

# WWA NEWS BREAK

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## 50th WIC Celebration Recap

This past October WIC staff from across the state came together to celebrate 50 years of WIC. This was the first in person statewide meeting since 2018!! It was great to see so many of you there.

This event brought together WIC staff from all levels to share the success and future of WIC. The USDA FNS Regional administrator provided an overview of Wisconsin WIC highlights. This shows all the work we do day in and day out really does make a difference. The state staff shared of other local successes like Excellence in Breastfeeding Awards and how Wisconsin WIC continues to evolve with the times and needs of the program.

One of the highlights was Paula Tran, State Health Officer and Administrator sharing how WIC does and continues to provide all the opportunity to achieve optimal health. She brought forward by bringing together our shared values that leads us to help our families to have the ability to thrive. This provided a us great insight of health equity in the work we do and the families we serve with the communities we live.

WWA was given the opportunity to present to share highlights of the year and vision for moving forward!

Thank you for all that attended and the State WIC Staff for bringing us together.



WWA Chair Beth Scheelk and Past Chair Kim Damrow



Everyday Hero WWA Board members: Kristina Ingrouille, Kim Damrow, Cheri Nemec

**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!**



## Hone Advocacy Skills at NWA Policy Conference

**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. 2025 session topics include WIC Policy, FMNP findings, WIC and Military Families, updates from congress staff, WIC and Immigrant Families, changes in supply and markets related to infant formula, and preparation topics for hill day visits.



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.

All WIC staff are welcome to partake at the Hill Day, especially in meetings with legislators in your districts. WWA will send out meeting information as meetings are set up.

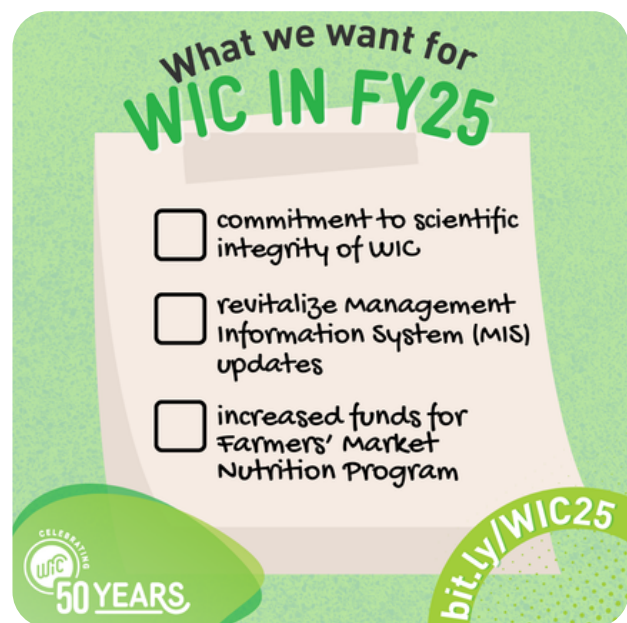
WWA Scholarships are available for this event. Apply for a **WWA Scholarship Application** by February 7, 2025

## Lobbying Opportunity

### A message from NWA:

It's time for Fiscal Year 2025 budget appropriations and we need YOU to help us let Congress know.

Take action by filling out this **short form** that will send a pre-drafted letter to your Members of Congress. The form must be completed on personal time.



## Board Member Spotlight

The WWA Board would like to introduce our newest members!



### **Alyssa Gollon, WWA At-Large Representative**

Wood County Public Health (P51), Support Staff

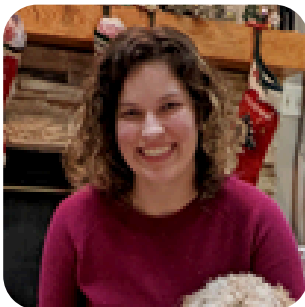
"I started working with WIC participants in March 2024. The program quickly became my heart and soul and I wanted to help as many families as I could. Joining the WWA board means that I can be a play a part in helping even more families receive WIC benefits and also improve on efficiency to better fit the families in the WIC program. "



### **Heidi McCann, RD, CD, WWA At-Large Representative**

Oneida Nation, Dietitian

"Working in WIC has been such a rewarding experience helping families build a solid foundation for healthy habits. I'm excited to be part of WWA where I can further expand that foundation and be a voice to support healthy lifestyles for the families we serve on a much greater level."



