

# Volunteers for Prosperity

*Experience Changing the World.*



## Annual Report 2007

VOLUNTEERS FOR PROSPERITY IS A PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE OF USA FREEDOM CORPS



“Today, I would like to announce a new USA Freedom Corps initiative called Volunteers for Prosperity, which will give America’s highly skilled professionals new opportunities to serve abroad. The program will enlist American doctors and nurses and teachers and engineers and economists and computer specialists and others to work on specific development initiatives, including those that I have discussed today. These volunteers will serve in the countries of their choice, for however long their project takes. Like generations before us, this generation of citizens will show the world the energy and idealism of the United States of America.”

President George W. Bush  
May 21, 2003

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# ABOUT VOLUNTEERS FOR PROSPERITY

**V**olunteers for Prosperity (VfP) is an interagency initiative established by President Bush's Executive Order 13317 on September 25, 2003, to encourage international voluntary service by highly skilled Americans supporting major U.S. efforts to promote health and prosperity around the world. Working under the direction of U.S. nonprofits and companies, volunteers are deployed to developing countries on flexible, short-term assignments ranging from a few weeks to several months to a year or more.

The Office of Volunteers for Prosperity at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the federal government's interagency coordinator of the initiative, is building a network of partner organizations that implement volunteer activities supporting the U.S. global health and prosperity agenda. The office hosts a website that helps to match individual volunteers with opportunities for service with appropriate VfP partner organizations.

Partner organizations can receive special consideration in applications for federal grants awarded by the departments of State, Commerce, Health and Human Services, and USAID in seven critical development initiatives. These are the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI); Digital Freedom Initiative (DFI); Water for the Poor Initiative<sup>1</sup>; African Global Competiveness Initiative<sup>2</sup>; Millennium Challenge Account (MCA); and the President's Malaria Initiative.<sup>3</sup>

The U.S. global health and prosperity agenda focuses on helping developing countries advance in the following areas: democratic governance, economic growth, education, HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, clean water, agricultural development, information and communications technology, trade and investment, natural resources management, women and youth empowerment, and malaria control.

<sup>1</sup>Water for the Poor, a three-year initiative, successfully concluded in 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Formerly Trade for African Development and Enterprise (TRADE).

<sup>3</sup>Added by Executive Order amendment, December 14, 2006.

## WHO CAN PARTNER WITH VFP?

**T**he Office of Volunteers for Prosperity at USAID actively identifies and recruits organizations that meet the following criteria:

- Organized under the laws of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any other territory of the United States, and have headquarters in the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any other territory of the United States.
- Conduct or anticipate conducting overseas activities consistent with the general purposes of the federal initiatives which VfP supports.
- Sponsor or indicate willingness to sponsor highly skilled U.S. professionals who wish to work on specific U.S. development initiatives supported by VfP.

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Global Water

After just four years, the lives of perhaps hundreds of thousands of people throughout the developing world have been improved—and forever changed—by dedicated and compassionate professionals from every corner of America.



Winrock International

It is with great pleasure that I present the fourth annual report of the Volunteers for Prosperity (VfP) initiative. Although it has been prepared to inform the White House on the progress of this endeavor from October 1, 2006, through September 30, 2007, it has also been written to celebrate the work of tens of thousands of talented Americans, and the hundreds of U.S. nonprofits and companies that deploy them in service to those in need around the globe.

Volunteers for Prosperity has achieved great success relatively quickly. After just four years, the lives of perhaps hundreds of thousands of people throughout the developing world have been improved—and forever changed—by dedicated and compassionate professionals from every corner of America. Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals have helped to ease the suffering of those infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. Engineers have provided villages in Africa, Asia, and Latin America with access to clean water. Teachers have helped to inspire a life-long interest in learning among people who otherwise had limited, if any, educational opportunities. Business executives, having attained the “American Dream,” have mentored aspiring entrepreneurs whose hopes were once confined to simply surviving each day. Our nation’s talented professionals

truly demonstrate the “energy and idealism of the United States of America” that President Bush envisioned when he established the initiative.

