

# WWA NEWS BREAK

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## WIC Celebrates 50th Anniversary!

In April, the National WIC Association celebrated the 50th Anniversary of WIC at the Annual Education and Training Conference in Chicago.

NWA described “the conference will look forward, as the need for WIC has never been greater. Sessions will explore policies, program innovations, technology, research, and communication tools to continue to grow participation and improve service delivery, the nutritional quality of food packages, the WIC shopping experience, and outcomes to meet the evolving needs of providers and the diversity of participants.”

Congratulations to the five WWA sponsored WIC Staff from across the state to attend the conference: Patricia Muether, Sarah Nix, Michelle Burington, Breanne Vos, and Jennifer Gaal.

Patty Muether, Community Health Nutritionist at City of Milwaukee Health Department, another scholarship recipient, tells us what attending the conference meant to her:

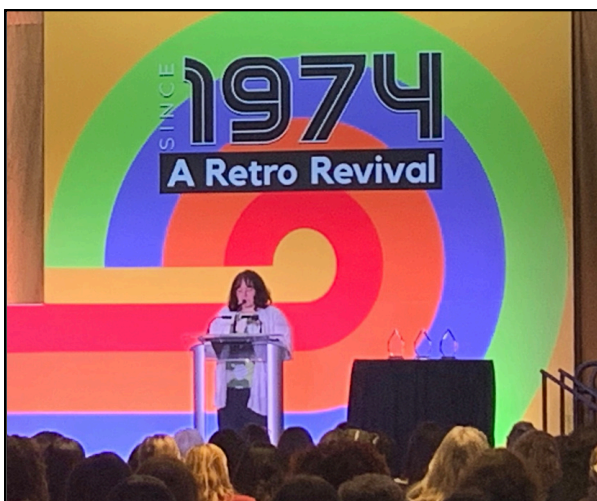
*“During my 2 and a half years with WIC, I have been in my City of Milwaukee WIC bubble with little interaction with other clinics in the state and even less interaction with other clinics in the country. The NWA conference allowed me to interact and learn from other clinics all over the county.”*

*While each state and clinic operate differently, we all have the same purpose - to support our families and communities in the best ways possible. Since each community is unique, how we all serve our families looks a little different. As community health graduate student, I loved learning how each clinic works to fit the needs of the community. I learned from clinics who are supporting military families, rural areas, and refugee families.*

*The conference taught me just how much WIC evolves to best support our families whether that be through new food packages, new ways to reach our families or new technology.*

*The conference was filled with passion for our families. It was an opportunity to learn from people who are just starting their career with WIC and also those who have been with WIC for decades.”*

*-Patty*



Cheri Nemec, WWA Advocacy Chair, speaks at NWA Conference.

## WIC Celebrates 50th Anniversary! continued

*Sarah Nix, MS, RD, CD, CLS; Eau Claire City-County WIC, WWA Board Member and scholarship recipient, shares her experience of the conference.*

*“Attending the Conference in Chicago to celebrate WIC’s 50th Anniversary was a true delight. My absolute favorite speakers were Dr. David Paige, who helped shape the WIC program from its origin, and Tom Vilsack, USDA Secretary of Agriculture.*

*An overall message they both alluded to, which was also reinforced throughout the conference, was of immense pride in the WIC program for the evidence-based services we provide, yet on the contrary, how much work we have yet to do in order to make greater strides for the health of our nation.*

*I’m very proud to work for Wisconsin WIC, reinforced at this conference in the way that several of the breakout sessions were of other states presenting on some of their new implementations, implementations that Wisconsin has already had executed for quite some time. Examples are the FMNP program, the BFPC program, and an online MIS system – not all states have these things! Crazy! So, thank you to our WI State Staff for being progressive and I surely hope we continue to be.*

*I left this conference feeling motivated to be a louder advocate for WIC by building relationships with trusted members of congress, something I would love WWA to focus on so local WIC staff can navigate and feel comfortable doing so too. This leads me to conclude with a quote from Tom Vilsack, “Spend your life in a worthy endeavor and make a difference.”*

*-Sarah*



WWA members pose with Dr. David Paige and his wife during the “Through the Decade” celebration 50 years of WIC at the National WIC Association

## WIC Advocacy: Everyone can make a difference!

Often, we are warned about the limitations of lobbying. While lobbying is a form of advocacy, it includes a specific ask connected to a specific piece of legislation. When WWA or NWA share a link to send a letter to your lawmaker about a specific vote, this is lobbying and should be done on personal time. For a detailed breakdown of the differences between advocating and lobbying, see NWA's document "[When Does Advocacy Become Lobbying](#)".

Visit NWA's [Action Central](#) for up to date information on advocacy efforts.



## Current Advocacy Topics

### Full Funding for Current and Prospective Participants:

Soon after the FY24 budget was settled, the FY25 budget process began. As of June 10th, the appropriations for WIC, though generous, fell short of needed funding for projected FY25 caseloads.

### Continue to promote the Modernization of WIC:

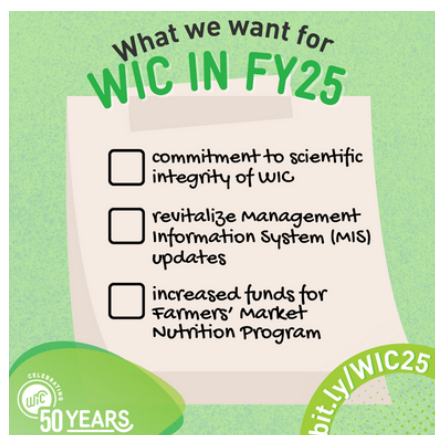
including issues such as modernizing MIS systems, implementing online shopping, and continuation of flexible, remote service options.

### Increased funding for FMNP:

Many states saw significant decreases in FMNP funding. Advocate by sharing participant and farmer stories of the benefits of this program.

### Full Implementation of The New Food Rules:

In April, USDA released the Final Food Rule to update WIC food packages. The food rules were developed through a rigorous process of independent and science-based research. The concern of various lobbying groups will influence changes to the food package rules to benefit of those groups. Share your stories and the need to maintain the integrity of the food package rule.

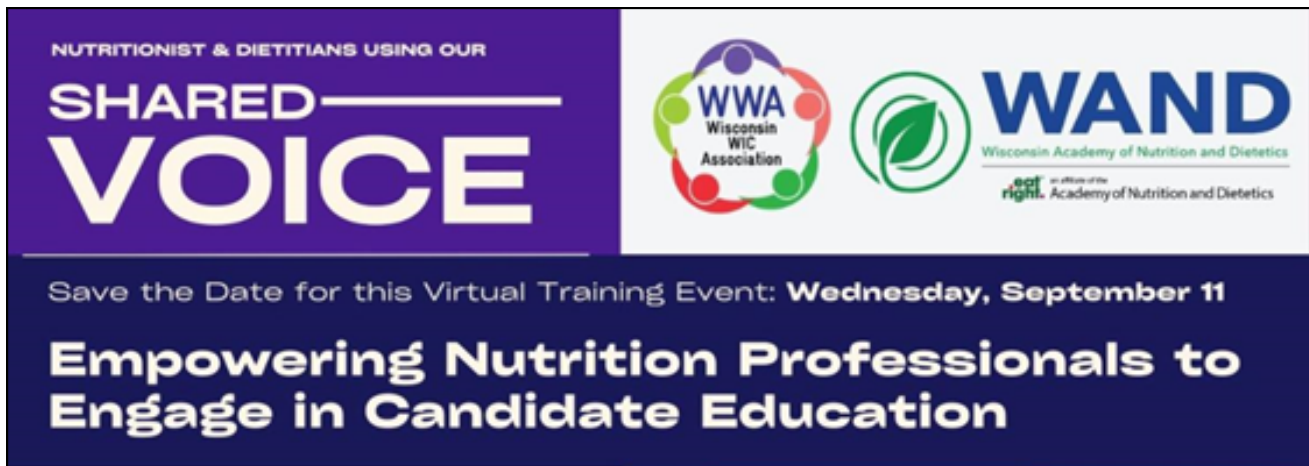


### The WIC Action Network

holds calls every other Friday from 2pm-3pm CST, sharing the latest updates on WIC Policy, legislative activity and advocacy opportunities. Meetings are open to all WWA/NWA members.

**Don't miss out – register today!**

## Advocacy Training Opportunity



NUTRITIONIST & DIETITIANS USING OUR

# SHARED VOICE

WWA Wisconsin WIC Association

WAND Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

eat right. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Save the Date for this Virtual Training Event: **Wednesday, September 11**

## Empowering Nutrition Professionals to Engage in Candidate Education

Join WWA and the Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (WAND) for 2 hours the morning of **Wednesday, September 11th** to learn the top reasons and key strategies to:

- Get comfortable talking with candidates and elected officials about our profession
- Educate candidates and elected officials on nutrition programs and policies
- Build our shared understanding and amplify our voices on issues like:
  - Community and public-health nutrition improvement initiatives
  - Funding streams and mechanisms for nutrition-related programs
  - Barriers being felt in the profession and advancement in the field of dietetics
- Prepare for the 2025 legislative season

\*1.5 CPEUs are tentatively planned to be offered for this event. You do NOT need to be a member of WAND to attend this event. Ideal audience is RDNs working in WIC.

## Scholarships

WWA supports professional development for WIC Staff and recognizes the importance of providing a means to do so. Scholarships are available for WWA members to pursue professional development opportunities that impact WIC. Click [here](#) if interested in applying for a scholarship.

