You Did It!

**WIC** employees across California made history on October 1, 2009, as they issued the first checks for healthier new foods! After years of complex policymaking, collaborative planning, and intensive training, frontline staff are now busy showing WIC families how to use their new green checks to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and soy products, as well as the more familiar items. CWA salutes the WIC community and our many valued partners for this achievement. After a long wait, and despite the fiscal crisis, you have reached a major nutrition milestone, smoothly implementing a change that is sure to result in dramatic improvements in the public’s health.

*Thanks to all for a superb job from the CWA Board and Staff!*

The State WIC Team savors the success of WIC’s transition to new foods on October 1. California WIC is serving up new foods to moms, babies and kids. This has been a long time coming and lots of work for many, many people. The new food choices will help California’s families grow healthy with WIC.
The New WIC

The new fruit and vegetable checks are here! WIC families can now purchase fresh, frozen and canned vegetables at any WIC-approved grocery store in the state. In addition, fruit and vegetable checks will be authorized for use at a small number of Certified Farmers’ Markets (CFMs) throughout the state beginning in May 2010.

In anticipation of the fruit and vegetable checks’ use at Farmers’ Markets next year, the State WIC Division released an application for market managers who are interested in working with state staff to develop the training and infrastructure needed to expand to all eligible farmers in the state. This first group will be year-round markets whose managers have experience with the WIC Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). These managers will work with their WIC local agency to communicate training plans and coordinate resources. The selection of this first group of five markets will be announced by October 30, 2009. Once these markets are up and running in May, additional CFMs will be authorized throughout the remainder of 2010 and 2011.

Unlike the current FMNP coupon redemption procedure, transaction of the WIC fruit and vegetable checks are very different. Farmers will follow the same procedures used by WIC-authorized grocery stores, including verifying the identity of WIC participants, obtaining the WIC participant’s signature on each check, writing in the purchase price, and submitting check serial numbers for payment authorization within 45 days from the checks’ “first day to use” before depositing into the bank. Also, there are slight differences between the foods allowed to be purchased with the FMNP coupons and the fruit and vegetable checks. For example, fresh cut herbs and white potatoes are an allowed purchase with FMNP coupons, but not with WIC fruit and vegetable checks.

To date, over 800 farmers selling at 300+ Certified Farmers’ Markets are approved to accept WIC and Senior FMNP coupons in California. Authorizing and training these additional farmers and market managers on the WIC fruit and vegetable checks will be the second wave of the Food Package implementation for California!
Foods Are Here!

Sam, a vendor from “Mommy’s” WIC-only store near PHFE’s Wilmington site, was very proud to show his first new checks redeemed this morning! Sam and his staff are standing in front of their new produce display, which is stocked with whole wheat bread, whole wheat and corn tortillas, and jar baby foods. Sam feels really good to be a part of the big change!

Sutter County WIC Program celebrated getting rid of the old check stock by making a bon fire with them!

CRP WIC staff at the Citrus Heights site proudly display the new colorful WIC Food Shopping Guides.

See more rollout stories and fun pictures from October 1 on CWA’s new Facebook page!
The New WIC Food Are Here (continued)

The excitement among the staff at the Native American Health Center WIC was palpable. Director, Peter Schlicting was especially thankful to his staff who have worked ceaselessly to make this day a success. He said their laughter kept things going amidst the intense months of training. Nutritionist Leah said her first participant of the day was a mom of a 10-month old infant who was receiving 9 cans of formula. Listening to the benefits of the new, enhanced WIC food package, the mom was happy to hear about the baby foods and decided to decrease the formula to 4 cans. What a great start to the day!

PHFE WIC baby Joshua Epps, who turned one on October 1, received his first new WIC checks.

Clinica de la Raza WIC in Oakland was a hub of activity on the eventful morning, with moms, dads and energetic toddlers filling the waiting room. The tech system (ISIS) worked well, and staff were thrilled that their months of training and preparation had led to such a smooth transition on the big day! Participants were eager to redeem their new checks and try out the many options offered.
The first WIC participant who received the new WIC Checks at the Monterey County WIC Program Seaside site on the big day!

All is well in the Inland Empire! The first round of checks were issued in San Bernardino without a hitch! Staff and participants alike were pleased and maybe a little surprised at the smooth flow of the overall WIC visit, printing, giving and receiving those first checks. San Bernardino County Staff spent their time without ISIS, on the 30th, getting the offices spruced up and making sure everything was ready to go for the first morning classes. Posters are up, decorations are adorable, balloons, fruits and veggies, etc. all ready for that first class.

