

16th International Conference and Exhibition on

OBESITY & WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

&

17TH WORLD FITNESS EXPO

 November 13-15, 2017 | Atlanta, USA

Cultivating health equity in California's San Joaquin valley

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California's San Joaquin Valley is the backdrop for Cultiva La Salud; six representative low-income Latino communities are focus sites for intervention including Turlock, Ceres, Southeast Fresno, Orange Cove, Southeast Bakersfield and Arvin. The primary purpose of Cultiva La Salud is to reduce the experience of health disparities among Latinos in the targeted communities through interventions that address poor nutrition and physical inactivity. To prevent chronic disease and promote health equity, Central Valley communities need population-based strategies that create greater access to healthy foods and beverages and promote physical activity. Cultiva La Salud has promoted equity and actualized opportunities to cultivate healthier communities by engaging residents in planning, implementation and evaluation processes, building their capacity to be advocates for change and encouraging their collective voice and influence for action. To further ensconce equity as an outcome Cultiva La Salud has connected interventions with opportunities for economic development and civic engagement; these two areas help to address the vulnerability experienced in the targeted communities related to poverty and power imbalances. Cultiva La Salud is designed with the belief that equity will be achieved in California's San Joaquin Valley when every Latino has the opportunity to attain his or her full health potential and they are not disadvantaged from achieving their potential because of social position or circumstance.

Biography

Genoveva Islas has earned her Bachelors of Science in Health Science with an emphasis in Community Health from California State University, Fresno and received a Masters in Public Health degree in Health Education and promotion from Loma Linda University. She is the Program Director of Cultiva La Salud. Cultiva is dedicated to creating healthier communities in the San Joaquin Valley by fostering policies, systems and environmental improvements to allow for greater access to healthy foods/beverages and increased opportunities for physical activity. She is a recognized Culture of Health Leader by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

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