, Maggie plans to pursue a Masters degree in Public Health, opening up even more career opportunities. She also hopes to advance within WIC as an Area Manager, allowing her to represent PHFE-WIC in the community on issues affecting WIC services.

Outside of work, Maggie loves to travel for pleasure and, in the future, as a volunteer. And, knowing that her own health is just as important as that of WIC families, at press time she was planning to run her first half-marathon!

DI Program Director Robin Evans says, “Maggie is so exuberant and outgoing that she puts everyone at ease right away. She is a great asset to the profession and role model for her community.”

Comings and Goings

Congratulations to the following local agency program directors, new to their positions since our last WIC Watch:

- Tina Canales, Clinica Sierra Vista (read her story on facing page)
- Linda Rose, Tehama County (not pictured)

In Memoriam

Lisa Lancaster, Chief of Site Operations at LABioMed WIC, passed away in April 2013. A Peace Corps assignment in rural West Africa inspired Lisa to study nutrition at Cal State LA, become a registered dietitian, and later earn a master’s degree in home economics. Lisa worked tirelessly for WIC for over 25 years and, even at age 79, was often the last person to leave the office.
Tina Canales, RD, CLC, has proven there is more than one pathway to success. Starting as a teen mom on WIC, she is now the Director of Clinica Sierra Vista WIC in Kern and Fresno Counties, president of the Central Valley Dietetic Association, and a CWA Board Member.

Tina did not follow the high school, college, family route typical of many of her peers. Pregnant at 17, she continued at a Fresno high school that had a nursery on site. At 19 and pregnant again, she married the father of her children, to whom she is still happily married.

While growing up, Canales’s mom stressed the importance of education. After high school, Tina attended Fresno City College, then Fresno State University, while also running a family child care home and working in restaurants and retail. Throughout her 20s, Tina made gradual progress toward her degree, eventually choosing to pursue dietetics at the suggestion of a professor.

Even before starting her career at WIC, Canales had experience with the program. When her first child was born, a friend referred her to WIC because they offered “free formula.” But the experience that stood out the most was the classes, which Tina credits with inspiring her to focus on nutrition.

After Canales graduated from Fresno State, she worked in the Migrant Head Start program for five years. The Central Valley Dietetic Internship offered by United Health Centers was started during this time, and Canales joined the inaugural class of WIC and non-WIC interns.

Her first job as a Registered Dietitian (RD) was at Madera Community Hospital. While clinical work was not her first choice, she needed the job and grew to enjoy it. Tina taught part-time at Fresno City College, too. Eventually, she returned to where she felt most at home – WIC. She started as a RD at EOC WIC in Fresno County. Later, she moved to Clinica Sierra Vista WIC as Assistant Director, and recently became the Director.

Canales credits Gloria Pecina, RD and Karen Gillian, RD for encouraging her to become an RD. In turn, Canales loves helping others follow their dreams. As the WIC director, she says her mission is “to encourage, promote and mentor culturally diverse and compassionate RDs.” Canales also credits her parents, especially her mom, for her success.

Recently, Canales shared her story with the Merced County WIC staff, providing information on scholarships, grants and financial aid, and encouraging them to “go back to school. If you have a goal, get started on it!” Sounds like good advice for us all.

“A dream doesn’t become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.”
– Colin Powell
Contribute to the WIC Watch!

Share your best practices and success stories:

SPRING 2014
Spring Conference Edition
Deadline:
February 24, 2014

SUMMER 2014
Breastfeeding Edition
Deadline:
May 30, 2014

Keep in touch!

To update your e-mail or mailing address, request more copies, or submit article ideas or drafts, contact Margaret Aumann at:

maumann@calwic.org
CWA, 1450 Drew Ave., Ste. 150
Davis, CA 95618
530.750.2280 phone
530.758.7780 fax

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Save the Dates

NWA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
March 2-5, 2014 • Washington, DC
CWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
& TRADE SHOW
April 6-9, 2014
Town & Country • San Diego
CWA INFO & EDUCATION DAY
May 28, 2014 • State Capitol, Sacramento