
WIC SPECIAL PROJECT INNOVATION GRANT

Project Staff & Advisory Group Member Bios

Heather Shaffer

The Council of State Governments

Heather Shaffer currently serves as the Deputy Director of the Center of Innovation at The Council of State Governments. Heather helps ensure CSG's portfolio of policy work meets and exceeds the expectations of our funders, partners, and member States. She brings deep expertise helping public and private sector organizations align and achieve complex change. Prior to joining CSG, Heather served as a Director in KPMG's public sector management consulting practice. Her projects spanned strategy development to program implementation for complex government entities throughout the U.S. Heather is a graduate of the University of Florida.

Matt Shafer, MPA

The Council of State Governments

Matt Shafer is a Project Manager at the Council of State Governments. Matt joined The Council of State Governments in 2017 and has quickly grown his portfolio as a technical assistance provider for state governments around a variety of policy areas. Matt has led CSG's efforts on several federally funded grant projects. Matt joined CSG as a graduate fellow while completing his MPA degree at the Martin School of Public Administration.

Jennie Hill, PhD

Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition

Jennie is a Senior Research Scientist at the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition. Hill is also an Associate Professor of Epidemiology at the University of Nebraska Medical Center's College of Public Health. Since joining the Center in 2016, Dr. Hill has lead evaluations on the effects of built environment interventions in retail spaces and schools on food choice. Additionally, Hill has designed and facilitates a learning collaborative that hones skills of community-based grantees in implementing and evaluating evidence-based approaches to childhood obesity prevention.

Eric Calloway, PhD

Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition

Eric is a Research Scientist at the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition. Calloway received his PhD from the University of Texas Austin in 2014 prior to joining the Center as a Postdoctoral Fellow. At the Center, Calloway leads evaluation and research projects of varying focuses, but his main areas of interest include federal nutrition assistance programs and their relationship with food security and dietary outcomes and the impacts of health advocacy initiatives on moving policy.



**Katie Stern, MPH,
Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition**

Katie is a Senior Project Manager at the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition. Stern began her career at the Center as a Research Associate in 2014 prior to becoming a Project Manager the following year. At the Center, Stern has developed a niche as an evaluation capacity building training and technical assistance provider and manages various evaluation efforts in the areas of food insecurity and childhood nutrition and obesity prevention.

**Wendi Gosliner, PhD
Nutrition Policy Institute at the University of California**

Wendi leads research projects at the Nutrition Policy Institute and teaches at UC Berkeley's School of Public Health. She has dedicated her career to understanding and working to improve policies and programs that affect population health and nutrition, with a focus on eliminating health disparities and improving federal food and nutrition programs. She has studied interventions in schools, childcare centers, WIC, SNAP, and SNAP-Ed, and is particularly interested in the nexus of research, public policy and community-based efforts to improve health.

**Antonia Violante
ideas42**

Antonia is a Senior Associate at ideas42 where she applies insights from behavioral science to problems in economic justice and civic engagement. In 2016, she conducted research on the behavioral barriers to the WIC experience, which culminated in the paper [Using Behavioral Science to Improve the WIC Experience: Lessons for the Field from San Jose, California](#). Over the past three years, she's worked with WIC administrators at the state and local level to design interventions to improve retention, appointment attendance and the shopping experience. Antonia holds a B.A. in Psychology from Swarthmore College and is also the Books Editor for the online news magazine, *The Behavioral Scientist*.

**Robert Ferguson, MPH
Jewish Healthcare Foundation**

Robert is Director of Government Grants and Policy for the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) and its supporting organizations—the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), Health Careers Futures (HCF), and the Women's Health Activist Movement Global (WHAMglobal). In addition to analyzing policy developments, he currently manages the statewide HealthChoices Patient-Centered Medical Home Learning Network, the Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative, the Reinvesting in Health Initiative which tests perinatal bundled payment models, the statewide Opioid Use Disorders Centers of Excellence Learning Network with Pitt PERU, the Health Activist Network, and the Pennsylvania Health Funders Collaborative. Prior to his current role, Robert directed JHF's Adolescent Behavioral Health Initiative, Salk Health Activist Fellowship, policy work for Community Health Workers, projects that implemented evidence-based models for depression and substance misuse in primary care settings, including a four-



state dissemination consortium funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement's nine-state implementation consortium funded by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation. Robert is a Fellow at CMS' Center for Clinical Standards & Quality through October 2019 working on the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative focusing on integrating physical and behavioral health care. He was a previous Health and Aging Policy Fellow with a placement at CMS. He earned his bachelor's degree in Health Sciences at Northeastern University and a master's in Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh while completing internships at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, and the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Exercise and Health Fitness Research.