Native American WIC Program RD Leah Shimabuka introduced the new WIC foods at a group education session.
State Breastfeeding Roundtable Established

The California WIC Association, in partnership with the California Breastfeeding Coalition, just completed the selection process for the California Breastfeeding Roundtable (CBR). This diverse advisory group will make policy and strategy recommendations to both the public and private sectors on breastfeeding.

A former related committee, started in 1994, was the Breastfeeding Promotion Advisory Committee (BPAC). In July 2007 when the California Departments of Public Health and Health Care Services were created from the Department of Health Services, the authority for the committee ended. The California Breastfeeding Roundtable is sponsored by four divisions in the California Department of Public Health (CDPH): Women’s Infants and Children (WIC), Maternal Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH), Physical Activity and Nutrition (PAN), and Genetic Disease Screening.

Much of the groundwork for the mission of the CBR is included in recommendations made by the BPAC in the recently released report Breastfeeding: Investing in California’s Future (2007), http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HEALTHINFO/HEALTHYLIVING/CHILDFAMILY/Pages/BreastfeedingInvestinginCaliforniaFuture.aspx. The work ahead will focus on the specific strategies laid out in the report and efforts needed to engage stakeholders in implementing strategies for improved breastfeeding for California families.

A provisional CBR was quickly established and met in April to work with the CDPH-PAN Division staff that was on a fast track to develop a variety of strategies for obesity prevention as part of a five year CDC obesity prevention grant that will result in an updated California Obesity Prevention Plan.

The members of the standing CBR, just selected, will continue the work on the strategies for the California Obesity Prevention Plan, and work on policy changes that will improve breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity in California. The first meeting will be December 1-2 in Sacramento.

The meetings are open to the public. For information contact CWA at 916-448-2280.

California Breastfeeding Coalition Fosters Strong Advocacy Skills

The breastfeeding specialists across California are quickly establishing themselves as an organized and effective advocacy group as members of their local and our state California Breastfeeding Coalition (CBC).

This year, with two breastfeeding bills moving through the legislature, these breastfeeding advocates across the state were key players in the success of the bills getting to the Governor’s desk with calls, letters and testimony at each step in the process. Many members have become Breastfeeding Ambassadors and attended Breastfeeding Policy Day at the Capitol and continue their work reaching out to their elected official with targeted advocacy information.

Members have also been taking advantage of the opportunity to become Breastfeeding Ambassadors. This opportunity, provided by CA WIC Association, provides advocacy training and pairs

continued next page
Governor Misses an Opportunity—Vetoes AB 513 and SB 257!

Governor Schwarzenegger’s decision to veto two modest but critical bills that would have increased breastfeeding support for low-income and working mothers was a missed opportunity to save millions in health care dollars by supporting low-cost, low-tech investments in breastfeeding. The evidence is in—breastfeeding prevents illness, chronic disease and even infant death. We are extremely disappointed over this short-sighted decision.

**AB 513 (De Leon—Healthcare Coverage/Breastfeeding)** sought improved support for breastfeeding by requiring health care service plans and health insurers to include coverage for lactation support and pumps. The Governor’s veto message stated that he supports breastfeeding, but that mandates in health plans increase the cost of health care. We would argue that the small investment would save millions in subsequent health care cost by reducing acute and chronic disease for mothers and babies.

**SB 257 (Pavley—Employee Notification/Breastfeeding Accommodation)** would have simply required every state agency and department to notify female employees nearing maternity leave of the existing lactation accommodation law. SB 257 sailed through the Legislature and was unopposed by state analysts, with many state agencies indicating there was a need for this simple notification. But the Governor’s veto stated that there was not enough evidence to indicate that employees were not adequately informed of their right to return to work breastfeeding.

