

The Texas WIC Dietetic Internship **What You Need to Know**

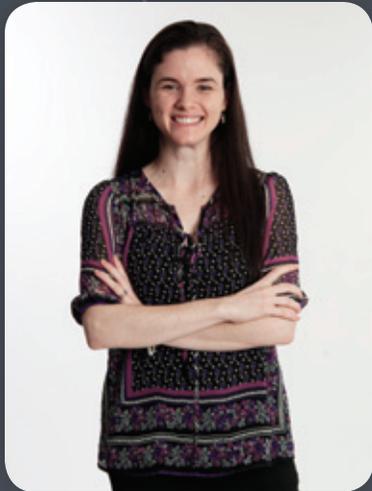


2010 - 2011 Dietetic Internship Class



"I have learned that there really are good people who are willing to share their knowledge and expertise to help others achieve their goals."

- 2010 graduate



"I was exposed to so many different areas in which a dietitian is employed and feel that there are various opportunities available to the nutrition professional."

- 2010 graduate



"My mentor and all of my preceptors have taught me so much about becoming a nutrition professional."

- 2010 graduate

What's different about the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship?

If you have a passion for public health/community nutrition, then the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship might be a good fit for you.

Only current WIC employees can apply to the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship (DI). It is a "closed" internship. It is not part of the internship match. However, like all other dietetic internships, it is a CADE accredited program. When you complete the program, you will receive a verification statement and be eligible to take the registration exam.

The Texas WIC DI concentrates on community health and nutrition. In addition to rotations in food service and medical nutrition therapy, Texas WIC interns do an extensive independent community health intervention and research project.

Do I need a verification statement from my DPD program?

Yes, you need a verification statement from an accredited didactic program in dietetics in order to apply for the WIC Dietetic Internship.

How do I get a job in WIC?

Over 70 separate WIC programs operate in Texas. Contracted through the Department of State Health Services, WIC programs are part of city/county health departments and other health or community agencies around the state. They each have their own hiring process and job postings.

The best way to get a job in a WIC program is to research WIC programs in your area and watch for job openings. To find WIC programs, look in your phone book, check websites and make phone calls to health departments in your community. If you have a nutrition degree, look for "nutritionist" and "certifying authority" positions.

You can also use this zip code locator <http://txhealth.ziplocator.com> to find nearby WIC clinics. Once you contact a clinic, ask for the phone number of the WIC administration office. Most agencies administer multiple clinics. WIC programs are all over Texas, covering every county.

Some areas of Texas have multiple WIC programs, so be sure to check them all. You can also look on the Texas WIC website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/joblist.shtm>, where some WIC jobs are posted.

Will I automatically be accepted into the internship if I have a job in WIC?

No. You need to follow the application process. Like all dietetic internships, it is a competitive process and many more apply than can be accepted.

What selection criteria is used?

Many factors are considered such as:

- ✦ Grade point average
- ✦ Recommendation letters
- ✦ Need of the community – Underserved areas of the state are given a high priority during the selection process. Local agencies that have difficulty finding registered dietitians are also given priority. Being bilingual is also seen as an asset during the selection process.
- ✦ Local agency and geographic diversity within the class – An attempt is made to select interns for each class from diverse areas of the state.
- ✦ Facility availability – Ability finding facilities and preceptors factor into the selection process.
- ✦ Application completeness and professionalism
- ✦ Other considerations – Writing ability, maturity, motivation, career goals and other qualities all are important considerations in the application

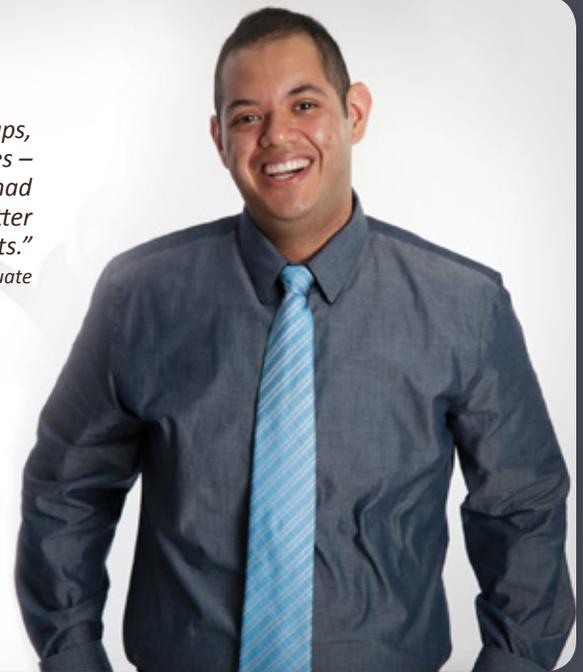


"The past year was full of late nights, coffee cups, PowerPoint® presentations and case studies – but I wouldn't give any of it up. The experiences I had in each of the rotations have shaped me into a better counselor and resource for the WIC participants."

