

Community Spotlight May 2018 – Alisha Gomes



Sacramento Promise Zone’s Health Coordinator uses her passion to transcend barriers and lead partners in helping underserved residents take their first steps towards healthy living.

May 2018 - Alisha Gomes, AmeriCorps VISTA and Sacramento Promise Zone Health Coordinator, is an inspiration. Drawing on her personal experience with adverse health, Alisha uses her passion for healthy living to transcend barriers and connect with Promise Zone residents in need. A native Massachusettsan, Alisha’s passion for helping others live healthier lives brought her across the country and to Sacramento, where she works daily to promote healthy behaviors and increase health interventions.

“I’ve always loved health,” Alisha says, “it was driven by the fact that I have diabetes and because I want to live a healthy life.” Having to live with diabetes from a young age led her to study at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, where she majored in health science. Afterwards, Alisha put her knowledge to work by joining the Boston Public Health Commission on its “Let’s Get Healthy Boston” initiative. As a community engagement intern, Alisha facilitated logistics and organized health information initiatives. Through public outreach, she helped Bostonians gain awareness of ways to improve health, such as taking advantage of local bike share programs.

“That’s when I realized how important . . . simple, everyday information about taking care of yourself, (such as) eating healthy and exercising, can be difficult for certain populations especially in underserved communities (to follow).” It was this awareness of barriers, and the concerted effort it takes to surmount them, that led Alisha to the Promise Zone. As Health Coordinator, Alisha helps health-focused partners promote healthy living in accessible ways. She mobilizes partners working on different health issues to increase their impact by collaborating to deliver comprehensive services. Resulting initiatives, like the upcoming Promise Zone Health Fair, provide accessible wrap-around resources direct to community members. Through such initiatives, Alisha leads the Promise Zone in showing residents that “even the smallest steps towards a healthy lifestyle can make a difference . . . once you start making small changes you’ll want to continue and improve more aspects of your life.”