

## **Alyson Venti Biography**

Originally from Boston, Massachusetts, I was first introduced to coral reefs in Key Largo, Florida when I was 12 years old, and have remained fascinated with them ever since. I received a BA in chemistry from Amherst College in 2004 after pursuing my interest in marine studies during a semester abroad at James Cook University, Townsville, Australia. After college I served as a US Peace Corps Volunteer in Fiji. My primary focus in Fiji was environmental education and waste management, tackling local environmental issues such as composting, recycling, and sustainable waste water treatment. After Fiji I interned with the Table Mountain National Park Marine Division in Cape Town South Africa, helping to establish marine monitoring programs for newly established marine protected areas. In 2007 I began an MS program at the University of Rhode Island, Graduate School of Oceanography. Here I assisted my advisor, Dr. Graham Forrester on his project studying the effect of management on the success of local marine protected areas in 22 islands throughout the Caribbean, while pursuing my own thesis project measuring coral calcification rates from coral core samples, and using stable isotopic ratios as paleo-proxies to estimate temperature and salinity. In 2009 I entered the PhD program at the University of Miami, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, under the guidance of Dr. Chris Langdon. My dissertation work here has focused on both coral and net ecosystem calcification rates in Bermuda, a region which may be the first to show signs of stress from ocean acidification.

When I'm not SCUBA diving in Bermuda, collecting corals, and filtering water samples I enjoy surfing, running, water skiing, hiking, snorkeling, fishing and going to the beach. As most of these activities rely on healthy, vibrant coral reef ecosystems, I hope to help ensure that these critical habitats remain a vibrant part of our future.