



**WHITE HOUSE CHALLENGE**  
TO END HUNGER & BUILD  
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



## **The National Association of Hispanic Nurses Awards Nine Chapters with Grants for Fuel2Flourish Program**

**October 15, 2024 (Lexington, KY)** – The National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN) is pleased to announce that nine Chapters of NAHN will receive grant funds to provide health education to youth. Aligned with the goals of the [White House Challenge to End Hunger and Build Healthy Communities](#), NAHN Chapters will pilot a community-focused curriculum promoting healthy eating and positive mental health among elementary school-age children within Hispanic communities. The prevalence of obesity among Hispanic children aged 6-11 years [is almost twice as high](#) as the prevalence for non-Hispanic children of the same age. Additionally, Latino youth are less likely than white youth to have ever received mental health care, yet [22% of Latino youth](#) exhibit depressive symptoms.

The purpose of **Fuel2Flourish for Kids** is to have nursing students/nurses provide nutrition and mental health education to youth. School-aged children will learn about healthy eating, and caring for their mental health, and will be exposed to the nursing profession as a career option.

Chapters will receive nutrition consultation from the Latinos and Hispanics in Dietetics and Nutrition (**LAHIDAN**) and reference the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

NAHN would like to congratulate the following chapters and highlight their programming.

**Michigan Chapter** will introduce a community-focused curriculum that promotes healthy eating and positive mental health among elementary school-age children within the Hispanic community in Pontiac, Michigan. This initiative aims to address the disparities in access to nutritious food choices and mental health resources in the area. The proposed project curriculum aims to address these social determinants of health issues by fostering healthy nutrition choices and mental health resilience among young children in Pontiac. The promotion of emotional health and well-being through self-care is considered a strategy to combat mental health challenges (Riegel et al., 2021; White et al., 2019). An additional strategy used to improve emotional health is the building of resiliency. Resilience is the "process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands". (American Psychological Association, 2023).

**Kansas City** intends to impart nutritional and mental health information using both the Serving Up My Plate and the Sesame Workshop curriculums. These modules will educate the participants on healthy eating habits, food groups, and the importance of nutrition for growth and development. The mental health curriculum would focus on teaching participants about emotional regulation, self-esteem, and coping skills to foster mental well-being. There will be three sessions and each session would include both nutritional and mental health education as they are both inevitably intertwined. Ultimately, the participants will learn the foundation for lifelong healthy eating habits and coping skills.

**Greater Milwaukee** will focus on five lessons that are community-engaged and focused on

reducing the incidence of obesity in Latinx children living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Lessons will be implemented by members of the Greater Milwaukee National Association of Hispanic Nurses (GMNAHN). Each lesson will include a nutrition component obtained from the *Serving up My Plate: A Yummy* curriculum and a mental health component adapted from the *Sandy Hook Promise Learning Center Library: Say Something and Start with Hello* curriculums.

**New Mexico** will collaborate with Title I schools, community centers, and after-school programs to provide interactive lessons where children will learn about healthy food and mental health. Children will learn about healthy eating through the “Serving Up MyPlate: A Yummy Curriculum.” Using child-friendly resources from Sandy Hook Promise Learning Center, and Sesame Workshop, children will learn social-emotional skills, ways to build empathy, and how to deal with bullying. In addition, nursing students and professionals will conduct interactive sessions to introduce children to nursing as a career option.

**Central Florida’s** program will consist of four interactive lessons that combine nutrition education, physical health activities, mental well-being practices, and career exploration. Each lesson is designed to be engaging, educational, and culturally relevant, fostering a holistic approach to health that resonates with children and their families. In addition to the core lessons, they will integrate activities that introduce children to career choices connected to healthy eating and overall wellness. These activities will encourage them to consider how their daily habits relate to potential future professions, such as becoming a nutritionist, chef, or health educator.