Thank you to all the breastfeeding advocates for your tireless efforts with quick responses to the MANY action alerts. Passing legislation requires reaching out to elected officials at many steps along the way with timely messages. We appreciate your efforts to fit this into your busy schedules. California’s breastfeeding advocates have developed a reputation in the Capitol for being professional and organized. Let’s continue to work together to build a strong breastfeeding advocacy plan. You can be part of this through CWA and the CA Breastfeeding Coalition.
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

FEDERAL UPDATES

CHEERS FOR WIC FUNDING: This month, Congress sent the Agriculture funding bills to the President for signature, with $7.252 billion for WIC funding, $398 million above the 2009 non-emergency enacted level, with a target national caseload of 9.6 million participants. You may be wondering why the final number was so much lower than the original markups, which ranged from $7.777 billion (the President’s proposal) and the House ($7.541 billion) and Senate ($7.552 billion) versions. Simply because, as time went by, food costs plummeted and program demand began to level off, so food cost estimates were revised downwards. But California WIC programs should still anticipate caseload growth next year.

WIC APPROS & REAUTHORIZATION DETAILS

A thirty-day technical extension for WIC and Child Nutrition Programs, that was set to expire at midnight on September 30, was added by the committee, with a longer (one-year) extension in the works. There is lots of great news in this funding bill. The conferees added $162 M for “WIC program improvements.” These include increasing fruit and vegetable vouchers by $2.00 for all women. The Cash Value Vouchers for kids is still at $6 (IOM recommended $8). We will continue to advocate for an increased CVV for kids! States will have six months to implement the $2 increase for women, with streamlined rules and help from USDA. Yogurt was not included.

There is also $14 million for infrastructure, $60 M for management information systems, $80 M for breastfeeding peer counselors “and related activities,” quadrupling the program, $15 M for evaluating program performance.

There is a modest but extremely important provision that provides $5 M for WIC breastfeeding performance bonus awards. CWA played an important role in framing the issues and supporting the language in the WIC funding bill which, for the first time, articulates policy and creates a fiscal incentive for WIC providers to improve health outcomes in the large population we serve. The bill provides $5 million for payments to State Agencies that demonstrate the highest portion, or the greatest improvement in proportion of breastfed infants, as compared to other State agencies. The bonus will be based on the proportion of participating exclusively breastfed infants, and can be treated as program income and transferred to local agencies. Last week, CWA sent a letter to USDA urging FNS WIC staff to “work smart” as they implement this initiative in conjunction with (1) a huge increase in peer counseling funds; (2) food package changes which are improving breastfeeding supports and incentives; and (3) pending healthcare legislation which would cover lactation support as a preventive service.

One more thing! The bill also includes a provision that exempts combat pay for members of the US military in determining WIC income eligibility -- provided that the additional pay is the result of deployment to, or service in, a combat zone, and was not received immediately prior to serving in a combat zone.

Member of Congress, Judy Chu, (District 32), visited a PHFE site recently. Staff members discussed the large WIC caseload in this district and the growing partnership between the program and WIC vendors to ensure better quality services to WIC families. Representative Chu was impressed that Baldwin Park WIC’s breastfeeding rates had increased from 18% to 40% since they received a peer counselor.
STATE UPDATES

SB 797/Pavley
Status: Vetoed by Governor
Eliminating BPA In Bottles and Sippy Cups – “Toxic-Free Babies & Toddlers Act”
This bill would limit the amount of Bisphenol A (BPA) allowed to leach from baby bottles, sippy cups, infant formula and baby food jars. Specifically, the bill would prohibit the manufacture, sale or distribution of the above products designed for children 3 and younger that contains more than 0.1 parts per billion of BPA.
CWA Position: SUPPORT

These Bills are dead for the year:

AB 159/Nava
Status: Held in Suspense File in Assembly (Dead for Year)
Perinatal Mood & Anxiety Disorders Awareness & Task Force
Sponsor: Jr. Leagues
This bill would authorize the Department of Public Health to create a Task Force on Perinatal Mood & Anxiety Disorders (PMAD). It would also authorize DPH and the Task Force to develop recommendations and educational materials for the department’s perinatal health programs. These recommendations would be for public awareness and to identify national guidelines for care for PMAD which health care providers and organizations may use. The bill is supported by ACOG, CMA, CA Hospitals Assoc and others. It passed A. Health on a bipartisan fashion with no “no” votes.
CWA Position: SUPPORT

Janelle Webb and Nora Garza from Clinica Sierra Vista were honored by Assemblymember Tony Mendoza, D-Artesia, for their efforts in working with WIC-authorized vendors as Local Vendor Liaisons (LVL), doing a fantastic job educating and assisting them as they implemented the food changes.
The Rollout of the new WIC food packages is a great time to educate our partners and the public about the many ways by which the healthier food options could improve the health of WIC moms and their children. State WIC is planning a series of media events in November. You can plan your own event to celebrate the healthy happenings!

