



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS QUARTERLY



Summer 2016



FSA STORE – The One-Stop-Shop for All Things FSA

Have you ever found yourself near the end of the health FSA grace period wondering how to use the funds left in your flexible spending account? If so, there is now a new resource. WageWorks has partnered with the FSA Store to provide thousands of eligible health care products online. You can search for such eligible items as thermometers, first aid products and blood pressure monitors. Then use your WageWorks Health Care debit card to purchase any eligible products online and have them delivered to your front door.

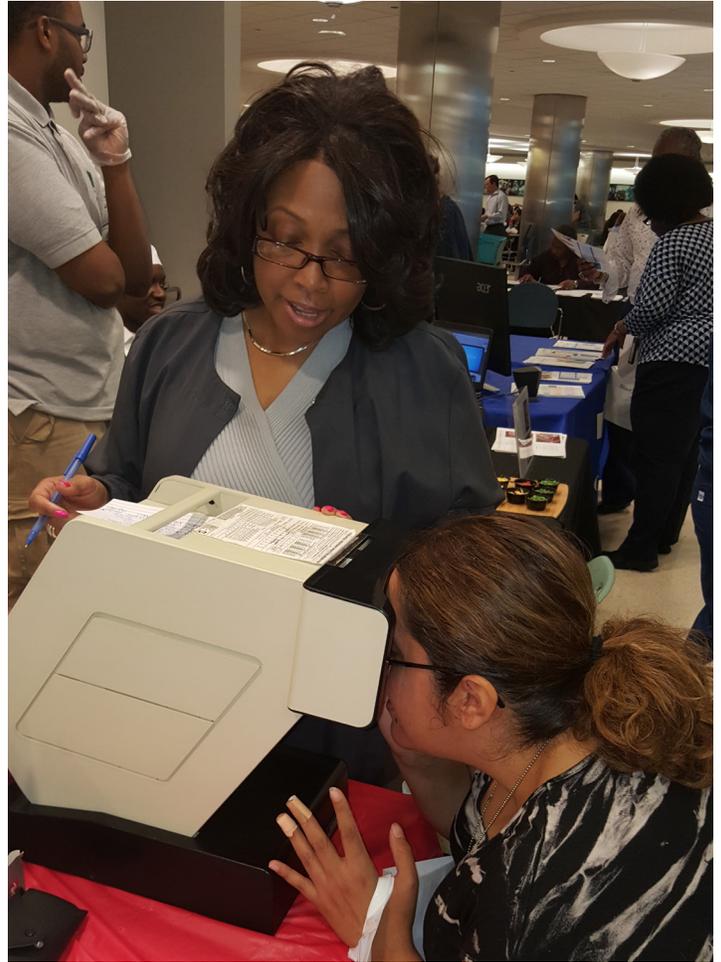
Don't have an FSA account? Enroll during Cook County's Employee Benefits Open Enrollment this fall to take advantage of the pre-tax savings.

For more information and to purchase FSA eligible items, please visit www.fsastore.com.

HEALTH FAIRS: A Ticket to a Healthier You

Over a 1,000 Cook County employees took advantage of health fairs held at their workplaces in May, accessing everything from diabetes and biometric tests to eye exams and healthful meal plans.

An Eye Med rep sports a pair of Ray Ban sunglasses, one of several prize giveaways from participating vendors. ▶



Diana Garcia, project director at the Hektoen Institute ▲ at Stroger Hospital, gets her vision checked.



Moon Meals brought recipes and wraps made with ▲ fresh ingredients.

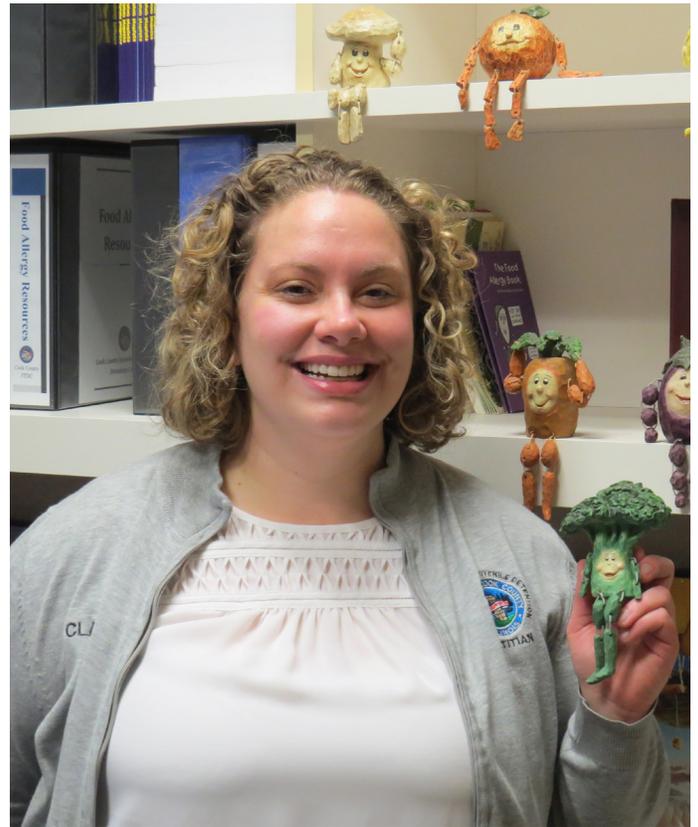
EMPLOYEE FOCUS

Meet Christine Clarahan, registered dietitian for the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center since 2013.

