

VIRGINIA ZERPA'S BIO

Virginia Zerpa is a native of Venezuela and has lived in the United States since 1981, gaining citizenship in 1997. She attained a master's degree in public health in 1997 and has worked in diverse public health issues since then. Throughout her career, Virginia has met many struggling and hard-working families that simply want to lead healthier lives, but don't have the necessary financial means or resources. Her career began as the Walker's Point Project Coordinator for Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin where she implemented a school-based pregnancy prevention program at South Division High School. During her time there, she became acutely aware of the complexity of life's circumstances and that simply providing sex education was not enough to prevent teen pregnancy and/or sexually transmitted infections.

In the summer of 2007, she joined the Milwaukee Latino Health Coalition Steering Committee to be part of a team of dedicated professionals determined to address the external forces affecting the health of Latinos. Virginia believes that "health education without efforts to improve equity is like building sandcastles."

Virginia has also served as the Bilingual Chronic Care Health Educator at Sixteenth Street Clinic and Outreach Specialist for the Center for Urban Population Health. Since 2011, she has been serving as the Community Outreach Coordinator for the Alzheimer's Association. All these positions have afforded her intimate knowledge of the impact of social determinants of health on the residents of Milwaukee County.