To help prepare you to do outreach to your local media about the new WIC food packages, CWA has created a Media Toolkit. It includes great resources, including Instructions and Timeline for Educating Media about the New WIC Food Packages, Interview Guidelines, Media Advisory Template, Press Release Template, Talking Points on Key Messages and Frequently Asked Questions. Be sure to check them out to help plan a successful Media event.

http://www.calwic.org/newfood.aspx

Plan a local media release of the new WIC foods. Possible events could include:

- A Speaking event featuring invited guests
- Cooking demo with a local celebrity chef
- Health fair with booths for other programs
- Activities for children
- Tour of WIC site
- Tour of local grocery store with WIC mom
- Add any localized information.
- Prepare your local people to be interviewed using the same materials.
- Stay on message!

STEP 4: Do before and during the event

- Arrange potential photo opportunities and interviews at your WIC site or at an authorized WIC vendor location with your identified local people.
- Make sure to get photo releases.
- If a WIC participant is to be interviewed, be sure to be with her during the interview for support and to clarify questions the reporter may have.

STEP 5: Work on Media Advisory

The media advisory is the invitation to your event. It will help your media contacts decide whether to cover the event and where and when it will take place. It includes all the necessary elements and a brief description of the information you should provide to your media contacts.

- Refer to the sample Writing a Media Advisory in the Media Toolkit for local information that you can insert.
- Send out to the local Media Advisory one week...
before you plan to have an event or set up your interviews.
• Email or fax the Media Advisory to local reporters, radio and television stations.
• Insert the Media Advisory as the body of the email
• Make follow up calls to the media to determine interest in the story.

STEP 6: Press Release

Writing a press release is your opportunity to write the ideal news story on your event. The press release is more in-depth than the media advisory. It includes all the necessary elements and what information you should provide to the media. A couple days before and on the morning of your event, fax or email the press release to your media contacts. Make follow-up calls the day before and on the morning of the event to remind your media contacts.
• Email or fax localized Press Release to local reporters, radio and television stations.
• Subject line: Better Foods for Moms and Children or Better Foods at WIC
• Body content: Last week, I sent you a Media Advisory about the better foods for moms and children at WIC. The better foods come after 35 years since the program started including fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and soy products.
• Insert Press Release in body of email, not as an attachment. Insert your local information in the fill-in-the-blanks Press Release
• Make follow-up calls and offer yourself as a resource.

STEP 7: Follow-up and emphasize local relevance

• Follow-up with all the reporters to whom you sent the media advisory and press release.
• Encourage him/her to run the press release or do a story on the better foods WIC is providing.
• Emphasize the local aspect of the story and the fact that you can arrange interviews with a variety of individuals, including mothers who are breastfeeding and health care providers and vendors.
• Make your pitch lively, short and compelling:
  • This is the story, here’s the problem/good news.
  • This is why I think you should write about it/ broadcast the story.
  • Here’s how I can help.
  • Is there anything else you need?
• Be sure to read the Interview Guidelines in the Toolkit.
• If the reporter engages you in conversation, make sure your comments are succinct.
• Have the Frequently Asked Questions available to help you stay on message.

STEP 8: Congratulate yourself on a job well done!

• Collect copies or tapes of successful media placements
• Please forward copies to Robbie Gonzalez-Dow at rgonzalez@calwic.org or Karen Farley at kfarley@calwic.org.

QUESTIONS?
Please contact Robbie Gonzalez at RGonzalez@calwic.org.
Q. I’d like to go back to college, what’s available to help with tuition?

A. As a California WIC employee, you may qualify for financial support through the California Nutrition Corps Scholarship administered by the California WIC Association. This scholarship helps WIC employees in an approved dietetic internship or employees taking upper division college or graduate-level coursework. Information is available on the CWA web page www.calwic.org.

Here are some tips to help you pay for college:

- Learn more about federal financial aid, including information on the federal Perkins loan that may be “forgiven” for full-time employees working for programs like WIC. For more information, go to www.studentaid.ed.gov.

- Check out www.students.gov, an official U.S. government web site designed for college students to make it faster and easier to find answers and helpful links to financial aid programs.

- Explore scholarships and grants through private, non-profit organizations and foundations, businesses and local community groups. Search scholarship web sites, starting with www.fastweb.com and www.collegeboard.com. You’ll also find a free course to guide you through the process of seeking funding for your education at www.foundationcenter.org/getstarted/.