### **Amy Richter, MS, RDN, CD; Western Regional Representative**

Pierce County WIC, WIC Registered Dietitian/CPA

Advocacy is a great way for us to be able to ensure those in our community in need are able to receive the best of the services available. It means a lot to be able to expand my ability to make a difference in our community and continue to help support nutrition and physical activity.

## Annual WWA Membership Discussion

Watch this recording to learn more about WWA and our WIC advocacy efforts!

[WATCH: 2024 WWA Membership Discussion Presentation](#)

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[PowerPoint slides: WWA Membership Discussion 2024](#)

## WWA Meetings & Minutes

Board Meetings are open to WWA Members. Upcoming meeting dates, times and link:

- [January 23rd, 2025, 12-1 pm](#)
- [February 27th, 2025, 12-1 pm](#)
- [March 27th, 2025, 12-1 pm](#)

[View Recent  
Board  
Meeting  
Minutes  
Here](#)

## WWA Executive Committee Spotlight

The Executive Committee is elected and supported by the 11 member board and serves as the foundation of the Wisconsin WIC Association for moving the organization forward. This committee provides general oversight of WWA board, operations and maintains integrity of the association as a liaison for all members.

Our 2025 goal is to increase engagement with WWA members. As we work to achieve the vision of WWA, to be the leader in advocating for the voices of the WIC community, we hope to provide members with opportunities, education and information on becoming advocates for WIC and your community. We look forward to connecting in 2025.

### Join a Committee!

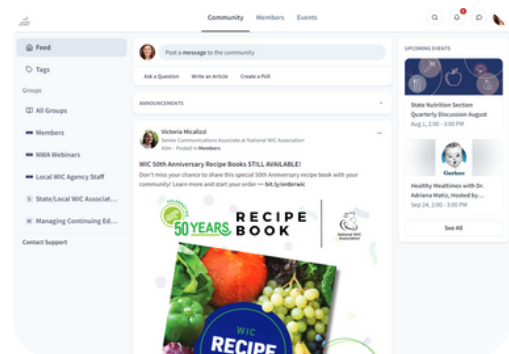
Along with the Connection Committee described above, WWA has two other committees supporting different aspects of the association. Please visit the [WWA Committees page](#) to learn about them and see which one would be a good fit for you! All the committees are currently accepting new members. If interested in joining a committee, please sign-up [here](#).

## 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.*



## Scholarship Opportunities

WWA supports professional development for WIC Staff. Scholarships are available for WWA members to pursue professional development opportunities that impact WIC. Apply for scholarships [here](#).

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.



## Financial Assistance to Attend NWA Breastfeeding Conference

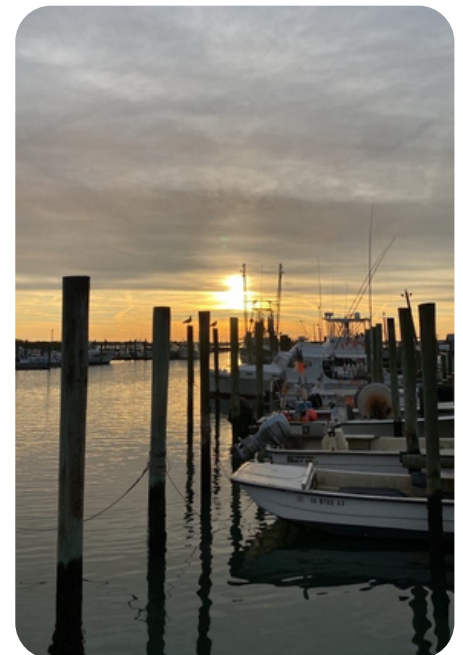


“There were many reasons I looked forward to attending the NWA Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference this year in November. Being surrounded by hundreds of like-minded peers provides opportunity for building new relationships, learning, discovering new solutions, and becoming further inspired. My experience at the conference could be summed up by those exact outcomes.

