

Perinatal Health Care Award - presented annually to a person that had dedicated their career to the improvement of health care for mothers and babies in the State of Texas.

Judy Harden has worked for the WIC program for over 20 years. She started her WIC career in Dallas. She started as a traveling WIC Nutritionist and worked several of Dallas' poorest communities and went part-time when she started her family and back to full-time before moving to West Texas in 1991 to run the WIC Program for the Texas Department of Health. She managed WIC clinics in 35 West Texas counties until Texas Tech took over WIC services in 13 of those counties.

Judy has been a member of the Texas Association of Local WIC Directors. She sat in several committees such as the Food package and policy committees. They were influential in changing policy and food packages affecting our Moms and their children. Most recently, Judy was elected to represent Texas at the National level. She is a board member of the National WIC Association. This Association is highly active in changing policy (cutting down on red tape making it easier for families to get on WIC) and assuring funding for the WIC program is available. She on occasion has met with policy makers to make sure that WIC is not forgotten. Her colleagues at the national and state level hold her in high regard. Judy is definitely a person that thinks out of the box and that is an asset to those committee.

She active with the Family Health Coalition and is involved with the March of Dimes. I'm not sure what her roles are with these organizations.

On a personal level, Judy is a giving person and even though she travels a lot and is busy with her administrative duties she always has time to work with moms and their children. She is always trying to find ways of how we can better serve our clients. She **always** treats WIC clients with respect and makes them feel at ease. She assures that the client has had the best possible experience when they come to WIC. She sets the example for all of us (staff) to follow. On many occasions she has worked late just to assure that that baby and mom did not leave without getting services. She is a softy when it comes to that baby or that down and out mom. I don't think she has ever said "no we can't help you" to anyone (staff or client). Judy is of the philosophy that you have got to love WIC in order to work for WIC. She must love WIC.