Another recent financial benefit for students is the new tuition tax credit. To find out more about the American opportunity tax credit and the Hope Tax Credit specific to tax years 2009-10, go to www.internal revenue service.

Q. Can my student loan be “forgiven” because I work for WIC?

A. Currently, if you have a Federal Perkins student loan you may be able to have it discharged (forgiven). Conditions that qualify include working full time in a program like WIC, providing services to high-risk families from low-income communities. You must apply to the holder of your loan to have it discharged. Check with the school that made you the loan or with the school’s loan servicing agent. If you’re not sure what type of federal loan you have or who holds it, go to www.nslds.ed.gov. To find out more about loan discharge, go to www.studentaid.ed.gov and click on “Repaying Your Loans” and “Loan Discharge.” Recently, the Higher Education Opportunity Act was enacted to offer loan forgiveness of other federal student loans for service in areas of national need, including WIC nutrition professionals. Unfortunately, the program has not been funded by Congress as yet, but we’ll keep you posted.

California WIC is working to provide you with the latest information on education programs and resources to help you achieve your career goals in community nutrition. If you would like more information on career development programs, e-mail Nancy at nnesa@projects.sdsu.edu.
Taking the Road to Wellness

WIC Wellness All-Star Diana Rosales

Referred to affectionately as the “Queen of Healthy Habits”, Diana Rosales, from Madera County WIC, is an inspiration to her co-workers. In the past couple of years, Diana has adopted lifestyle changes that have made significant improvement to her overall health.

Diana’s wellness journey began in January 2007, when she and a few of her co-workers attended the Childhood Obesity conference in Anaheim. Learning of the magnitude of the obesity epidemic among our young, and hearing success stories from across the state made Diana resolve to get herself and her family on a track to a healthier future. She knew that any change had to begin with herself first – she did not want her young sons to deal with the effects of overweight and obesity, and knew that she had to model the behaviors she wanted to see in her family.

When Diana returned home from the conference, she and a group of co-workers began walking at lunch time and during their work day breaks. For her family, Diana stopped buying sodas and chips, and started stocking veggies and fruits as snacks for her three active sons. After the initial transition, Diana’s husband and sons enthusiastically embraced the changes. Diana says that taking small, incremental steps have helped her and her family sustain these healthy habits. “We take care of each other”, says Diana, “and that has made our lifestyle change feel so empowering.” She says making healthy choices in the past couple years have had life-changing effects, making her happier, and gain confidence in her strengths. When asked what made the difference in making her achieve her health goals, Diana says, “The most important thing is make the change for yourself and be happy with who you are.”

Diana’s determination has helped her lose 60 lbs over the past 18 months. When her coworkers noticed the pounds dropping off, they too were inspired to start eating healthy and exercising more. They supported Diana on her journey by bringing healthy snacks and lunches to the office, accompanying her on walks. Her focus kept them on track to better health. Diana is proud to say that it has become the norm for almost all Madera county WIC staff to use part of their lunch breaks for walks and exercises. Exercising as a group has helped them work better together, manage their stress and improve their skills as counselors. They see themselves as change-makers, confident of making a real impact on their own lives and on the health of the families they serve.

Christine Bilbrey, currently a Nutrition Consultant at State WIC, who used to work as an RD at Madera County, nominated Diana for the WIC Wellness All-Star honor. According to Chris, “Diana is an outstanding example of a Healthy Habits for Life success story.” CWA was thrilled to recognize Diana’s wellness efforts at the Annual Conference last May. Administrative Analyst Alma Rutherford, says, “Diana has worked very hard and done an amazing job becoming healthier and losing the excess weight she wanted to. I am very proud of her! She has been a GREAT example for all of us. Diana is definitely... a Champion for Change!”

“Diana says that taking small, incremental steps have helped her and her family sustain these healthy habits.”
Congratulations on your commitment to make your local agency a certified “Well WIC Worksite.” To assist you in this journey, CWA would like to invite you to participate in UCLA’s REACH US program.

California WIC Association is pleased to announce a partnership between WIC and UCLA. Dr. Toni Yancey heads the Center to Eliminate Health Disparities (CEHD) at UCLA. Her team leads the prestigious “REACH US” project, a CDC-funded program to improve nutrition and physical activity at worksites. The UCLA REACH US program has had significant success in the last three years, helping organizations in Los Angeles develop effective environmental strategies that incorporate physical activity and healthy food choices into their work day routines.