- 2010 graduate

"I have had the chance to learn from so many wonderful professionals in this field who took their time to teach me and help me to grow in my understanding of their particular area of expertise with only a "thank you" for their effort."

- 2010 graduate



When does the program start and end?

The official program starts in January and ends in August, but there is a stringent preparation period from September to January, prior to the start of the internship.

Is there a required amount of time I have to work in WIC to apply to the internship?

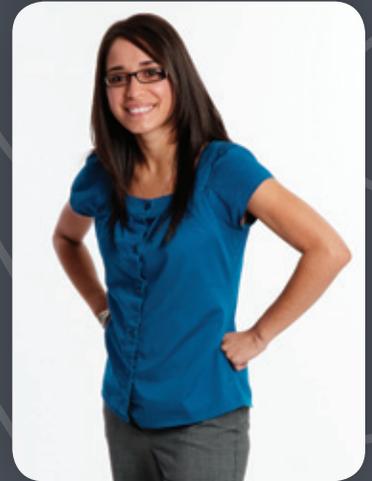
Some local agencies have criteria related to the amount of time you must work for them before you can apply to the internship. That depends on the rules and policies of your employer WIC agency.

What does WIC do?

WIC provides nutrition and breastfeeding education, foods, breast pumps and referral sources to pregnant women, moms of and children from birth to 5 years old. Working in WIC is a challenging and rewarding career of assisting women and children to build healthier lives. If you are interested in a career in public health/community nutrition, WIC is the place for you.

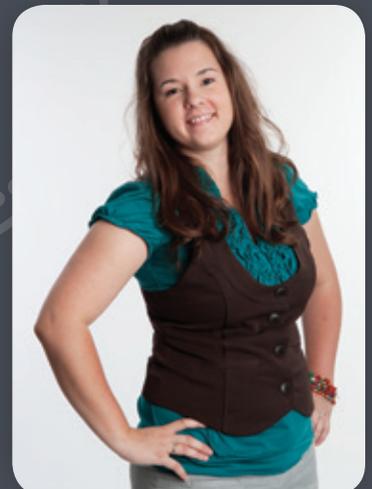
What do RDs do in WIC?

Many of the WIC directors around the state and country are registered dietitians. In local clinics, RDs conduct high risk counseling and nutrition education, supervise staff, and manage clinics.



"I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to learn from such a variety of dietitians, including our internship director and coordinators."

- 2010 graduate



I was also blessed to have a great group of fellow interns to lean on."

- 2010 graduate



"The internship has increased my self-confidence in building towards becoming a dietitian."
- 2010 graduate



"The continued support and patience of my preceptors made each of my rotations amazing and unique."
- 2010 graduate



"Just search in your soul and see if you are really ready to be challenged in many ways, trust your self, work hard and you will complete this program successfully."
- 2010 graduate

What would a job in WIC be like?

Most degreed nutritionists in WIC works as nutritionists, clinic supervisors, nutrition educators, breastfeeding counselors, and certifying authorities.

Can you tell us something about the WIC interns?

Most of our interns have worked for a couple years in WIC and have some professional experience. We have many non-tradition students — some are married, some have children, some are older than most recent graduates.

Most preceptors and facilities comment about the level of professionalism and maturity of the WIC interns. Work experience from WIC prepares you for the various supervised practice rotations.

How much do WIC nutrition jobs pay?

It varies quite a bit. The average monthly salary of this year's intern is approximately \$3000–\$4000 a month, but pay scales vary widely around the state in the various WIC programs.

Do you work in WIC while the internship?

No, the internship is 1200 hours of supervised practice and you dedicate full-time to it for the full 8 months.

What else should I know about the Texas WIC Dietetic Internship?

You get your full WIC paycheck the entire time you are in the internship. You will have some expenses, such as travel, books and lodging, but there is not a fee for the internship. It is sponsored by the Texas WIC program through special funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Where can I find more information about the Texas WIC program and the WIC Dietetic Internship?

- ☞ www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/
- ☞ www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/interns/intern-brochure.shtm
- ☞ www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/interns/intern-FAQ.shtm