Over the past year a number of activities have helped to ensure VfP’s emerging role in the global volunteer community:

- The initiative’s website, [www.volunteersforprosperity.gov](http://www.volunteersforprosperity.gov), enables prospective volunteers to identify both immediate and continuing service opportunities.
- The website now supports a public dialogue among partner organizations. The “Partners’ Corner” encourages partners to exchange ideas about making volunteer programs more effective.
- The Office of Volunteers for Prosperity (VfP Office), which manages the initiative, has released both a promotional video and a public service announcement to give viewers glimpses into the experience of being a volunteer overseas.

During the past year, VfP was called upon to address additional global development challenges. At the first White House Summit on Malaria on December 14, 2006, President Bush announced that VfP would be expanded to include malaria control. In remarks at the White



Our nation's talented professionals truly demonstrate the "energy and idealism of the United States of America" that President Bush envisioned when he established the initiative.



House Conference on the Americas on July 9, 2007, First Lady Laura Bush noted the influence of VFP in directing Americans interested in volunteering in the Western Hemisphere.

Throughout FY 2007 the VFP Office again concentrated on the activities that marked the initiative's dramatic growth in the first three years. For example, it made further earnest efforts to expand the network of partners—the U.S. nonprofits and companies that provide opportunities for international voluntary service. There are now 244 partners offering over 35,000 opportunities for skilled American volunteers in the coming year.

These talented Americans have worked tirelessly and generously in support of others in need around the world. As you read this report you will find the inspiring stories of half a dozen of the more than 34,000 volunteers deployed during the past year. Their stories offer insights into the commitment to service that has improved lives and the high degree of personal satisfaction gained from volunteering.

The continued growth and measurable results of the initiative clearly show VFP's great potential. Accordingly, the VFP Office plans to explore adding disaster relief and response to its

portfolio, and to pursue options for making international service affordable for American professionals who need financial assistance to serve overseas as volunteers.

As the initiative enters its fifth year, the VFP Office is appreciative of the support and encouragement provided by the USA Freedom Corps, the White House's coordinating council for federal volunteer programs, and participating federal agencies. We are also grateful for the steady leadership of the U.S. Agency for International Development, our host federal agency.

Recognizing the lives that have been changed—of volunteers as well as those they help—we in the VFP office consider it an honor and a privilege to direct this initiative.

Jack Hawkins  
Director  
Office of Volunteers for Prosperity  
U.S. Agency for International  
Development

# AMERICAN PROFESSIONALS RESPONDING TO THE PRESIDENT'S CALL TO SERVICE

Fiscal year 2007 showed significant gains in key measures of volunteer participation:

- The pool of highly skilled American professionals available through VFP partners grew impressively from nearly 285,000 in FY 2006 to more than 355,000 in FY 2007.
- During FY 2007, VFP partners reported deploying more than 34,000 volunteers, over 60 percent more than the FY 2006 total of 21,000.
- Between FY 2006 and FY 2007, the number of volunteer opportunities reported by VFP partners rose from just over 30,000 to more than 34,000.

- The number of VFP partners for FY 2007 increased more than 10 percent over FY 2006, to 244.

Finally, grants to VFP partners during FY 2007 totaled \$44 million, an increase of nearly 160 percent over the FY 2006 total of \$17 million. Many partners received awards related to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief; the New Partners Initiative, established in FY 2006; and the Middle East Partnership Initiative. Grant solicitations related to the President's Malaria Initiative entered their final phase and grant awards will be reported in FY 2008.

These results point to a sustained and impressive response to President Bush's call to service by skilled Americans in support of those in need throughout the world.

## VFP PARTNER BENEFITS

The Volunteers for Prosperity initiative provides a number of good reasons for interested companies and nonprofits to become partners. Among the advantages of partnership:

- VFP serves as an effective clearinghouse for international volunteer opportunities through its network of partner organizations.
- The VFP website is a resource that
  - matches prospective volunteers with appropriate partner organizations.
  - gives volunteers and other interested parties exposure to partners' international development and volunteer activities.
  - helps prospective volunteers to identify both immediate and continuing international service opportunities.
  - shares volunteer success stories that show how American professionals are helping to better the lives of people all around the world.
- provides a global map of volunteer destinations and links to information about partner organizations.
- facilitates an on-line information exchange for partners to share insights on managing volunteer programs.
- The initiative promotes recognition of service by VFP partner volunteers. Through a simple certification process, organizations can nominate their volunteers for the President's Volunteer Service Award ([www.presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov)).
- The VFP Office offers strategic counsel to organizations seeking to develop or expand their international voluntary service programs.
- VFP partners can receive special consideration in the federal grants process.