Growing up in Bettendorf, Iowa, with “the most amazing mother,” Clarahan says she knew she wanted to be “just like her.” Her mom is a registered and licensed dietitian with a private practice that focuses on eating disorders. Clarahan followed in her footsteps, earning a bachelor’s degree in dietetics from Iowa State University and a master’s in human nutrition from the University of Alabama. During the 2014–15 school year, she served on the Illinois School Nutrition Association’s board of directors and nutrition committee. Before Clarahan became a registered and licensed dietitian in Illinois, she worked at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and interned at the Cleveland Clinic. The 31-year-old lives near her two brothers in Chicago with her beloved dog, Watson.

Q: Tell me about your job and what you do on a daily basis.

A: I’m one of the few, if not only, in-house, full-time dietitians with any juvenile system across the country. I make all the menus for residents, that includes tailoring menus for any kids with food allergies, therapeutic medical diets, or who are lactose-intolerant, for example. I run a nutritional analysis on the menus to make sure they meet federal standards. We participate in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs; we follow the exact same rules as the Chicago Public Schools do. Also, there’s the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, and we make sure we’re compliant with all the food and nutrition regulations from them. I work closely with the kids. For example, I teach them about hand washing. We have a black light that we can use to show the kids what germs are remaining on their hands. We use hands-on and engaging things like this to keep their attention, which is critical. One of my favorite things to do at work as well as when I’m teaching the kids is to tell them silly food jokes and puns and see their reactions. One of my favorites is “What should you do if you lose your root vegetables? ... Hope they turnip!” The holidays can be a tough time for our kids to be locked up, so I do fun food activities with them. We’ve made Santa strawberry brownie hats, candy turkeys and candy reindeer. [In the fall] they harvested pumpkin seeds, and I baked them in three different styles and then taught the kids about the nutritional value of the seeds as a healthy snack.



Q: Tell me about the residents and what kind of impact you have on their lives.

A: The residents are usually 10–18 years old. Our facility is the largest juvenile detention center in the country. In terms of food and nutrition and education, a lot of the kids who are detained here have little or no knowledge of it. Since some of them are here for a good amount of time, I’m able to start with some of the building blocks of nutrition — the most basic things, like looking at the different food groups. Then each time I meet with the kids, I can build on it. We’ve gone all the way to vitamins and minerals and how they affect our bodies depending on whether we have too much or not enough. Overall, I’ve had very positive feedback from the kids and they seem to want to learn about these topics. I can’t walk anywhere in the building without a kid wanting to talk to me either about our food or food in general.

Q: How is a dietitian different from a nutritionist? Or is it?

A: This is a great question, because you have a lot of people who are calling themselves nutritionists who are not registered and licensed dietitians. In the state of Illinois, you have to be a registered dietitian to call yourself a nutritionist and give nutrition advice, and only licensed dietitian nutritionists can practice nutrition services in Illinois, including medical nutrition therapy, which, according to the Illinois Department

of Professional Regulation, involves “interpreting and recommending nutrient needs for individuals with medically prescribed diets.”

Q: What do you like most about your job at JTDC?

A: I like working with the residents the most. I feel like this job is perfect for me because I get to do something different every single day and I love that! Last week I taught at the school that’s attached (we have a CPS school attached for our kids). I got to fill in for the health class, and we talked about food waste, which is always interesting. We talk about what food waste does, about how the new USDA federal regulations have had a big impact on food waste, and we talked about food waste within our own building. I also work closely with the physicians and medical staff from Cermak, part of Cook County Health Services, who are on-site, and provide things like one-on-one nutritional counseling to the kids.

Q: Is there a common dietary concern you hear over and over?

A: With our kids ... because of the food regulations, their diet is pretty healthy for the most part. Getting them to try new foods can be a challenge. I just had them try a strawberry spinach salad with a creamy Italian dressing. We do this through a taste-test with our resident advisory council; the council is made up of two residents per living center. We take these kids and have them taste-test the foods, and their approval of the foods goes a long way in convincing the other kids to eat them. So getting kids used to the fruits and veggies and not just wanting the heavy salt and high-fat, high-calorie, corner store-type foods can be tough. At breakfast they have yogurt and muffins or yogurt and granola, and they love it and it makes me so happy. This seems like a mini victory, but they’re big victories to me. I think our food here is pretty great. I try really, really hard to incorporate resident feedback and use the resources available to make the menu as enjoyable and nutritious as possible. I want the kids to enjoy and get nourished by the food and not just hate it.

Q: Are there any programs or initiatives you’re working on with the kids that you’d like to highlight?