Georgia Machell, PhD
National WIC Association

Georgia joined NWA in 2015 and is responsible for directing program operations for the Association. This involves managing staff and working closely with senior leadership to ensure the Association develops projects, programming and products that support the mission and vision of NWA. In addition, Georgia links the research community with the WIC community, advises on WIC research priorities, works closely with the NWA Evaluation Committee and contributes to NWA's advocacy efforts. Georgia has a PhD in Food Policy from City University of London and has worked extensively on food access issues in the UK and the US on both the local community and national levels.

Elisabet Eppes, MPH
National WIC Association

Elisabet has worked at the National WIC Association (NWA) since 2014 and has held multiple roles, including Community Partnerships Associate and Senior Government Affairs Associate. In her role as Program Innovation Manager, which she began in May 2018, Elisabet is responsible for managing NWA's activities related to WIC program innovation, focusing on those aimed at improving recruitment and retention of WIC participants. Elisabet's background includes a Bachelor of Science in Biobehavioral Health from the Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Public Health with a concentration in Nutrition from the University of Washington.

Geraldine Henchy, MPH, RD
Food Research and Action Center

Geri is the director of nutrition policy at FRAC. Geri's work focuses on nutrition policies, such as increasing the healthfulness of nutrition programs, necessary to reach the goals of eradicating domestic hunger and improving the nutrition and health of low-income individuals and families.

Geri is a member of the Institute of Medicine's Committee to Review the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Requirements, which has the task of creating nutrition standards to bring the meals served into compliance with the Dietary Guidelines. Geri is the current chair of the legislation and policy committee of the American Public Health Association's Food and Nutrition



section. She currently serves on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Management Improvement Task Force. She has been honored to receive awards for her work on the Child Nutrition Programs from the Sponsors Association, the National Sponsors Forum and the California Roundtable. Most recently, the National Association of Family Child Care honored Ms. Henchy with their Advocate of the Year Award.

Geri is the author of numerous policy briefs on the federal child nutrition programs. She has co-authored a number of publications, including Making WIC Work for Multicultural Communities: Best Practices for Outreach and Nutrition Education, Time for a Change: WIC Food Package Guide, WIC In Native American Communities: Building a Healthier America, and WIC Partnerships and the Nurturing Parent. Ms. Henchy is also the author of a number of web-based tools, including most recently the Child Care Wellness Tool Kit: Child and Adult Care Food Program. She is a Registered Dietitian and has an M.P.H. in nutrition from the University of California, Berkeley.

Zoë Neuberger, MPP, JD
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Zoë, a Senior Policy Analyst, joined the Center in May 2001. She works on nutrition assistance programs. Zoë provides analytic and technical assistance on child nutrition programs such as WIC and school lunches to policymakers and state-level non-profit groups.

Previously she worked as an analyst at the White House Office of Management and Budget, where she was responsible for oversight of over \$30 billion in federal spending on TANF, child care, child nutrition, WIC, and low-income tax credits. She holds a law degree from Yale University and a Master in Public Policy degree from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

Linnea Sallack, MPH, RD
Altarum

Linnea works with federal, state, and local nutrition and food assistance agencies to assess program operations and develop strategies to strengthen services, increase operational efficiency and impact, and ensure program integrity. Linnea oversees national studies and projects pertaining to the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) conducted for U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), as well as evaluation, technical assistance and training services for state government agencies, universities and non-profit organizations. Before joining Altarum Institute, Linnea had a 30-year career providing and managing WIC program services, including serving as State WIC Director for the California WIC Program. During her WIC career, she received a California Department of Public Health Leadership Award and the NWA Leadership Award, as well as recognition for leadership and service from FNS and the California State Legislature. Linnea is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley School of Public Health and Penn State University, and she is a Registered Dietitian.



Debra Keyes, MA

DKEYINGREDIENT Consultants LLC

Debra has extensive background in running programs specific to women and family with an emphasis on nutrition and positive health strategies. She is currently the Founder and Chief Consultant at DKEYINGREDIENT Consultants LLC where she provides professional consultation, coaching and training in Professional Development, Organizational Development and Personal Development for individuals, non-profits, federal, state, and local governments, and others. Previously, she served as the Director of Georgia Nutrition WIC Program. Her role included directing the overall planning, implementation, coordination, and evaluation of program services, policy and budgets to promote effective administration and service delivery; overseeing the states 18 districts and one contracted program with over 200 WIC sites and 1,400 WIC authorized Vendors (grocers). She was responsible for a state staff of more than 60 professional and paraprofessionals and managed the activities of four WIC Offices -Administration, Nutrition and Program Operations, Vendor Management/Cost containment/WIC farmers Market and Strategy and Integrity.