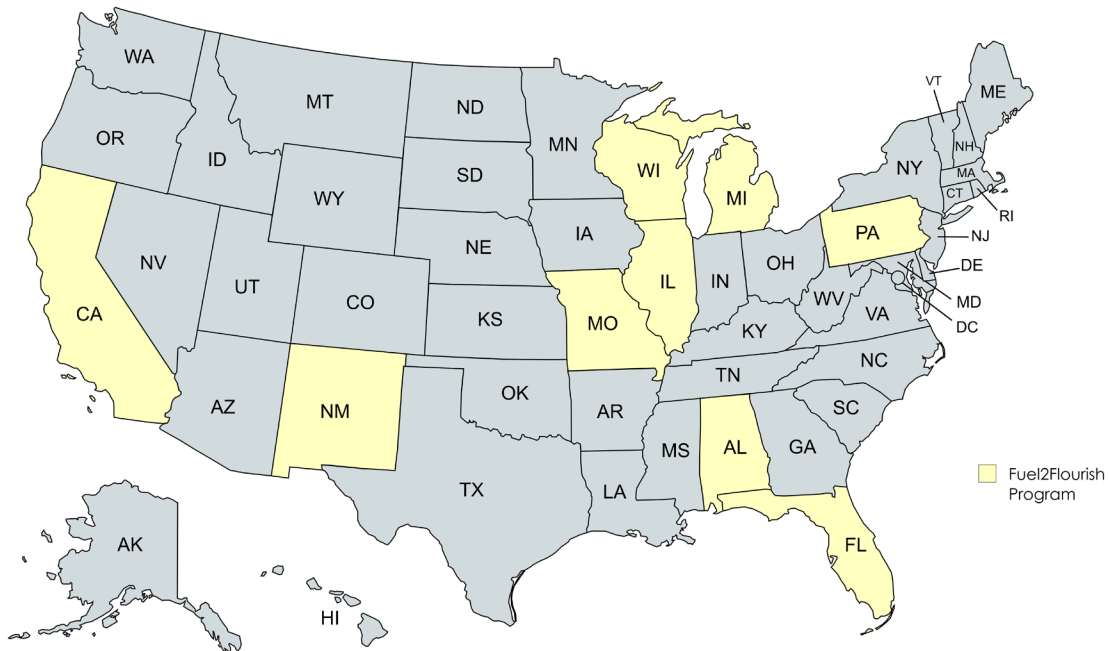
**Alabama** will conduct educational programs around nutrition, mental health and nursing to school-age children in Alabama. Students will be introduced to careers in nursing through coloring, and hands-on exposure- teach hands-only CPR, stop the bleed, and dress up, tools of trade (stethoscopes/nurses caps/lab coats). Students will be sent home with a photo dressed up like a nurse. **“If you can see it, you can be it.”**

**Illinois** aims to address childhood obesity and mental health disparities among Hispanic children aged 6-11 in the Chicagoland area. Children will “travel” through different Latin American countries, learning about USDA-approved healthy food choices. Each session will focus on a MyPlate food group tied to the country’s cuisine (e.g., vegetables from Mexico, whole grains from Colombia, proteins from Peru). Children earn passport stamps as they explore new food groups.

**Sacramento** will aim to educate families and school children about healthy foods, provide food marketing, enroll children in after-school activity programs, distribute Fitbits or activity trackers, and offer nutritional and mental health education and resources in their preferred language.

**Western Pennsylvania** will create and implement programs promoting healthy eating and mental health for Hispanic elementary school children in the Pittsburgh metro area, in collaboration with community partners and aligned with the White House's hunger and health initiative. This nurse-led effort aims to enhance nursing career visibility and inspire children towards education and healthcare careers.

Figure 1. Nine Chapters Implementing Fuel2Flourish Programming in 2024-2025.



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“Nurses play a vital role in addressing the health needs of their local communities. We are excited to see the impact our chapters will have on the children and families they will serve. Thank you to Direct Relief, the Coalition for Safe Food and Beverages, and LAHIDAN for supporting NAHN on this important White House Initiative to End Hunger and Promote Healthy Communities”, said Dr. Adrianna Nava, Project Director, Fuel2Flourish and Immediate Past President of NAHN.

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### **About the National Association of Hispanic Nurses**

Since 1975, NAHN has been the nation’s leading professional society for Latino nurses. With a growing membership of more than 40 local chapters, NAHN represents the voices of over 220,000 Latino nurses throughout the United States. NAHN is devoted to promoting safe, quality healthcare delivery to Latino communities and recognizing excellence among Latino nurses. To learn more, visit [www.nahnnet.org](http://www.nahnnet.org).

### **About the Latinos and Hispanics in Dietetics and Nutrition ([LAHIDAN](#))**

Latinos and Hispanics in Dietetics and Nutrition (LAHIDAN) is a Member Interest Group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (The Academy), the premier organization for food and nutrition professionals. LAHIDAN is a provider of culturally appropriate nutrition resources,

recipes, research, and education for those who provide nutrition care to the Latino population.

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