

TALWD NEWS

Volume 5 Issue 21

TALWD NEWS

November 2021



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 21.

Jolene Norbert-Harrell, Newsletter Reporter
Email: jolene.norbert-harrell@phs.hctx.net

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LA# 044 – City of Del Rio

From: Luz Covarrubias

LA 44 had an over 10% increase in participation each of the last 2 months. (August and September)

We started our outreach at housing projects using the WIC Mobile Unit. Participants who don't have a vehicle or are not able to come to the clinic they can walk up to the mobile unit, they get screened, counseling and nutrition education or any other needs from the participants are handle over the phone. Once everything is done, they will get their benefits.

Our participants are loving our walk-up window and the less time they spend getting their benefits. Using the Gateway participants are able to upload documents, interviews, and counseling are been conducted via phone while the participants are at their homes, when they come to the window, they hand out their card and the wait time is no more than 15 minutes.

LA# 044 Breastfeeding Celebration Protect Breastfeeding

LA# 003 – Cameron County Public Health

LA 003 welcomes a New WIC Director

Claudia Soto transitioned into the role of Assistant Health Administrator for Cameron County Public Health. “It has been an amazing journey to be part of the WIC family for 23 years. Although my departure is bittersweet, I’m happy that as the Assistant Health Administrator I will continue to work closely with Ms. Vicinaiz and the WIC program,”

Yvette Vicinaiz has accepted the position of LA 003’s new WIC Director. “Yvette brings over 14 years of experience as the Assistant WIC Director and I am confident it will be a smooth transition.”

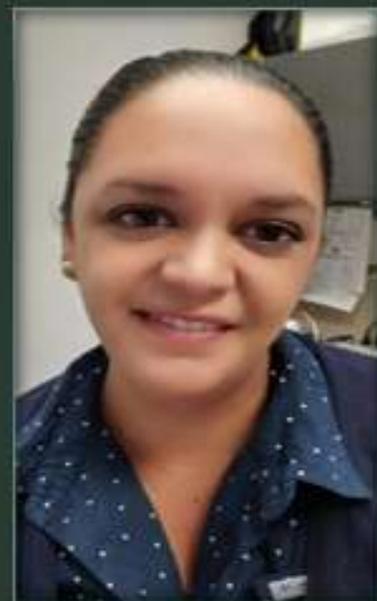
On behalf of TALWD, congratulations to both of Claudia and Ivette on your accomplishments! You will do great things.

**Claudia
Soto**



**Former
WIC Director**

**Yvette
Vicinaiz**



**NEW
WIC Director**

**Good luck to you
Claudia!!**

WELCOME!!!

Spotlight on LA# 054 – Tarrant County Public Health

The Tarrant County Public Health (TCPH) WIC Program received the Bronze award for the 2021 NACCHO Innovative Practice Award titled “Adapting Delivery -Curbside WIC services.” The Innovative Practice Award recognizes and honors programs and practices that have been quickly and/or creatively developed in response to COVID-19. Awarded practices demonstrated effective community partnerships and collaboration, adaptability and quality improvement, and remarkable innovation.

Tarrant County Public Health WIC Program utilized USDA waivers and the innovative TXIN tools to safely serve WIC families. The main goal at roll out in April 2020 was to minimize exposure to COVID. LA 054 strategically combined sixteen WIC clinics so participants could be served equitably. TCPH WIC Program had 50% of the staff working from home and 50% working in the six clinics that remained open. Benefits were issued curbside by staff going to vehicles to collect required information. LA 054 also mailed EBT cards to those participants who experienced barriers. In July 2020, LA 054 moved to phase two which is still in operation. The main goal continues to be to increase access to services. Three additional clinics opened, and all staff returned to work. Employees continue to practice social distancing and follow CDC guidelines. LA 054 moved from curbside to a drop box model during this phase, where participants walk to a table to complete required documentation. Staff issue benefits over the phone while participants wait in their vehicles, and then return to the table to pick up their benefits.

