



## The City of York Pennsylvania

The Honorable Michael R. Helfrich, Mayor

**India Banks**  
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PRESS RELEASE

### City of York Bureau of Health Employee Receives National Award

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*Nicole Smith will participate in "Walkable Communities" training program*

**YORK, PA** - America Walks, a national advocacy organization working to empower communities to create safe, accessible, and enjoyable places to walk and move, announced today that Nicole Smith, MPH of City of York- Bureau of Health has been awarded a Walking College Fellowship as part of the 2019 program.

The Fellowship will enable Nicole and other advocates from around the country to participate in a five-month training program designed to strengthen local efforts to make communities more walkable and livable. "We are thrilled to welcome Nicole Smith as a member of the Walking College," said Emilie Bahr, Walking College Manager with America Walks, "This year's application process was extremely competitive and rich with unique professionals, and she will make a fitting addition to our 2019 class. We look forward to developing her



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skills and are excited to see her grow their knowledge, share experiences, and prepare plans to expand their work for bolstering walkability at home.”

Nicole Smith will complete a six-module distance-education training program this summer, followed by an independent study project in York City. They will also engage with the national network of America Walks and meet one another and other walking champions at various events throughout the year. Nicole lives and works in York City and holds a Master of Public Health degree with a concentration in Nutrition from Liberty University. She has been promoting the health benefits of walkability since 2016 when she began with the City of York-Bureau of Health. Her commitment has developed around this important issue as she leads the City’s Active Transportation Committee and serves on the Traffic Safety Committee in support of Complete Streets Policy. She is also very active in bringing awareness to pedestrian safety as a public health concern and providing education on best practices. Nicole is also Outreach Chair for York County Walks, a countywide initiative which promotes walking for physical activity. "It is my passion to encourage others to make simple changes by walking more, to advocate for my neighbors in ALL areas of our city to have safe places to walk, and to educate partners and decision makers on the various benefits of walkable communities.”, says Nicole.

The Walking College curriculum has been designed to expand the capacity of local advocates to be effective community change agents. Topics include the science behind the benefits of walking, evaluation of built environments, as well as communication skills and building relationships with stakeholders and decision makers. Fellows work with other members of their class and a set of experienced mentors to develop the knowledge and skills needed to create community change. At the conclusion of the Walking College, Fellows will develop a Walking Action Plan for implementation using their new skills.

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***About America Walks:*** America Walks, a nonprofit national organization, is leading the way in empowering communities to create safe, accessible, and enjoyable walking conditions for all. We provide a voice for walking and walkable communities with federal agencies, provide strategy support, training and technical assistance to statewide, regional, and local organizations, and serve as the convener of the national Every Body Walk! Collaborative. Together, America Walks and the Every Body Walk! Collaborative boast 700 allied organizations who across the nation are working to increase walking and support walkable communities for all members. More at [www.americawalks.org](http://www.americawalks.org).

***About City of York – Bureau of Health:*** City of York – Bureau of Health provides public health services in the City of York. The mission of the Bureau is to prevent disease and to promote and protect the health of York City residents through the assessment of needs, the assurance of public health services and the provision of sound public health policies through dynamic and committed leadership. The Bureau began in 1985, and is funded by federal, state and city monies as well as proceeds from the Albert S. Weyer Community Health Fund (administered by the York County Community Foundation). Services are provided free or for a nominal charge to city residents.