

Chair Elect:

Paul Throne, State WIC Director, Washington State WIC



I'm grateful to be considered for the position of NWA board chair. I have represented the western region state directors on the NWA board since 2019. I am also board liaison to the Risk Identification and Selection Collaborative (RISC), which examines nutrition risk codes and their criteria. As WIC director for Washington State, I believe in the power of our connection to each other, to our participants and partners, and to national policy makers.

I am running for board chair because I believe we have a unique opportunity to set the stage for the future of WIC, and I want to help lead this program into the next decade. The national political environment, and the passion for social justice at the state and local level, are coming together to open doors for us that we haven't seen before. In the past year we've gone from struggling to provide services, to seeing the very real possibility that we may soon have legislation that includes the funding, tools, and flexibilities that will make our program stronger. This is an amazing moment for WIC, and we need to take advantage of this opportunity.

I believe in giving children their best chance to thrive. That means supporting pregnancy and birth equity, meeting families where they are, and bringing community empowerment, traditional wisdom, and lived experience together with nutrition and lactation science, to give caregivers and children everything they need to have the best start in life. It also means building strong, real, and equitable relationships with our community partners, friends, and policy makers, to bring together diverse voices and perspectives to reduce nutrition insecurity. Most importantly, this means listening to the voices of WIC participants as we seek to deliver our services in more effective ways.

I have worked for over 30 years in public health, including community mental health, HIV/AIDS, health care quality assurance, immunization, and state policy, before leading Washington WIC. As state WIC director, I have prioritized health equity, and made combatting racism, bias, and oppression in all forms a priority for our program. I am committed to using data to guide decision-making, using resources wisely to support the program's vision, working respectfully and effectively with our federal partners, and growing the next generation of professionals and leaders who will carry this program forward.

I grew up in rural southern Oregon and went to college in New England. I received my doctorate in public health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and master's degrees in public health and social work from the University of Connecticut. In my spare time I'm trying to get better at playing the piano, and I have caught the family history bug, and enjoy finding out as much as I can about the people who made me who I am.

I would welcome the opportunity to serve you and the organization as board chair.

Chair Elect (continued):

Christina Windrix, WIC Nutrition Director, Oklahoma WIC



Christina Windrix is a Registered and Licensed Dietitian. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Nutritional Sciences from the University of Oklahoma.

From 2001 to 2005 Christina launched her WIC journey as the local agency nutritionist for several WIC clinics in rural and central Oklahoma, where she discovered her love of the WIC Program.

In 2005 she accepted a position at the State WIC Office as a WIC Program Consultant. In this position she planned and coordinated various visits to local WIC clinics within an assigned region of the state. Christina functioned as a trainer, teacher, mentor and monitor of the WIC program. She served in this role for 10 years, providing coverage to over 40 counties within the State of Oklahoma.

In 2015 she accepted the position of WIC Program Consultant Coordinator. This position supervised six WIC Program Consultants with statewide responsibility and provided coverage for the WIC Nutrition Director as needed. During her tenure, she assisted the State eWIC Program Specialist with the launch of eWIC. She helped test the state MIS system, created training materials, provided regional trainings, and worked with her group to provide on-site clinic support during the six month eWIC roll-out period.

Since 2017 Christina has served as the Nutrition Services Director for the Oklahoma WIC Program. In her recent role she has had the opportunity to serve, support, and lead a team of 13 dedicated WIC dietitians, six of which are also IBCLCs. Together her team strives to provide quality nutrition services and support while continuing to advocate for the health of Oklahoma women, infants and children. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Christina led the development of an extensive online application utilizing Qualtrics, an online survey platform.

Why I am running for Chair-Elect.

I am interested in serving as Chair-Elect to represent the WIC Program at a national level. My experience as a registered dietitian, along with my extensive understanding of WIC policy, procedure and clinic operations, make me an ideal candidate. Throughout my WIC journey, I have had the remarkable opportunity to work closely with various WIC staff across all spectrums. I am eager to continue promoting the valuable role WIC plays in transforming the nutritional well-being of our nation's women, infants and children. Finally, the knowledge and experience I have obtained throughout my twenty-year tenure will help meet new challenges facing the WIC Program as we evolve to meet the future needs for our participants.

