

TALWD

# NEWSLETTER

<https://www.talwd.org/>


## TALWD Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Texas Association of Local WIC Directors shall be to act as a vehicle for the expression of ideas on planning, policy, coordination, implementation, and administration of the WIC program on the Local, State, and Federal level; to foster communication between local WIC programs and the Texas Department of Health with the goal of positively affecting the administration of WIC within the state; to bring together administrators of Local Agency WIC Programs, in order to provide peer support, orientation and/or assistance; and to promote professional and public awareness of new and existing Federal and State legislation.

From the Editor: Please contact us, if you have suggestions or story ideas. Hope you enjoy Volume 5, Issue 33

Meliza Garcia, Newsletter Reporter

Email: [mgarcia@sanpatriciocountytexas.gov](mailto:mgarcia@sanpatriciocountytexas.gov)

## 2025 TALWD BOARD MEMEBERS:

President – Benny Jasso  
 Secretary – Jennifer Gregory  
 Treasurer – Jessica Neal  
 1st VP of Organization & Development  
 – Brandy Patteson  
 2nd VP of Operations – Jennifer  
 Ranspot  
 Past NWA Representative – Adela  
 Garcia  
 NWA Rep-Elect – Tecora Smith  
 Newsletter Reporter – Meliza Garcia  
 Historian – Clarissa Ramirez  
 Past Presidents Council  
 Representative – Eileen Mendoza  
 Past Treasurer – Sandie Lopez

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Business & Finance Chair – Margaret  
 Payton  
 Legislative Chair – Michelle Cummings  
 Marketing Chair – Jannette Sepeda  
 Membership Chair – Amanda Brogdon  
 Nutrition Education Chair – Kathryn  
 Almaraz  
 Breastfeeding Chair – Zahra Koopaei  
 Client Services Chair – Jammie Wright  
 Local Agency Administration Chair –  
 Kelly Bocanegra  
 Technology Task Force – Brandy  
 Patteson  
 Funding Formula Task Force – Margaret  
 Payton  
 Re-Opening Task Force – Amanda  
 Brogden  
 QA Task Force – Eileen Mendoza

## REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES & ALTERNATIVES:

Central Representative – Alissa Orozco  
 \*Alternate – Nicole Koenen  
 Panhandle Representative – Eileen  
 Mendoza \*Alternate – Margaret  
 Payton  
 Western Representative – Adriana Archer  
 Alternate – Vacant  
 Northern Representative – Janice Piper  
 \*Alternate – Kathy Oliver  
 Gulf Coast Representative – Becca Reed  
 \*Alternate – Zahra Koopaei  
 Southwestern Representative – Julie  
 Granado  
 \*Alternate – Mandi Wilcox  
 Eastern Representative – Scherry Barnes  
 \*Alternate – Kristi Kilgore  
 Southern Representative – Kathrine Galvan  
 \*Alternate – Yvette Viciniaz





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## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

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As a member of TALWD, you have the opportunity to participate in a number of committees (which gives you the chance to provide valuable input first hand) and events. You also have the opportunity to network with fellow directors and learn more about WIC throughout Texas. Your voice as a TALWD member is needed and valued!

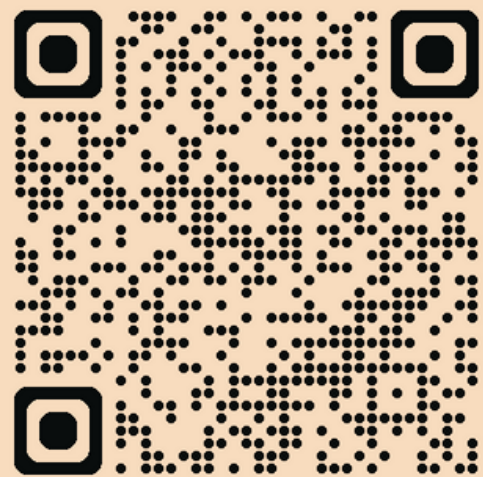
Joining is easy! Simply go to your account and select "Membership/Renewal" and place in your cart. You can complete payment with a credit card online or complete the form below for payment by check.

Watch our Membership Video here!