Working in a small project, it can often become familiar to get into routines and feel burnt out on ideas to further engagement and outreach with our families and community. I have to say that my favorite part of the conference experience was networking with other agencies and professionals - having opportunity to pick their brains and listen in on the creative ways that they are expanding WIC’s reach to their communities. For example, I enjoyed a session observing how Maricopa County WIC in Arizona has worked diligently to craft online modules, recipe videos and cookbooks for their participants to get excited about nutrition education. In other sessions I had opportunity to listen in on how we can strengthen breastfeeding peer contact with our pregnant and breastfeeding families, how to better lift up women experiencing post-partum mental illness, and how to support families on WIC with children who have severe food allergies. It was also great to hear firsthand all of the excited changes that are to come to enhance the modernization of WIC for future success. I took away so many thoughts and ideas that I was excited to share and begin implementing within our project.

On another note, visiting the city of Baltimore exceeded my expectations and it was so neat to explore the surrounding areas including Assateague Island, a National Seashore occupied by several wild horses. Oh, and the seafood was incredible too! I hope to attend this conference for years to come.”

**Emily Seltzner, MS, RD, CD**  
**WIC Director**  
**Columbia County WIC**



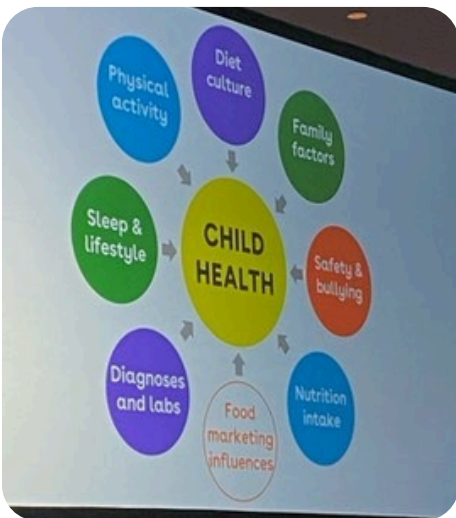


"I am so thankful for the NWA scholarship that was awarded to me this year. This scholarship allowed me to attend the Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Conference in Baltimore this fall. I truly enjoyed connecting and networking with colleagues from my home state of Wisconsin and colleagues from other states that do the same work I do in WIC.

There were so many amazing sessions provided. One of the sessions that I found most useful was Preventing Food Allergies: Addressing Disparities and Overcoming Barriers presented by Michael Pistiner, MGHfC from Food Allergy Center Malina Malkani, Malina Malkani Nutrition. This session provided information about preventing food allergies in infancy and can be shared with families in the WIC clinic. This session provided me with new information regarding the introduction of allergenic foods to high-risk babies to help prevent food allergies in individuals. I have shared the information that I have learned from this session with families in our WIC clinic to help parents understand recommendations in feeding their infant to best prevent food allergies.



One of the most memorable sessions that I attended was Channel Your Inner Child – Adventures of Zobey & More presented by Texas WIC. We learned about how Zobey's videos were created by a collaboration with Texas WIC, a graphic designer and other professionals needed when creating content for the videos. All of Zobey's videos include fun actions and promote healthy behaviors for children. The audience at the conference was able to participate in a Zobey Adventure video. We jumped over logs, picked mangos and even ducked under branches while hiking through the jungle. I have mentioned Zobey videos on YouTube to families at our local WIC clinic and so far the feedback is amazing. Screentime is being used to learn about healthy behaviors and increase activity in children resulting in an increase in activity in the home and children asking for healthy foods after watching these videos.



The Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Conference was enjoyable and provided valuable information that I have been able to use frequently when providing nutrition education to families enrolled in our local WIC Program. It has also given me more confidence in providing nutrition and breastfeeding information to families that I work with. Thank you, NWA, for providing a great conference."

**Alexis Tuma, RDN, CD, CLS**  
**Public Health Nutritionist**  
**Eau Claire County WIC**

## WWA Membership Survey

Please consider completing the annual WWA membership survey for your chance to win a \$20 Amazon gift card! As a WWA member, the association wants your voice to be heard. *How are we doing as an association and what can the board do to help you feel engaged as a member?* The survey can be accessed [here](#). **The survey will close 2/1/25.**

### 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](#)