Lessons learned during this crisis include the following:

- Strategic placement of open locations was the biggest step to minimize health inequity
- Accessibility: Consideration of distance between open and closed clinics and access to public transportation helped improve accessibility
- WIC services are a valuable resource during the pandemic
- WIC has a meaningful impact on public health which has been magnified on many levels during COVID
- Many babies were born during the pandemic that needed immediate support of WIC, and the ability to adapt as the situation changed multiple times was essential to serving them.

When all clinics reopen Tarrant County Public Health WIC Program plans to continue utilizing the new skill sets WIC staff have developed. The plan is to continue using the upgrades in TXIN including the gateway, to continue serving participants by phone. The biggest lesson learned through this pandemic is that WIC can adapt in times of crisis to the ever-changing needs of the population it serves. WIC is an indispensable component of public health and essential in the community.

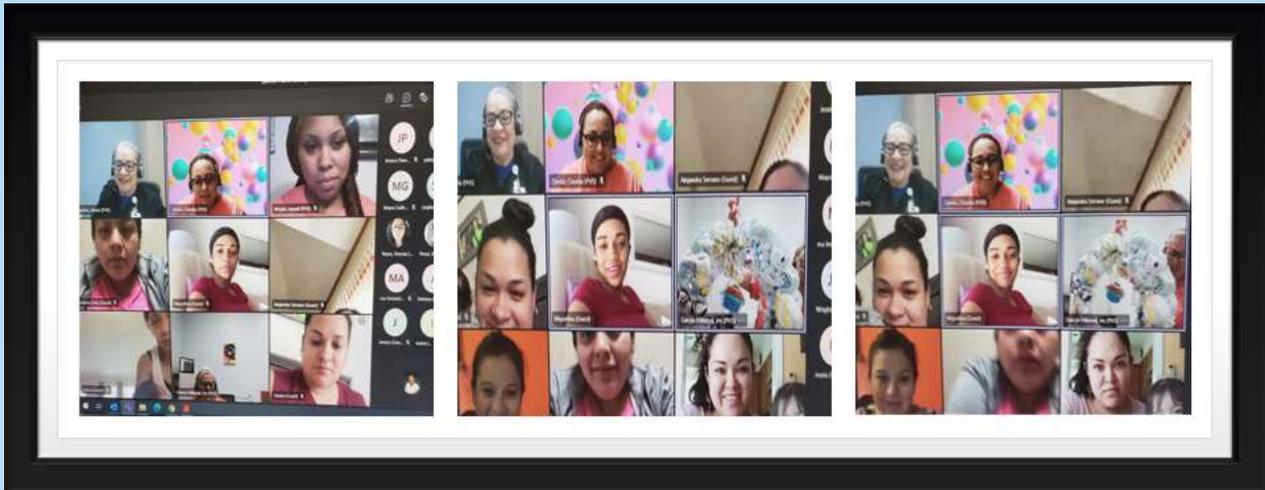


Michelle Cummings, RD
WIC Director
Tarrant County Public Health WIC Program LA#54

Spotlight on LA# 048 – Harris County Public Health

National Breastfeeding Month

During National Breastfeeding Month, LA 48 hosted a virtual Breastfeeding Celebration. 50 invitations were sent to pregnant women on our pregnancy due date list and text messages were sent as a follow up. A total of 42 WIC clients participated in the celebration and received giveaways such as diapers, baby wipes, baby socks, baby face clothes, burp clothes, diaper cream, baby body wash, baby lotion, and baby washing powder. Although we enjoyed celebrating mothers this year, we are looking forward to an in-person celebration in 2022.