[https://www.talwd.org/images/TALWD\\_membership\\_640x360.mp4](https://www.talwd.org/images/TALWD_membership_640x360.mp4)

Membership Renewal Form

<https://www.talwd.org/account?page=join>



**Your Voice as a  
TALWD Member is  
Needed and Valued**

**Texas Association of Local WIC Directors**





### Texas WIC Memos

<a href="#">25-058</a>	New LMS Role for WIC Directors and LA Training Coordinators and LMS Updates	8/8/2025
<a href="#">25-056</a>	Virtual WIC Directors' Orientation and WIC Financial Management Training	8/5/2025
<a href="#">25-055</a>	Updated WIC Folder	7/17/2025
<a href="#">25-054</a>	New Teaching Tool Available: Fruit and Vegetable Options for Infants 6-11 months	7/16/2025
<a href="#">25-053</a>	Revision of WIC Policy GA 14.0	7/14/2025
<a href="#">25-052</a>	WIC Material Guide to Helpful Programs and Services Now Available to Order	7/9/2025
<a href="#">25-051</a>	Formula Approval Resources	7/8/2025
<a href="#">25-050</a>	Revisions to GA:25.0.0 The Essentials of Texas WIC Hospitality	7/2/2025
<a href="#">25-049</a>	Get Started in the New WIC Staff Training LMS on July 14	7/1/2025
<a href="#">25-048</a>	Revision of WIC Policies QA:01.0 and QA:03.0	6/23/2025
<a href="#">25-047</a>	Revision of WIC Policy BF:01.0 – Breastfeeding Promotion and Support Standards	6/17/2025
<a href="#">25-046</a>	Revisions to the Health History Questionnaires	6/11/2025



#### **Texas WIC Express Archive**



- New LMS User Role for WIC Directors and LA Training Coordinators
- Class of 2026: Texas WIC Dietetic Interns
- Updated Breast Pump Manual
- Texas WIC Feeding Practices Survey – Local Agency Reports Available
- Texas WIC Staff LMS Updates
- Upcoming Trainings This Week

### **Upcoming Breastfeeding Courses – 2025**

#### **Breastfeeding Course Information**

The Health and Human Services, Texas WIC Program collaborates with the Texas Association of Local WIC Directors (TALWD) to provide current, evidence-based lactation education to ensure consistent, accurate information across all levels of health care professionals. Courses are offered virtually, in-person, and on-demand. If your facility would be interested in hosting an in-person Lactation Principles class, please use the Contact Us feature.

Online Breastfeeding Management and Breastfeeding the Compromised Infant are offered online to take at your own pace. No pre-requisites and no cost.

Texas WIC employees must take the classes on the Texas WIC Training site.

Non-WIC employees must take the classes on our site for WIC Partners.

If you have questions or problems, email [WICPartnerTraining@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:WICPartnerTraining@hhs.texas.gov)

#### **Live Classes**

Classes are offered in-person and/or virtually. Virtual classes are free to attend and require attending orientation at least once on the learning platform, Livestream, lasting about 20 minutes. Virtual classes are spread out over the course of several days. Registration is required in advance and closes a week prior to the class.

#### **Who Should Attend**

Live courses are designed for local agency WIC staff and health professionals who counsel breastfeeding mothers and would like to improve problem-solving and counseling skills. The classes emphasize critical thinking. You will work through case studies and activities as a group. Be prepared to join the discussions and share your ideas with others in class. There will be no written handout or syllabus so you can focus on discussions.

Active engagement is assessed in this virtual platform using participation via chat and polls. Evidence of consistent active engagement throughout the entire session day is required.



# Breastfeeding Courses

## Advanced Lactation Management: Session 1

Sep 8, 2025, 1:00 PM – Sep 8, 5:00 PM

4/60 Tickets

Please read the "Things to consider prior to registering" list on the Information Page prior to registering. This class is held virtually on the learning platform, Livestorm. Originally, this was a 2-day, in-person class but is now split into 4 sessions offered qua...

## Advanced Lactation Management: Session 2

Sep 10, 2025, 1:00 PM – Sep 10, 5:00 PM

4/60 Tickets

Please read the "Things to consider prior to registering" list on the Information Page prior to registering. This class is held virtually on the learning platform, Livestorm. Originally, this was a 2-day, in-person class but is now split into 4 sessions offered qu...

## Advanced Lactation Management: Session 3

Sep 15, 2025, 1:00 PM – Sep 15, 5:00 PM

4/60 Tickets

Please read the "Things to consider prior to registering" list on the Information Page prior to registering. This class is held virtually on the learning platform, Livestorm. Originally, this was a 2-day, in-person class but is now split into 4 sessions offered qua...

## Advanced Lactation Management: Session 4

Sep 17, 2025, 1:00 PM – Sep 17, 5:00 PM

4/60 Tickets

Please read the "Things to consider prior to registering" list on the Information Page prior to registering. This class is held virtually on the learning platform, Livestorm. Originally, this was a 2-day, in-person class but is now split into 4 sessions offered qua...

## Lactation Principles (in-person)

Oct 7, 2025, 8:00 AM – Oct 7, 5:00 PM

2/40 Tickets

Please read the Information Page; specifically the "Things to consider prior to registering" list. Who Should Attend: This is a basic level course that focuses on the counseling skills needed to provide optimal breastfeeding support to clients.

## Lactation Principles (virtual)

Nov 17, 2025, 9:00 AM – Nov 20, Noon

36/60 Tickets

Who Should Attend: This is a basic level course that focuses on the counseling skills needed to provide optimal breastfeeding support to clients. The course will enable attendees to strengthen their problem solving and critical thinking skills through case studies...

## Advanced Lactation Management: Session 1

Dec 8, 2025, 1:00 PM – Dec 8, 5:00 PM

1/60 Tickets

Please read the "Things to consider prior to registering" list on the Information Page prior to registering. This class is held virtually on the learning platform, Livestorm. Originally, this was a 2-day, in-person class but is now split into 4 sessions offered qua...

## Advanced Lactation Management: Session 2

Dec 10, 2025, 1:00 PM – Dec 10, 5:00 PM

2/60 Tickets

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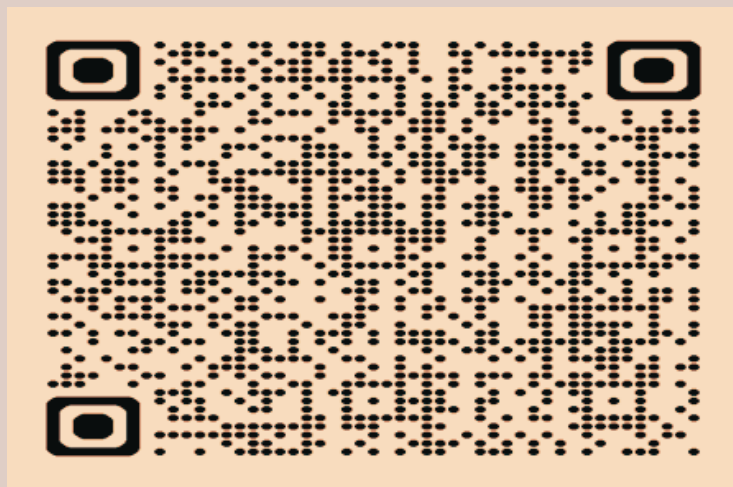
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## **TXIN and myWIC Live Trainings**

**Check out the Live Training Schedule for full details on upcoming training opportunities.**







[\\_Egnyte Directory on Egnyte](#)

Folder \_Egnyte Directory shared using Egnyte  
txwic.egnytegov.com



## Texas WIC Express Archive on Egnyte

Folder Texas WIC Express Archive shared using Egnyte





**Press Room**

The National WIC Association (NWA) is the non-profit education arm and advocacy voice of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

 National WIC Association

Welcome to the NWA online community

<https://community.nwica.org/community>

## **Protecting WIC Participant Data**

**Aug 14, 2:00 - 3:00 PM**

**<https://community.nwica.org/events/Yw8riG3MqeMnL2QPJ>**

**Hosted in NWA Webinars**

**Please RSVP for this event**

This NWA webinar is second in the series on WIC food packages and is hosted by NWA's Evaluation Committee. Presenters will share information on how food package issuance and redemption at category level can be used to identify families with unredeemed benefits and underutilized foods to conduct outreach. They will also speak on the importance of sharing timely information with Local Agencies to assist with program operations, outreach and retention.

## **WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program: Implementation Toolkit**

**Aug 21, 2:00 - 3:00 PM**

**<https://community.nwica.org/events/huCEGSrAni92mHHux>**

**Hosted in NWA Webinars**

**Please RSVP for this event**

Join us for an overview of the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP): Implementation Toolkit, developed as part of the Increasing Access to Healthy Food through Farmers' Markets initiative, funded by the Elevance Health Foundation. The webinar builds upon insights from the FMNP Landscape Scan Report, offering a deeper look into the facilitators, barriers, and promising practices of FMNP, electronic FMNP (eFMNP) and Cash Value Benefit (CVB). These findings served as a foundation to highlight effective tools and strategies that WIC Agencies from around the nation have used to enhance FMNP delivery. Explore how the Toolkit supports implementation across core focus areas, including farmer engagement, participant education and redemption, technology, and funding.



# NWA



## Blog

The National WIC Association (NWA) is the non-profit education arm and advocacy voice of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

 National WIC Association

July 11, 2025

### Meet the Board: Jennifer Nicklas, Chair, Executive Committee

As part of NWA's "Meet the Board" series, we spotlight Jennifer, Nutrition Services Director at the Louisiana Department of Health, who is the NWA Chair. With over a decade in the WIC program, Jennifer brings a collaborative and growth-focused approach to her leadership. In this Q&A, she shares her journey to the Board, her enthusiasm for member engagement, and her vision for NWA's role in modernizing WIC services.

June 20, 2025

### Advocates and Lawmakers Urge Congress to Pass Modern WIC Act & Defend Nutrition Benefits

On June 17, the National WIC Association (NWA), Bread for the World, and the Alliance to End Hunger hosted a Congressional briefing where U.S. Representatives and advocates pushed for passage of the MODERN WIC Act, support for WIC's Cash Value Benefit (CVB), and full funding for the program.

June 18, 2025

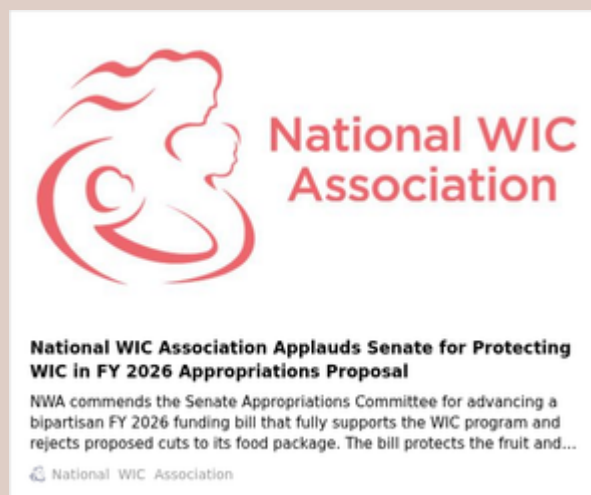
### Dads and WIC -- Strengthening Families Together

In a new guest blog, USDA Food and Nutrition Service Administrator James C. Miller shares how WIC supports whole-family health and why dads play an important role. Drawing on his experience as a father, he highlights simple ways dads can support their partners, connect with their children, and make the most of WIC. When fathers are involved, families grow stronger.

June 16, 2025

### Health Equity in Action: NWA's Guiding Principles at 40 Years

As the National WIC Association marks four decades of advocacy, this blog reflects on how our Guiding Principles continue to shape a more equitable public health future. From expanding access to nutritious foods to advancing culturally responsive care, NWA's equity-centered work ensures every family, regardless of identity or income, has the support they need to thrive. Learn how initiatives like AHEAD 3.0 and our ongoing policy advocacy put these principles into action.



[Register Now](#)

The National WIC Association (NWA) is marking a significant milestone! We are celebrating 40 years of driving innovation and technology forward in WIC. We invite you to join us in-person from September 3-5, 2025, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, for the 2025 NWA Technology, Innovation, and Vendor Management Conference.

The theme of this year's conference is Engage, Inspire, Energize: Driving WIC Innovation and Technology Forward. This conference brings together WIC leaders, experts, vendors, and innovators who are at the forefront of enhancing the WIC participant experience through cutting-edge technological solutions. As WIC evolves, it's essential to collaborate on new ideas and strategies that promote flexibility, improve participant access, and empower WIC practitioners.

This conference will feature five key topics that reflect the most pressing issues and WIC advancements:

- Participant Access – Innovations in certification processes and virtual services
- Leveraging Technology in Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Support
- The WIC Shopping Experience – Online options, vendor management, and program integrity
- Evaluation & Quality Improvement – Leveraging MIS systems to enhance program effectiveness
- Data Linkages – Enhancing recruitment, retention, and outreach

For 40 years, NWA has been a driving force in championing technology's role in improving WIC services. As we celebrate this milestone, we invite you to be part of the next phase of innovation. Help shape the future of WIC as we work together to develop solutions that will continue to empower families across the nation.

We look forward to seeing you in Minneapolis!





- **2025 Virtual NWA Nutrition Education & Breastfeeding Promotion Conference**  
November 5-6, 2025 | Virtual-only  
(Prospectus to be released by the end of Summer 2025)
- **2026 NWA National Policy Conference**  
February 24-26 | Virtual
- **2026 NWA Annual Education and Training Conference**  
May 27-30, 2026 | Dallas, TX  
(Prospectus to be released in Q4 2025)
- **2026 Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference (In-Person)**  
Dates and location TBD



## **Texas Association of Local WIC Directors Annual Conference 2025**

The Texas Association of Local WIC Directors, TALWD, is a professional organization made up of local WIC Directors who put forth efforts to influence program planning, changes to WIC policies, coordination between local and state agencies, and implementation and administration of the WIC Program on the local, state, and federal level. Our mission is to partner with the Texas WIC State Agency, advocate for WIC's mission, and provide a framework for WIC Directors.

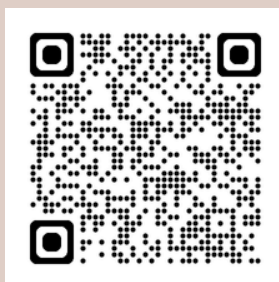
Hotel Margaritaville Beach Resort  
310 Padre Boulevard South Padre Island Texas, 78597



Dates Saturday October 18, 2025 to Wednesday October 22, 2025

Registration Cost: \$500

Preconference Cost: \$75





## **Pre-conference – Ernesto Galindo, Texas Association of Counties**

### **First Session Title: The Power of Change**

#### **SESSION DESCRIPTION:**

Change is a part of life. Some of us see change as a disruption of our norms, and our lives, but we all know change is inevitable. During this presentation, the participants will learn the role of strategic change as part of a successful risk management program.

### **Second Session Title: Seven Habits of Highly Effective Risk Professionals**

#### **SESSION DESCRIPTION:**

Effective risk managers always start with the end in mind. As a risk manager you should be prepared to learn from the past, look into the future, be aware of the evolving risk exposures impacting your organization, and pivot as necessary to better serve your organizations. During this session, the participants will discuss best practices to help you grow as a risk manager and improve current risk management programs.

The Power of Change – This presentation will discuss some of the obstacles and challenges experienced by organizations when implementing a new process or modifying the work culture.

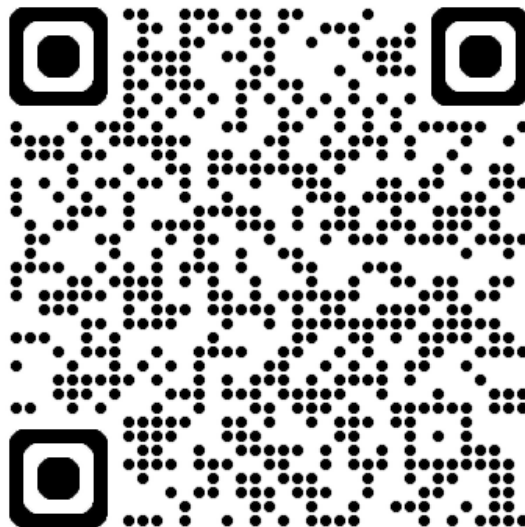
## **TALWD Board Positions up for Election & Job Descriptions**

President

VP of Organization & Development

Secretary

**LINK BELOW FOR JOB DESCRIPTION**





### **House Appropriators Advance Agriculture, WIC Spending Bill**

Last Monday night, the House Appropriations Committee [advanced](#) their proposed fiscal year 2026 agriculture funding bill with a party-line vote. Following an amendment offered by Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-IA), the bill would flat-fund WIC, providing nearly \$7.6 billion in funding, the same as fiscal year 2025. During the markup, leading Appropriators underscored their intention to provide WIC with sufficient funding to serve every eligible individual who seeks certification, a commitment reiterated in the bill's report language. However, as food prices continue to rise, the proposed funding level risks turning eligible families away from WIC, reverting to waitlists for the first time in nearly three decades. The bill also cuts the Cash Value Benefit (CVB) for fruits and vegetables by 10%, which Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD), chairman of the subcommittee overseeing agriculture spending, described as the first step in resetting total benefits to pre-2021 levels. Finally, the bill also contains several policy "riders" that would interfere with the implementation of the 2024 rule that made evidence-based updates to WIC's food packages. The Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to begin consideration of a counterproposal early next month.

### **Senate Inches Toward Megabill Passage, Teeing Up House Consideration**

This morning, the Senate [began](#) the marathon amendment process for Congressional Republicans' domestic policy package, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The measure would cut taxes, with savings concentrated among large corporations and wealthy Americans, while cutting basic needs programs and green energy investments. While WIC is not included in the package, restrictions on SNAP and Medicaid eligibility and access would have [ripple effects](#) for WIC participation. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that the bill as written would cause more than 11 million Americans to lose access to health coverage in the next decade. Despite numerous outstanding points of contention, President Trump has repeatedly indicated he would like Congress to finalize the bill before lawmakers leave town for the 4th of July recess, putting further pressure on any Republican holdouts.

## **New Recipe Calendars**



**We're excited to announce that our new Recipe Calendars are coming soon! Each calendar features simple, nutritious, and WIC-approved recipes designed to support families with healthy meal ideas throughout the year.**

**These will be perfect for clinics, community events, and outreach efforts and we can't wait to share them with you!**

**CLICK ON QR CODE TO ORDER**



## Physical Fitness



**Laredo WIC  
Summer Camp  
Day 1**



**Laredo WIC Summer Camp  
Day 2**

## Physical Fitness



**Laredo WIC  
Summer Camp  
Day 3**



**Laredo WIC  
Summer Camp  
Day 4**

## City of Laredo Public Health WIC Program

### LA 13

### Laredo WIC Summer Camp

The camp took place over four days, from July 7th to 10th, running from 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. We coordinated with the state to send text notifications to our WIC participants and provided our main phone number for families to call and register. The camp was open to children aged 3 to 4, along with their siblings up to 8 years old. During registration, we informed parents that at least one parent was required to stay for the full duration of the camp each day.

Each day began with parents and children attending separate sessions led by LA13 agencies Registered Dietitians and Nutritionist. While the parents received more in-depth nutrition and WIC-related information, I led basic nutrition lessons with the children, covering a different food group each day.

We also welcomed guest speakers from the City of Laredo. On Monday, the Fire Department gave a presentation; Tuesday featured the Laredo Public Library; Wednesday included our Environmental Department; and on Thursday, Laredo Animal Care Services presented.

In addition, we partnered with Laredo ISD to offer optional free breakfast and lunch to the children.



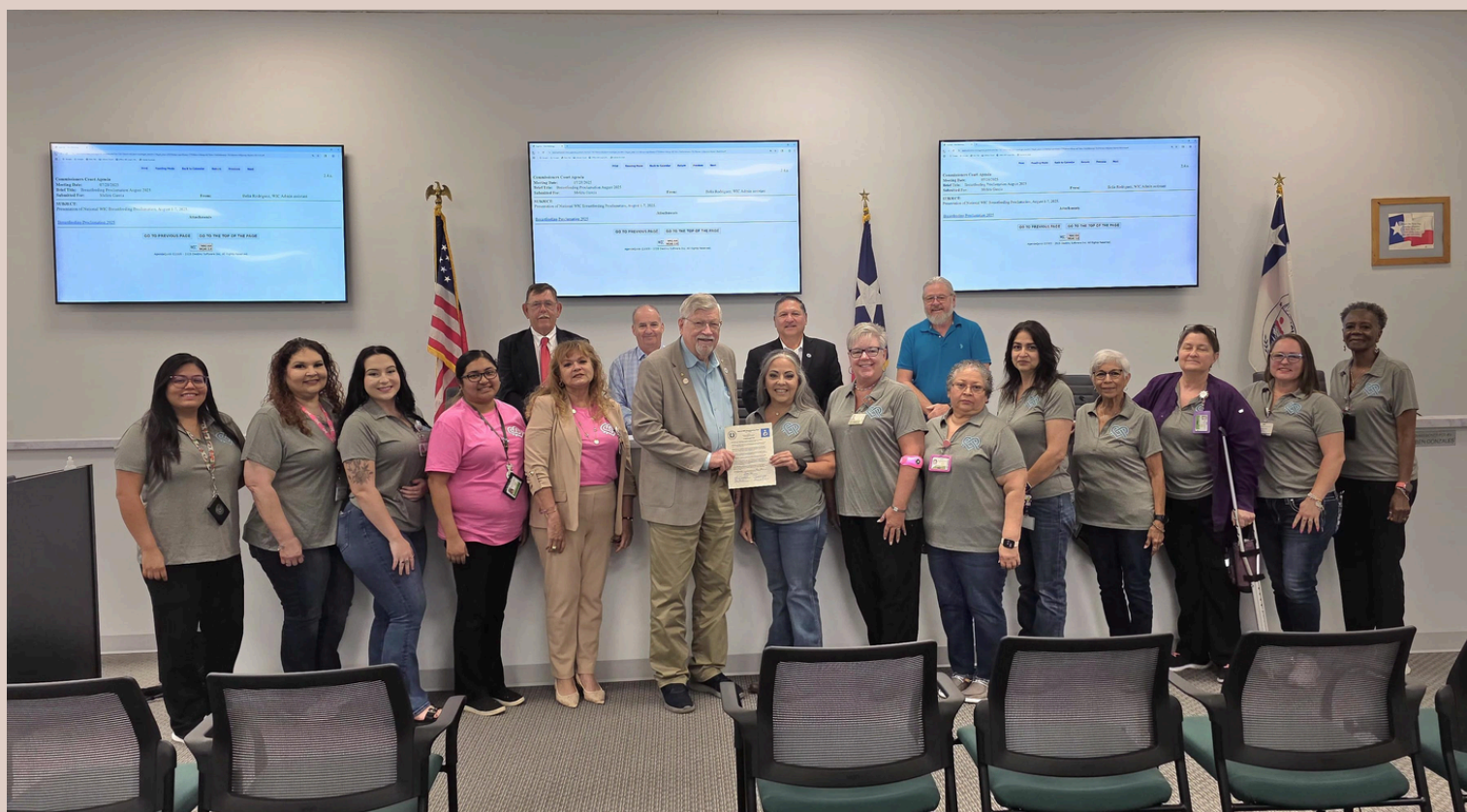


## Guest Speakers: Laredo Public Library

## Guest Speakers: Laredo Fire Dept.







## San Patricio County WIC LA051

Celebrated National Breastfeeding Month by presenting the National Breastfeeding Month Proclamation in Commissioners Court and Hosting a coordinated Celebration event with SPC DPH/TXPAN department.





## **Congratulations to Missy Hammer!**

**Retired on July 31, 2025 after almost 32 years of service!**

Missy managed the CE program in the Nutrition Services Section for in-person, virtual and online on-demand classes. She applied for credits for various WIC Program events and work with authorizing entities (such as Commission on Dietetic Registration, Texas Nurses Association (past), DSHS CE Service, and International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners) to secure credits. She coordinated with doctors, nurses, dietitians and other professionals regarding accreditation and regulatory requirements maintaining relationships and consulting with professional boards and organizations. Missy stayed current on rules and regulations regarding the acquisition and retention of CE hours. Missy also participated on the planning committee to identify needs assessment, practice gaps, logistics and evaluative components.

All of this while, maintaining detailed/accurate attendance records and oversaw the TALWD registration websites, developing content, adding classes and manage classroom sizes/registrants to verify eligibility and completion. Missy will be greatly missed!





After 16+ years of dedicated service to Texas State and to WIC program, Elsa Rodriguez is retiring. Her last day will be August 29th, 2025

Elsa started working under DSHS, WIC program in the quality Management Branch under Nancy Taylor as a Fiscal Monitor conducting reviews at WIC Local Agencies. In 2014 she started working with the Clinic Service Branch as quality Assurance Coordinator and in 2015 was promoted to Unit Coordinator aka Fiscal Liaison for LAs. In 2018 Elsa joined WIC financial group as Financial Analyst III and was upgraded to Financial Analyst IV.

