

# Meet the WIC Team

Welcome to WIC! We want to share with you a little about the staff that make up the WIC Team. Enjoy ☺



Hello, my name is Maricela Elias and I am the WIC Program Coordinator. I started my WIC career in January of 2008 and have been here ever since! Shortly after joining WIC with North Central Public Health District, I learned that lactation was so fascinating, and knew right away it would be my area of concentration.

I am a certified lactation educator and love supporting mothers in their breastfeeding journey. Being bilingual and bicultural, allows me to provide the same quality of service and support to our Spanish speaking population, which is the second biggest minority group in our community.

The Dalles is where I've grown up and have chosen to have my family. Working for WIC gives me the opportunity to help build a healthy strong community for us all. My husband and I have 3 children, all boys! They keep us busy with school activities, clubs, sports, ect. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with family, exploring the Columbia Gorge or attending sporting events.

My name is Cynthia Rojas I'm the Front Office Lead. I was born in California, but have lived most of my life here in The Dalles. I have worked in North Central Public Health since July 2010. I began working in the WIC Program in 2018.

I most recently became a Qualified Healthcare Interpreter. Being bilingual has been such a rewarding part of my job that way I'm able to help more people that I interact with. I enjoy my daily interactions with families & I love that I'm always learning something new.

Currently I live in The Dalles with my husband and my 2 kids. I enjoy spending time with my extended family that all live in the area, doing activities with my kids, & enjoying the outdoors.



Hello, my name is Janna Hughitt and I am a WIC Certifier. I joined the WIC team in March of 2021 and before joining WIC, I worked many years at Mid-Columbia Medical Center (MCMC). While at MCMC I was a CNA II and worked mainly in the Labor & Delivery Unit and in 2016 began teaching Childbirth Education classes, which I currently continue to teach. During my time at MCMC I attended additional education courses and received certificates as a Lactation Educator and Car Seat Safety Technician.

I am also a mom to 3 active boys who keep me very busy. Children are all so different in their behaviors, their likes and dislikes. I feel my knowledge, education and personal experiences help me to better assist and educate those I work with about nutrition, breastfeeding, and other challenges moms and caretakers may experience.

When not working I enjoy hanging out with family and friends, playing a variety of games, going on casual hikes and playing around at lakes in our kayak. We live in such an amazing area which makes it so easy to stay active and have fun together!

Hello my name is Chelsea Downey and I work in the front office and also a WIC clerk. I am freshly new to North Central Public Health, but you may have seen me at my second job Fred Meyers. I started at North Central Public Health in December of 2022. I was raised in The Dalles pretty much my whole life.

I am always wanting and looking forward to helping people. So with working in the WIC department now and gaining all the knowledge, I can't wait to help the participants at Fred Meyers when it is needed.

I graduated from The Dalles High school, with some college education. But I prefer to have hands-on learning and interacting with people. Being genuine and happy is always my go to.



Hello! My name is Ashley Danielson and I am a Community Outreach Expanded Practice Dental Hygienist. I graduated from The Dalles High School and it is an honor for me to be able to serve the community in which I grew up in. I attended Oregon State University after graduating from high school and studied science. Following that, I attended Oregon College of Dental Science through the Oregon Institute of Technology in La Grande, Oregon where I received my dental hygiene license.

I have been providing community-based dental care since 2015. I strive to continue educating myself in regards to non-invasive dental procedures. Continuing my education and knowledge of dental care is something that I take a great passion in.

Making my patients and families feel comfortable is one of my number one goals. I feel like I am a great communicator and have a great level of understanding when it comes to the pediatric population. Being a mom is also very helpful because I am able to give tips and tricks that work in my home and hopefully bring that positive dental related energy into another home.

A recent accomplishment that I am very excited about is being asked to be a guest speaker on the services I provide. This will give other dental providers continuing education credits and information about different methods of dental care.

My husband and I have two young children - ages 5 and 3. We live in Grass Valley Oregon where my husband grows wheat and raises cattle. Our kids keep us busy and we love watching them grow and learn. We enjoy boating on the John Day River in the summers, riding horses, as well as activities on the Ranch are always happening and there's never a dull moment.

If I have not yet had the pleasure of working with you or your family I look forward to meeting you in the future and to all of my current patients, thank you for being amazing!





North Central WIC contracts with Synergy Health and Wellness out of Bend, Oregon for dietitian needs. When you arrive at the WIC office, the staff will weigh and measure as usual, then you will be set up in front of the computer for your video meeting. Visits take about 20-30 minutes and cover topics like health in pregnancy, food safety, child's growth, childhood nutrition, picky eaters, special health concerns and any WIC participant who has concerns about nutrition!