Treasurer:

Amanda Hovis, Director of Nutrition Education and Clinical Services, Texas WIC, Nutrition Services Section Representative



Originally from Minneapolis, MN, Amanda moved to Texas shortly after graduating from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Nutritional Science. She was lucky to be bitten by the WIC bug early in her career as a nutritionist for the City of Austin. Since then Amanda has held numerous positions in WIC at both the state and local agency levels. While working at the state WIC office Amanda completed the Johns Hopkins MPH Program. After several years at the state WIC office, Amanda launched a successful consulting business where she worked with WIC and other public health programs nationwide.

In 2015, Amanda returned to the Texas WIC Program as the Director of Nutrition Education and Clinic Services. Amanda has a passion for nutrition and for creating innovative cost-effective initiatives that show measurable changes in participant health habits and behavior. She and her husband live in Austin, TX with their two boys, Rai and Mac.

Nominating Committee:

Kate Franken, State WIC Director, Minnesota Department of Health, State Agency Section Representative, *State Agency Section Representative*



My name is Kate Franken. I am the State WIC Director for the Minnesota WIC Program. I have worked in the WIC Program at the state level for 8 years and in the director role for 4 years. I am a Registered Dietitian and have a master's degree in Public Health from the University of Minnesota. I have served in various Public Health Nutrition positions during my career in the last 20+ years. These positions have included roles in School Nutrition, research and evaluation, consulting, and program management.

I have a strong commitment to the individuals and families we serve in WIC. Those of us working in the WIC community have a mission-oriented focus to reach as many eligible families as possible with the services and resources that we know can make a positive difference in these families' lives. It is a pleasure and honor to work with so many dedicated and knowledgeable colleagues in the WIC community through NWA. I would be honored to help connect NWA members with opportunities to serve on the NWA Board through this role on the Nominating Committee.

Erin James, Breastfeeding Coordinator, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, *Native American Section Representative*



Erin began her health career working with mothers and babies to support breastfeeding as a Peer Counselor for the Choctaw Nation WIC Program. As her interest in helping mothers grew, she expanded her knowledge by working as a WIC Paraprofessional. She attended certification classes and became a Certified Breastfeeding Educator (CBE) and a Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC). Seeing the need for more breastfeeding support in her community, she studied to certify as an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). Her love for bettering the health of the community continued to grow, propelling her to continue her education and add to her Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting she had completed in 1999. In 2012, she earned her Master of

Science in Health Science degree with a focus in Public Health. She served her community by working as the Breastfeeding Coordinator for 10 years and continues to support families as the Nutrition Coordinator in the Choctaw Nation WIC Program. She also serves as Secretary on the National Indian and Native American WIC Coalition (NINAWC).

Erin is a devoted wife and loving mother of two breastfed children, both of whom are now in college. In her free time, she enjoys baking and crocheting.

Nominating Committee (continued):

Beth Honerman, WIC Quality Improvement Specialist & Oral Health, South Dakota Department of Health - WIC, Nutrition Services Section Representative



Beth has a BS in Nutrition and Food Science from South Dakota State University, completing her internship at Rapid City Regional Hospital. She is a Certified Lactation Counselor. Beth has 30+ years of public health experience working various positions for the South Dakota Department of Health WIC Program. During her tenure with the WIC program she provided nutrition counseling of at-risk participants in a variety of clinics, been a team lead, and serves as a preceptor for USD Dietetic Interns in their Community Health nutrition rotation. At the State WIC Office she has been the State WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator and is currently the Quality Improvement Specialist.

Carrie Zavala, WIC Director, Maricopa County Department of Public Health, Local Agency Section Representative

I am a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and have a Master of Science in Nutrition from Central Washington University. I



started my WIC career 24 years ago as a WIC Clinic RDN and then a WIC Nutrition Consultant for the Public Health – Seattle & King County WIC Program where I spent the first 10 years of my career. I also had the opportunity to serve as the Executive Director for Nutrition First which is the non-profit WIC Association in Washington State for a little over 3 years. I moved to Phoenix, Arizona in 2010 and was the State Nutrition Coordinator for the Arizona Department of Health Services until making my transition back to the local agency arena in early 2015 where I am the WIC Director for the Maricopa County Department of Public Health WIC Program. Our WIC Program is the largest local agency WIC Program in Arizona serving over 45,000 women, infants, and children per month.

The thing that I am most proud of is that my initial experience with WIC was as a client when I was pregnant with my son Sam, who is now almost 25, which is what really sparked my interest in working for this incredible program when I finished graduate school. Currently, I live in Phoenix with my Husband Marco, our two dogs (Ava and Fender) and my mom also lives with us. We have 4 grown children and just became grandparents to McKenna about 16 months ago! I am looking forward to getting involved with the NWA Board as part of the Nominating Committee.