

**COUNTY OF**



**ALLEGHENY**

**RICH FITZGERALD**  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 6, 2014

**CONTACT:** Guillermo Cole  
Public Information Officer  
412-578-8004  
[gcole@achd.net](mailto:gcole@achd.net)

### **County Health Department Celebrates WIC's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**PITTSBURGH** – The Allegheny County Health Department will celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Supplemental Food and Nutrition Program at a recognition ceremony on Wednesday, May 14, from 1 to 4 p.m., at Hosanna House, 807 Wallace Avenue, Wilkensburg.

Guest speakers will include Hosanna House's Executive Director Leon Haynes; Health Department Director Dr. Karen Hacker; Health Department Deputy Director of Community Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Dr. Roderick Harris; and retired WIC staff involved in the program at its inception.

"Our County played a key role in WIC's development as one of the test sites for the national demonstration project in 1974. We pioneered a program that has come to be acclaimed as one of our nation's most effective public health initiatives," said Health Director Dr. Karen Hacker.

WIC is a federally funded program that provides nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support and food benefits to pregnant/breastfeeding women, postpartum mothers and children under the age of five. Food vouchers are redeemable at participating grocery stores. Eligibility is based on income and medical risk.

WIC encourages early prenatal care and monitors weight gain during pregnancy and early childhood. Studies show that WIC decreases premature delivery and low birth weight; increases breastfeeding; reduces iron deficiency anemia in children; and enhances physical growth and development.

The County's WIC program has grown from a pilot project with a caseload of 11,000 clients to a long-established program that currently serves nearly 16,000. An estimated 818,000 residents – two-thirds of the County's population – have received food benefits worth about \$320 million since 1974.

WIC isn't just for low-income families on public assistance, but has income limits high enough that many working families struggling to get by on modest incomes eligible for benefits. In fact, one out of every two WIC families in the County is employed and receives no public assistance.

The income limits are an annual gross income of \$21,257 for a family of one; \$28,694 for 2; \$36,131 for 3; \$43,568 for 4; \$51,005 for 5; \$58,442 for 6; \$65,879 for 7; and \$73,316 for 8. Add \$7,437 for each additional member beyond 8. Unborn children are counted when the woman is pregnant.

The U.S. Postal Service is issuing a special cancellation on May 14 recognizing WIC's 40th anniversary. The cancellation is available through June 14 by mail at: WIC 40th Anniversary Station, ATTN Retail Specialist, 1001 California Avenue Room 2036, Pittsburgh, PA 15290-9681. Please send a self-addressed stamped envelope, with first class postage, to receive the pictorial cancellation.

PA WIC is funded by the USDA. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**###**

KAREN A. HACKER, MD, MPH, DIRECTOR  
**ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT – PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**  
955 RIVERMONT DRIVE • PITTSBURGH, PA 15207  
PHONE (412) 578-8004 • FAX (412) 578-8325 • [WWW.ACHD.NET](http://WWW.ACHD.NET)