Below are links to other organizations with educational events that can positively impact WIC Staff. Scholarships can be used toward WIC related (WWA, WI WIC, NWA) and non-WIC related events.





## 2025 Board Positions Open!

Are you interested in a new experience to grow your leadership skills and learn more about WIC program advocacy? Now is your time!

The WWA Board is seeking 2 At-Large Board Members, serving October 2024 through October 2026. At-Large Board Members have the following responsibilities:

- Attend monthly virtual board meetings
- Travel and attend 1-2 in-person board meetings (Spring and Fall)
- Participate in 1 WWA Committee, attending monthly to quarterly meetings with active participation
- Participation as committee chair or Executive Committee role

Estimated time commitment is 3-4 hours per month, depending on role with committees and other special projects. WWA time is an allowable WIC expense.

If you are interested, please submit your [application](#) by July 31, 2024.

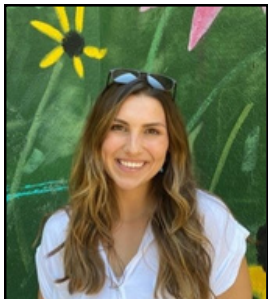
Want to know more? See page 7 for contact information for your Regional Representative.

WWA member voting will occur in August with position announcements by August 15th, 2024.

**[View Recent Board Meeting Minutes Here](#)**

## Welcome New Board Members!

The WWA Board would like to introduce our newest members, Emily Seltzner, WIC Director at Columbia County and Marlena Oechsner, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor at Washington Ozaukee WIC.



“As a recent grad I didn’t expect to wind up in WIC, but I am so glad that I did. I am new to the program as of February and have already uncovered so many unfamiliar topics I am passionate about.



“I have been working with WIC since June of 2022 as a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor. I love being a part of such a great organization that helps families and enjoy connecting with other parents, especially working with moms to meet their breastfeeding goals. Connecting and building relationships is such a rewarding part of this role, especially since it takes a village to raise a family. “

## WWA Committee Spotlight - Membership

Are you aware of the benefits of being a WWA member? Are you looking for a creative outlet or furthering your networking experience? Here is a list of membership benefits to make the most of your WWA membership experience!

- Connect with peers across the state
- Create and attend local engagement events
- Website development and maintenance
- Organizing and distributing quarterly newsletters

If you are interested in getting to know more about the Membership Committee, please contact [Chair Alex Forsythe](#).



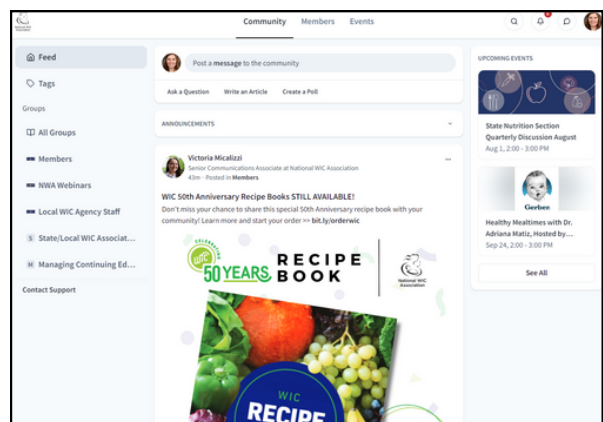
## Join a Committee!

Along with the Membership Committee described above, WWA has three other committees supporting different aspects of the association. Please visit the [WWA Committees page](#) to learn about them and see which one would be a good fit for you! All the committees are currently accepting new members.

## NWA Membership Information

Did you know all Wisconsin WIC Staff are members of the National WIC Association? Here to [log in](#).

This Spring, NWA launched an online Member Community, where you can connect and share with other WIC staff across the country! NWA also shares webinars and other resources here. You can access the online member community [here](#).



*NWA website and Online Member Community use the same login information.*

## 2024 Apparel Sale - COMING SOON!



WWA will be offering an apparel sale starting this summer. The purchase of WIC apparel, is an allowable WIC cost, if used for work purposes only (Policy 11.1).

Sales will coordinate with the 50th WIC Celebration on October 30th for easy pick up and savings on shipping costs.



**Watch for order form coming soon!**

## 2024 WWA Board

### Executive Committee

Kim Damrow: Chair  
Beth Scheelk: Vice Chair  
Past Chair: Vacant  
Treasurer: Morgan Thums  
Secretary: Rachel Bauer

### Regional Representatives

Northern Region: [Cheri Nemec](#)  
Northeastern Region: [Rachel Bauer](#)  
Southeastern Region: [Alex Forsythe](#)  
Southern Region: [Emily Seltzner](#)  
Western Region: [Sarah Nix](#)

### At Large Representatives:

Kim Damrow  
Kristina Ingrouille  
Morgan Thums  
Beth Scheelk  
Shawn Handfelt  
Marlena Oechsner



Connect With Us!