Participation in the REACH US program is voluntary, and will not affect your WWW accreditation status.

To Local Agencies participating in the REACH US program, CEHD staff will provide the following:

- Provide you with training, materials and technical assistance that will enable you to incorporate physical activity and healthy food choices in your organizational culture and daily work routine through use of the “push” or default strategy.
- Administer and analyze the Worksite Wellness Assessment survey.
- Assist site in identifying strategies to increase organizational wellness;
- Assist you in identifying strategies to incorporate physical activity into the work environment;
- Assist you in identifying strategies to incorporate healthy food choices into the workplace;
- Upon request and where feasible, provide on-site direct training and technical assistance on program implementation;
- Evaluate the impact of these strategies on the practices and policies of organizations and on the health status of WIC employees.

CWA will provide unqualified support and endorsement for the REACH US program, and will assist you by:

- Providing venue and logistics for training of key staff by UCLA CEHD trainers.
- Working with you to incentivize and support your incorporation strategies recommended by CEHD into your daily routines and organizational culture.
- Working with you to complete the Worksite Wellness Assessment survey and other data collection efforts.

Agencies who agree to participate will be divided into two categories: the “Early Adopters” and the “Later Adopters”. The “Early Adopters” will receive their training in January 2010. CEHD will gather data on the effects of the training and practices over a four-month period. The “Late Adopters” will serve initially as the control group, and will receive their training and materials from CEHD at the Annual CWA conference in May 2010.
Local Agencies who agree to participate in this program will agree to:

- Send their Wellness coordinators/key staff to participate in a day-long training with Dr. Yancey’s team from CEHD, who will help them implement physical activity and healthy eating practices developed especially for your WIC setting.
- Will complete a baseline assessment survey administered by UCLA CEHD staff on the day of the training.
- Show a commitment to the program by working with UCLA to help incorporate the training components into the site’s routine, and participating in the data collection.

We hope you will utilize this wonderful opportunity to partner with UCLA in this prestigious program and learn strategies that will make healthy eating and regular physical activity the norm for all staff at your sites.

Dr. Nick Yphantides conducted a day-long wellness retreat at Delta Health Care to get the staff jump started on their wellness goals. One of DHC’s Clinic Coordinators, Lupe Williams, gets some individual advice from Dr. Nick.

Riverside County staff take a PA break every morning. When physical activity is incorporated into the work day, there is a better chance of staff participation.

Staff meetings at Shasta County WIC Program start with fun, chair exercises.

We will be starting a listserv soon, so you can ask questions, share ideas, and exchange information with your peers. Keep checking the WIC Worksite Wellness website for inspiring stories and resources. The WIC Worksite Wellness Advisory committee members are leaders, who have implemented many innovative wellness practices in their local agencies. Feel free to contact them for assistance.

Questions? Call Kinkini at kbanerjee@calwic.org.
One of the characteristics of a healthy work place is that its policies and practices promote both organizational effectiveness and employee well-being. By taking care of employees, a strong, vibrant work culture is built, with employees committed to the organization.

Under the stewardship of Director Maureen Clark, the Community Resources Project WIC program exemplifies the best practices in worksite wellness. Employees are passionate about what they do, and feel empowered to bring their expertise to assist WIC families to address the complex concerns they face. The following three stories reflect that commitment to excellence that the CRP team shows everyday.

Elk Grove Team Give Hope to Victim of Domestic Violence

In September, staff at the Elk Grove site helped a mother in need of a safe haven, escape her violent environment. The young woman came in to her WIC appointment fearing that her abuser may have followed her, not knowing where to turn to for help. The staff put their heads and hearts together to come up with a plan. They contacted the Director of My Sister’s House (MSH), a non-profit organization that provides a Safe Haven to victims of abuse and got her in that very same day. The participant came back the next day to express her gratitude with tears in her eyes and informed the Elk Grove staff that because of their compassion and effort, she and her children were saved and safe. The participant stated, “It’s a comfortable place with a refrigerator and I can restfully lay my head down”.