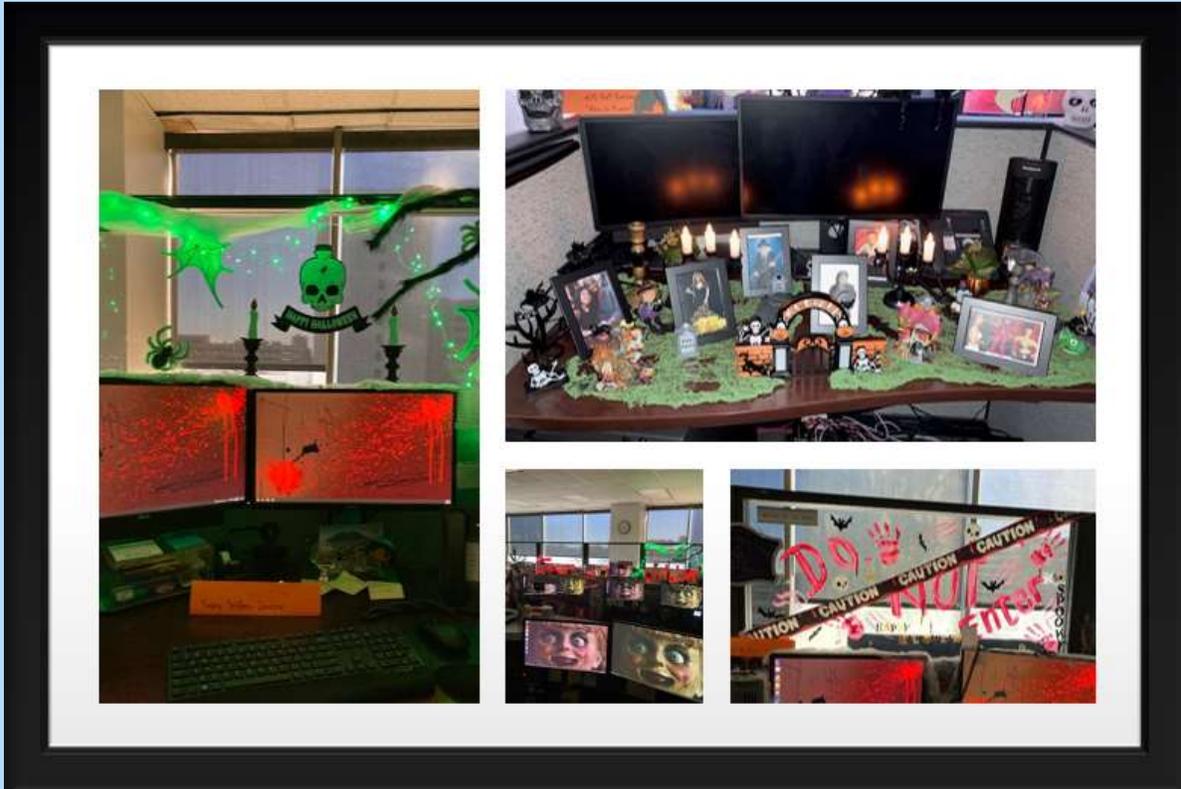
Spooky Fun LA 48

LA 48 participated in a department wide Spooktacular activity that included costume, office decorating and pumpkin contests. Our Tomball, Antoine, Shaver and Scarsdale WIC clinics and our Call Center all participated and won in all categories as either winner, tie, runner up or honorable mention. This activity was a nice way to have some fun and connect.

WIC Clinics:



WIC Call Center:



Jolene Norbert-Harrell, MBA, RD, LD | WIC Director
Harris County Public Health – LA# 048

Have you
renewed your
TALWD
membership?

Visit
www.talwd.org
for more info!

Importance of TALWD Membership

- TALWD acts 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.
- TALWD fosters communication between local WIC Programs and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) with the goal of positively effecting the administration of WIC within the state.
- TALWD brings together the administrators of the local agency WIC Programs in order to promote peer support, orientation and/or assistance.
- TALWD promotes professional and public awareness of new and existing federal and state legislation.
- Membership in TALWD represents an agency membership.



Happy Holidays

AND HAVE A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR