

WWA NEWS BREAK

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Learning About Advocacy

On September 11th, WWA partnered with WAND to bring members of both organizations the event “Empowering Nutrition Professionals to Engage in Candidate Education”.

The event featured WAND lobbyist Nathan Butzlaff and Marie Gualtieri of NWA to explain concepts of advocacy for nutrition professionals at both the state and federal levels.

Each February, NWA hosts a Policy Conference, giving education on how to advocate for the WIC program and education legislators on the importance of the work WIC staff do. Watch for conference information in the coming months if increasing your advocacy understanding is of interest to you. The conference is virtual and includes a Hill Day to meet with Wisconsin legislators or their staff.

Marie Gualtieri and WWA Vice Chair, Beth Scheelk, presented a breakout session discussing NWA Priorities as well as an update and overview of the Wisconsin Taskforce on Childhood Obesity. Since WIC usually focuses on national level advocacy the introduction of how this local initiative connects to Wisconsin WIC and the work we do as an upstream approach to childhood healthy weight in Wisconsin.

WAND state policy representatives presented a breakout session to provide information and status of the WAND priority regarding Wisconsin licensure compact and professional requirements.

If you missed the event, the general session and licensure breakout can be watched [here](#).

The WIC Action Network

holds calls the 2nd Wednesday of each month 2:30pm CST (new date/time as of October 2024), 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!



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

Welcome 2025 Board

With October come a new WWA Board. The WWA board focuses on WIC Advocacy for all that are involved with WIC from participants, staff and the community.

As we start a new year for WWA advocacy, we would like to take a moment to welcome the new board members as well as send out a huge thank you to those that have served and helped move the WWA board forward over the past years.

New Board Members:

- Emily Seltzner – Southern Region Representative joined the board summer of 2024 finishing out a previously opened term.
- Amy Richter - Western Region Representative
- Marlana Oechsner – At Large Representative joined the board summer of 2024 filling a vacant at large position
- Alyssa Gallon – New At Large Representative
- Heidi McCann - At Large Representative

Outgoing Board Members:

- Kristina Ingrouille – Waupaca County – Has served on the board for 8 year! Thank you Kristina for all the support and dedication to the WIC community!
- Sarah Nix – Eau Claire City/County – Sarah has taken a board position with the National WIC Association to be a voice at the national level for Wisconsin! Thank you Sarah we will continue to support you in the new role with NWA.
- Cheri Nemec – Great Lakes intertribal WIC – Cheri serves as the Chair of the National Indigenous and Native American WIC Coalition.

We look forward to continuing to be a voice for WIC families and community.

If you are interested in being part of WWA, we are always welcoming WIC staff as committee members. Please reach out to any of the board members to learn more.



[View Recent
Board
Meeting
Minutes
Here](#)

WWA Committee Spotlight - Connection

The WWA Board voted to merge the Communication and Membership committees, forming the **Connection Committee**. The Connection Committee will oversee strategic communications promoting WWA's mission and ensure each WIC region is represented on the WWA board.

The Connection Committee is seeking motivated members with interest in developing or sharpening the following skills to:

- Develop and maintain the WWA website
- Write and distribute quarterly newsletters
- Promote current news and events through Facebook
- Recruit At-Large and Regional Representatives
- Create engaging committee opportunities for members
- Survey members about their experience annually

Interested members can contact their [regional representative](#) or Connection Committee Chair: alex.forsythe@sschc.org.

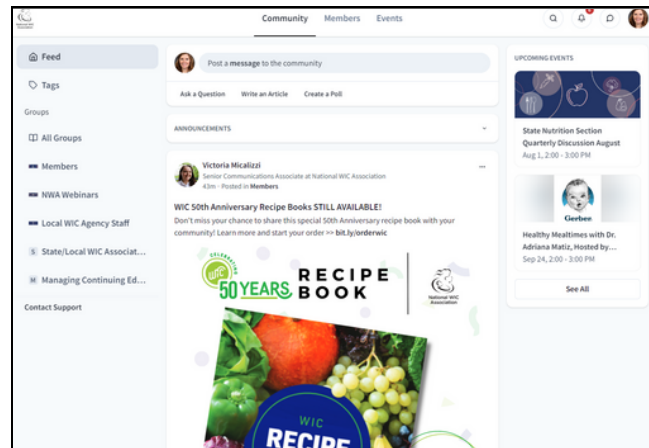
Join a Committee!

Along with the Connection Committee described above, WWA has two 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](#).

NWA has an online Member Community where you can connect and share with other WIC staff across the country and access webinars and other resources. Access the online member community [here](#).



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

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.

In September the National WIC Association released the [2024 State of WIC Report](#) that helps to share how far WIC has come, along with supporting information for the current WIC priorities.

Advocacy Training Opportunity

[2025 NWA NATIONAL POLICY VIRTUAL CONFERENCE](#)
[FEBRUARY 25-FEBRUARY 27, 2025](#)

The National Policy Conference is NWA's annual forum to highlight emerging and pressing WIC policy issues and build leadership skills to empower and sustain WIC advocacy at the local level.

The conference culminates with NWA's Annual Capitol Hill Education Day on Thursday, February 27, empowering members to virtually engage with Congressional leaders and their staff on WIC's critical services. *NWA Scholarships are available for this event*



Apparel Sale Fundraiser Results

The 2024 apparel sale raised over \$2,200! Thank you to the 25 local WIC agencies who purchased from the sale. Proceeds will be used to fund the WWA scholarship fund, supporting WIC Staff for professional development.

In 2024, WWA supported WIC staff from across the state to attend various continuing education conference and opportunities. Sponsorships have included:

- 3 sponsorships to the virtual National WIC Association Policy Conference in February.
- 5 sponsorships to the Chicago hosted NWA Annual Education & Training Conference in April.
- 1 sponsorship to support leadership development through Wisconsin Association of Nutrition and Dietetics while attending FNCE in Minneapolis in October.
- 1 sponsorship to attend the future NWA Nutrition Education & Breastfeeding Conference in Baltimore in November.

See WWA previous 2024 newsletters to read summaries of scholarship recipient experiences!

Financial Assistance to Attend FNCE!

“With the support of WWA, I attended the Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo in Minneapolis. Attending was part of the participation in a year-long Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Leadership Academy, focusing on food security projects around the state of Wisconsin.

A highlight of the conference was a session on the Farmers Market Nutrition Program initiative, where local WIC agencies in Pennsylvania brought markets into the WIC clinics. The focus was on system change, which ties into both our WI FMNP program as well as opportunities to build PSE in Fit Families. Thank you for the support in my leadership development!” - Kim Damrow, Bay Area WIC

Scholarship Opportunities

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. Apply for [scholarships](#).

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.



Connect With Us!



2024 WWA Board

Executive Committee

Chair: Beth Scheelk

Vice Chair: Vacant

Past Chair: Kim Damrow

Secretary: Rachel Bauer

Treasurer: Shawn Handfelt

Past Treasurer: Morgan Thums

Regional Representatives:

Northern: [Kim Damrow](#)

Northeastern: [Rachel Bauer](#)

Southeastern: [Alex Forsythe](#)

Southern: [Emily Seltzner](#)

Western: [Amy Richter](#)

At Large Representatives:

[Alyssa Gallon](#)

[Beth Scheelk](#)

[Heidi McCann](#)

[Marlena Oechsner](#)

[Morgan Thums](#)

[Shawn Handfelt](#)