Breast Cancer Survivor Finds Solace, Support and Courage at CRP

Recently, a mother came to WIC to recertify herself and enroll her new born infant. Although she wished to exclusively breastfeed her baby, she was a breast cancer survivor who had undergone a single mastectomy. She worried that with just one breast, she may not produce adequate milk supply to satisfy her baby’s need. The WNA who counseled the participant understood the young mothers anguish, and asked Nancy Woo, an RD at CRP, who is also a breast cancer survivor for advice. Nancy spoke with the participant, listening to her concerns and assuring her that breastfeeding exclusively with one breast was possible. She shared her personal experience as a breast cancer survivor and a mother of two and how she was able to breastfeed exclusively with one breast.

Nancy went out of her way and visited the participant at her home on her days off, wanting to do all she could to help the new Mom gain her self esteem back. She set up an appointment with Kaiser Hospital, drove her to her appointment, and even took her for mastectomy bra fitting. The mom says words cannot express her gratitude towards
Worksite Wellness

as a Well Worksite

CRP RD Nancy with her beautiful family.

CRP staff, especially Nancy, who gave her unswerving support and empowered her to regain confidence in herself. She continues to breastfeed and now shows up for her WIC appointments with a smile on her face instead of worrying about what people would think of her when they look at her.

Janine Marello In her Own Words - Why I Chose to Donate My Breast Milk

One day, I looked in my freezer as I was putting the breast milk I had pumped at work away and I realized that there was a lot of extra milk in there. I had my fair share of challenges with breastfeeding my son in the early months. I fed Baby Chimalli frequently and pumped to save up for when I returned to work, always feeling the need to have some extra “just in case” something happened. My emergency supply had really grown!

I had heard about the San Jose Milk Bank and looked into donating. So, I called and started the process to donate. The Milk Bank will pay for any test needed to make sure the donated milk will be safe, for any shipping, and they accept pumped, frozen milk from months past because it is pasteurized when they receive it.

Chimalli and I were thanked with all the other donators in their annual letter they send out. A few weeks ago I received a note a thanking me for my donation of 322 ounces of breast milk. I’m saving the note to share with Chi when he’s old enough to understand that he helped do something very special, that may have saved lives.

To all the amazing staff at CRP WIC, thank you for all you do to make the lives of WIC families better. Your stories will inspire countless others to take customer care to the next level.

CRP RD Nancy with her beautiful family.

Photo by Melanie Larkin

There are infant and children alive today because of the donated milk provided to them. Some extremely premature infants will die if not given breast milk and some mother’s of these infants may not be able to provide what they need. I thought to myself, I have this healthy baby who is just not going to drink all the milk I’ve saved for him. I thought about other parents who have to go to the Intensive Care Unit to visit their babies, how terrible it would be to not be able to provide breast milk to their infant that may make the difference of living and thriving, and coming home.

To all the amazing staff at CRP WIC, thank you for all you do to make the lives of WIC families better. Your stories will inspire countless others to take customer care to the next level.

YANG HER, IBCLC at CRP WIC, shared these amazing stories of her co-workers. Yang herself is a survivor of domestic violence, who found the courage to walk away from the violence with her four young children. She enrolled in college while working and raising her children. Everyday, she uses her own life experience to show women suffering domestic violence that they too can find the courage to make a better life for themselves and their children.
WIC Healthy Habits Cook-Off

CWA hosted the first ever “Healthy Habits Chef Cook-off” at the last Annual Conference in San Jose. Twenty three creative recipes were submitted. WIC staff voted online for their favorite recipe, and the top three recipes were selected. The finalists were Michelle Fox from Monterey County WIC, Nuzi Karim from Antelope Valley WIC Program, and Sherry Norwood from Planned Parenthood of Orange County WIC Program. The event was a huge success. Mike Elfant from State WIC Division served as master of ceremonies in true Iron Chef Chairman style.

Local celebrities were on hand to judge the contestants recipes. The judges were Marlene Sorosky Gray, a Bay Area cookbook author, Maggie Mah, Executive VP – Culinary of Mattson Inc., and Lynne Char Bennett, food writer of the San Francisco Chronicle.

Congratulations, to Michelle Fox for taking home the First Prize for her delicious Spinach Medley.

Marissa’s Spinach Medley

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<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>onion, chopped</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 ½ cups</td>
<td>Roma tomatoes, chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 cloves</td>
<td>garlic, chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bunches</td>
<td>spinach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>zucchini, cut up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cups</td>
<td>mushrooms, sliced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 can</td>
<td>corn, drained</td>
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<td>Reduced fat mozzarella cheese (optional)</td>
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Directions:
Spray a large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Sauté the onions, tomatoes and garlic for 2-3 minutes.
Add the spinach, piling high, adding ¼ cup or less of water. Cover and let steam for 3-5 minutes.
Add zucchini, mushrooms, corn, and salt and pepper to taste.
Cover and steam another 5 minutes.
Sprinkle with cheese (optional).

