For Immediate Release

Health Department Employees Recognized For Breastfeeding Support

During a special regional awards ceremony in Waukegan, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) recognized Peoria City/County Health Department and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) staff for exemplary breastfeeding support activities. Michelle Compton, Child and Family Health Coordinator, and Lisha Smith, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, received the USDA’s WIC Loving Support Award of Excellence.

Bruce D. Hillman, Branch Chief of Food and Nutrition Service at USDA, presented the award to Compton and Smith for their work in providing a model program to strengthen breastfeeding promotion and increase breastfeeding initiation and duration.

Compton stated, “The award is meaningful to all our staff for our work as our team designs program activities, promotes health policies, and engages the community in collaborative partnerships. Breastfeeding protects both mom and baby against many infections and diseases and encourages mother and infant bonding.”

As a breastfeeding peer counselor, Smith uses her own expertise from breastfeeding to support the program activities, “I love providing help and encouragement to women from the beginning of pregnancy, through the birth of the baby, and through the duration of breastfeeding. It makes my job a success story.”

The WIC Program is designed to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk by providing nutrition education and supplemental food.

For more information on important public health issues, visit the Peoria City/County Health Department website at www.pcchd.org.

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The Peoria City/County Health Department continues efforts to improve community health in Peoria County with the overarching goal “to increase the number of people who are healthy at every stage of life.”