During her service, Elsa always worked close to Local agencies, helping them in so many different ways. She enjoyed traveling and visiting local agencies all over the state of Texas, responded to LAs questions, provided training and reviews, projected and monitored the funds LAs need. Her dedication, leadership, mentorship, and positivity will leave a lasting impact on us as a team and individually as well.

For her retirement, Elsa plans to stay busy – cleaning and organizing her house, helping her brother taking care of farm animals, and providing loving home to her babies – pug Princess and pug mix Frida.

While we are excited for Elsa to begin this new chapter, we will certainly miss her presence. She has touched many of our lives in such a positive way! She will be missed tremendously.

# Award Nominees

## Quarter 1:

Art Fuston –Jennifer Ranspot. Jennifer has served TALWD in several capacities including being Vice President and a member of the Technology Task Force. She is always willing to step up and fill in gaps when needed and provides encouragement and support for new members. She brings a unique and valuable perspective to TALWD as she functions as a CA in her Local Agency. It can be challenging for Directors of smaller LA's to find time to be active in TALWD and still complete daily duties; however, Jennifer willingly makes this sacrifice for the betterment of the WIC program. Jennifer participates on multiple task forces to help support TALWD and WIC. She is also very kind and supportive of all her colleagues on the board.

Customer Service –Tiffany Brown. Tiffany is always a pleasure to work with. She is knowledgeable about WIC policies, responds to LA questions in a timely manner, and goes the extra mile to assist us. She has also done an excellent job planning the Texas WIC Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference over the past few years.

Newcomer – Kathy Almaraz. Kathy has been an excellent addition to the board and has a light hearted and kind attitude that is contagious. She has done a great job in her role as the Nutrition Education committee chair. She brings a great deal of insight and expertise to each TALWD board meeting.

## Quarter 2:

Art Fuston –Jenifer Gregory. She is the one director I know I can continuously count on for support. She is so knowledgeable and has great insight into all aspects of technology, policy, quality management etc. She does an incredible job in her role as the TALWD Secretary. TALWD has benefitted greatly from her organizational skills. This includes meeting invites, well-kept records, to supporting all those on the executive board, Jenifer does it all. She is humble, kind, and generous. She embodies all the characteristics of the Art Fuston award.

Customer Service –Alyssa Rubin. She is consistently responsive in a timely and efficient manner with all requests. She demonstrates excellence in customer service and cares about the local agency's needs. Alyssa hit the ground running when she started with WIC and has not slowed down! She is very knowledgeable and continually works to improve the WIC Food Packages and printed materials and local agency staff trainings.

Newcomer –Kelly Bocanegra. Kelly has stepped up to fill in positions in TALWD, and she is currently serving as the chair of the Administration Committee. Prior to becoming a WIC Director, she functioned as an administrator within her LA, so she brings a unique and fresh perspective to TALWD.



### **Quarter 3:**

Art Fuston –Adela Garcia. Adela became a WIC Director and immediately became involved as the TALWD NWA Rep-Elect and now the NWA Representative. She is passionate about WIC and has spoke and presented on her agency's project at NWA. She is active in TALWD and provides a great voice for all Local Agencies. Adela actively listens and provides great input. She is funny, thoughtful and very sweet!

Customer Service –Connie Cheng. As one of the lead State Agency staff for the new counseling framework, Connie did an amazing job developing the curriculum and leading the Nutrition Counseling Workshop. She presented the information in a way that was easy for staff to understand and implement. She is also a source of encouragement to Local Agency CAs. I observed her encouragement when LA staff were filming for the Counseling Fundamentals trainings and during the workshop. Connie is a gem, and we are fortunate that she is part of Texas WIC!

Newcomer –Nicole Koenen. Since assuming the role of WIC Director, Nicole has been an asset to TALWD. Nicole is diligent about serving within TALWD committees. She provides thoughtful and meaningful feedback to policies and other documents sent to TALWD committees for review. She knows and understands the clinical side of WIC. I am thankful to have her (and her expertise) as a part of TALWD.