A: One of my dreams here is to get a cooking and life skills program going for the kids, and I’m slowly building up to it. It’s challenging because there can’t be any knives, hot water, or things like that. But not many people have those life skills anymore, so we talk about grocery shopping, meal planning and cooking terms, things like ‘What’s a whisk?’ I’ve made ice cream in Ziploc bags with the kids, and the kids really enjoy that.

Q: What about with your colleagues? Are there any programs/initiatives you’re involved in that you’d like to share with them?

A: Everyone here has a really hard job. I have an employee wellness bulletin board, and right now the topic is healthy eating on a budget. I’ll go over all the health benefits through our insurance [providers], because they are awesome and I think people don’t have time to look them over. There are great courses on nutrition and stress management, for example. So I try to be a voice for the staff here, because all our people work so hard and they need all the extra help they can get. I just really, really enjoy working with the staff and residents here. It’s a very tough job, but it’s especially rewarding to work with the kids. God willing, I’ll teach them cooking skills one day!

Do you know of an employee who is wellness focused that we can highlight in a future newsletters? Send an email to Myron Chin, myron.chin@cookcountyil.gov with the employee’s name and contact information with a description of their ongoing wellness commitment.



COMING SOON...

PAPERLESS ONLINE OPEN ENROLLMENT

This October, we will be introducing paperless online Open Enrollment. In the past, Open Enrollment changes were made online or by submitting enrollment documents to the Department of Risk Management. Employees will now be able to change benefit options, add/drop coverage for dependents and enroll in the health care and dependent care flexible spending accounts. Changing to paperless online enrollment will improve efficiency and accuracy of the data collected.

More information will be coming in our next newsletter.



BUG OFF! THE ZIKA VIRUS MAKES INSECT REPELLENT CRUCIAL

Whether you're heading to the Olympic Games in Rio or the back yard for a barbecue, apply an ounce of prevention against mosquito bites and viruses such as West Nile and Zika. Not all repellents thwart mosquitoes that carry the Zika virus, which has been linked to birth defects and other risks. (There are currently no reported cases of Zika transmission in the United States, but experts caution that traveling outside the area and international airports present risks. There have been 23 confirmed cases of the virus in Illinois.) The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Protection recommends repellents that contain one of the following:

- **20 percent or more DEET.** DEET originated with the U.S. Army in 1946 and studies show it's both safe and effective, but some worry about the chemical. Note that the Environmental Working Group (EWG), a watchdog of chemicals in consumer products, approves DEET's use on people ages 6 months and older. It also advises a formula that matches the timeframe of exposure to biting bugs. For instance, there is no need for an 8-hour formula if you're out for a short walk.
- **Picaridin:** A newcomer to an age-old battle of the bugs, picaridin products emerged in the late 1990s overseas but only debuted in the U.S. in 2005. Picaridin confers protection comparable to DEET with no odor and a light texture. Picaridin is contained in OFF! FamilyCare Insect Repellent II Clean Feel.

For daytime, the CDC recommends applying sunscreen first, then repellent. The CDC discourages products that combine the two. For infants younger than 6 months, the EWG suggests avoiding all chemical repellents in favor of protective clothing and netting over strollers and carriers. The EWG finds treated wristbands to be generally unreliable.

To reduce your risks at home ...

- Make sure windows have screens
- Run the air conditioner if you're at home during the day
- Eliminate standing water around your home and in containers (a mosquito can lay up to 200 eggs in a thimble-full of water; eggs can survive up to a year)

Source: Time magazine, May 4, 2016, "Ten Zika Facts You Need to Know"

STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT: APPS IDENTIFY WHAT YOU SEE TONIGHT

Smartphones often are cast as the villain of the great outdoors. But your device can be the hero of a new fresh-air ritual. Just download a stargazing app, then hold your phone out in any direction on an evening walk. These apps will see right through cloud cover, light pollution or a tree canopy, connecting the dots of constellations, labeling stars and planets and starting conversations about which one you'd name your child or pet after (Pollux or Bellatrix, anyone?).



SkyView (free or \$1.99; Android and iOS 8.0 or later) doesn't just identify planets, stars and satellites, it also offers basic trivia (Venus: second planet from the sun). Set the tone with in-app music. Upgrade to the \$1.99 version to see all constellations.



Sky Guide (\$2.99; Android and iOS 8.0 or later) lures both amateurs and astronomy buffs. A time-lapse feature divulges the future whereabouts of the moon, comets and other bodies so you can schedule optimal viewing. Sky Guide's soundtrack gets rave reviews.



Star Chart (free; Android and iOS 7.0 or later) runs on older iPhones and iPads that kids inherit from parents. It's no old fogey, though, displaying 120,000 stars and 88 constellations. And Star Chart is the dwarf planet of astronomy apps – it uses less than 30 MB.

Have questions?

Visit www.cookcountyrisk.com or contact Employee Benefits:

Phone: (312) 603-6385 | Fax: (866) 729-3040

Email: risk.mgmt@cookcountyil.gov

Blue Cross Blue Shield Hotline Numbers:

For HMO plan: 1 (800) 892-2803

For PPO plan: 1 (800) 960-8809



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