Submitted by Michelle Fox

Nuzi Karim, Sherry Norwood and Michelle Fox celebrate their winning foods with the judges and State WIC Division Chief, Linnea Sallack.

Cook-off MC, Mike Elfant quizzed the finalists about the WIC foods used in their recipes.

The finalists had 30 minutes to cook and serve their recipes. Points were awarded for taste, originality, and plating.
Recipe Winners!

**Fresh Mango Salsa**

Serves: 4  Serving size: ¾ cup

**Amount**  **Ingredients**
1 large      fresh mango
1 or 2       jalapeño chile pepper
1 small      clove of garlic, crushed fine with 1 tsp of sea salt
½ large      red bell pepper
½ large      red onion (¼ cup sliced green onion may be substituted)
½           fresh lime juice

**Directions:**
1. Peel and dice the mango into ½-inch pieces.
2. Prepare the jalapeño by removing the seeds and membranes and dicing, add to the Mango.
3. Dice the bell pepper and onion, and add this along with the crushed garlic. Stir the mixture well.
4. Squeeze the half lime over the mixture, and stir it well (not only will the lime give a tartness to the salsa, it will help keep the other ingredients fresh and slow any browning to the mango pieces).

Submitted by Sherry Norwood

**Tofu Kabobs**

**Amount**  **Ingredients**
2 medium      chopped tomatoes
4-5 Tbsp.     chopped onion
3-4 Tbsp.     lemon juice
4-5 Tbsp.     finely chopped cilantro
½-1 tsp.      finely chopped Serrano green pepper
½-1 tsp.      turmeric powder
½-1 tsp.      cumin powder
½-1 tsp.      chili powder
1-2           cloves of garlic
1-2 Tbsp.     tomato puree
Salt to taste
8-16           cherry tomatoes
1            red bell pepper (cut in squares for skewers)
1            carrot (sliced for skewers)
1           cucumber (sliced for the skewers)
Tofu cubes (buy firm tofu) (1/2" into 1/2" thickness approx)
Bamboo skewers

**Directions:**
Blend the chopped ingredients, tomatoes, onion, cilantro, Serrano peppers, garlic and lemon juice in a blender. Pour the blended mixture in the sauce pan. Add spices to the mixture and add salt to taste. Lightly cook the mixture for 3-5 minutes on medium heat.
Add tofu cubes, lower heat and simmer for another 5 minutes or more to allow the tofu to absorb the flavor of the mixture.
Skewer the Tofu cubes, red bell peppers, carrots, and cucumber slices kabob style on the bamboo skewers (as shown on the recipe Photo). Garnish with an orange twist on the plate.
Optional – Serve the Tofu Kabobs over rice or pasta.

Submitted by Nuzhat Kazim

The employees of the Antelope Valley WIC Program are very proud of Nuzi for entering the WIC Cook-off and placing third in the contest. Nuzi’s accomplishment was featured in the June 2009 edition of Antelope Valley Hospital’s employee newsletter. Antelope Valley WIC Program employees plan to sustain the progress they have made in keeping the Healthy Habits For Life Campaign going by becoming a Well WIC Worksite in 2010.

PPOC WIC Program’s Sherry Norwood displayed her terrific knife skills and an easy comfort in front of the camera during the intense 30 minute Cook-off.
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2009 - 2010

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(Pediatrician), Emily Bowen

You have a story to tell!
You have a program to showcase!
Contribute to the WIC Watch!

Upcoming Newsletters are already being planned around the following themes:

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<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
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Want to be added to the Flash e-mail?
Need more newsletters?
New e-mail address?

Save the Date
2010 ANNUAL CONFFERENCE
Mon., May 3-Wed., May 5, 2010
(Preconference- Sun., May 2)
Town & Country Resort
& Convention Center
San Diego, CA

Community Action Partnership of Kern -WIC program was recognized by State Senator Roy Ashburn for their outstanding education and outreach with the Healthy Habits for Life campaign, working to improve the health of their community through nutrition education and active support of breastfeeding to moms. On behalf of CAPK-WIC, Marketing Specialist and LVL Michelle Turner receives the honor from Senator Ashburn’s District Director, Tracey La Monica.