# VOLUNTEER STORY

**O**ver five million people in Kenya—42 percent of the population—lack access to basic sanitation. This sobering statistic motivated Laura Rose, a graduate of the University of California Santa Cruz, to sign up for volunteer service with Lifewater International (see page 23), which works to build the capacity of its indigenous partner organizations through training in water development, and sanitation and hygiene education. Over the past two years, after receiving training from the nonprofit organization in both hygiene and basic and advanced sanitation, she has served as a Lifewater volunteer to educate local communities in Kenya on sanitation.

“I experienced the deep satisfaction that comes with making a difference among those who need it most.”

In February 2007 Laura Rose and two other Lifewater International volunteers facilitated sanitation trainings in Kisumu, Kenya. She worked with Lifewater’s Kenyan partner organization to train teachers and members of local women’s groups in techniques to promote sanitation and hygienic behavior in schools and communities. Because the training took place at primary schools, Laura was able to see first-hand the learning environment for teachers and students in Kisumu. Each day participants and facilitators interacted and learned together.

During her volunteer service in Kenya Laura met a young girl named Agnes, a member of a local school health club. Agnes lost both parents to AIDS and is herself HIV-positive.

Laura was encouraged that Agnes’s teachers planned to take the lessons they learned back to the school health club. That meant Agnes, a health club leader, would be able to teach her classmates about sanitation and instruct other students about good hygiene practices.

Heartened that her work would improve Agnes’s health and give her tools to serve others, Laura said, “I experienced the deep satisfaction that comes with making a difference among those who need it most.”



Laura Rose leads sanitation training in Kisumu, Kenya.

# NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Broadening Involvement in International Volunteering to Combat Malaria

**O**n December 14, 2006, President Bush announced expansion of VfP to support his goal of controlling global malaria. Speaking at the first White House Summit on Malaria, the President stated that, through VfP, doctors and nurses can volunteer overseas to combat the preventable disease, and organizations may more easily receive grants for using highly skilled volunteers to combat malaria in Africa.

Since the summit the VfP Office has concentrated on recruiting U.S. nonprofits that use skilled American healthcare professionals as volunteers to combat malaria, and helping the organizations to access federal grant programs related to the fight against malaria.

## Sharing Information for Managing Effective Volunteer Programs

**I**n fiscal year 2007 a new feature was added to the VfP website. The “Partners Corner” is an on-line information exchange that gives partners periodic opportunities to share with others in the VfP network insights and perspectives on managing volunteer programs. Presented in a Q&A format, VfP partner responses are entirely voluntary. They offer a useful dialogue of ideas on best practices, challenges, and lessons learned relating to international voluntary service. Among the VfP partners that

**“Defeating malaria is going to require a lot more work than just the action of the U.S. government. Defeating malaria requires cooperation between government and grassroots volunteers.”**

President George W. Bush  
White House Summit on Malaria  
December 14, 2006

have participated are CHF International, Partners Worldwide, Cross-Cultural Solutions, and Partners of the Americas.

## Helping Skilled Americans Find Service Opportunities

**T**he VfP Office also added a search engine to its website that links to a database of announcements for immediate international voluntary opportunities (see USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network—Find an International Volunteer Opportunity). The search engine makes it easier for skilled Americans to volunteer overseas; it complements the service opportunities available on the VfP website, [www.volunteersforprosperity.gov](http://www.volunteersforprosperity.gov), under “Match Your Skill to a Sector.” A visitor to the search engine can select an interest category from among several options and learn about related service openings currently available

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# VOLUNTEER STORY

**D**r. John Varallo, an obstetrician/gynecologist, spent two weeks in the South American country of Guyana in October 2006 as a volunteer with the nonprofit Omni Med (see page 24) to continue his work to help implement a national cervical cancer screening initiative. Dr. Varallo received his medical degree from Georgetown University and his Master of Public Health at George Washington University. Since 2004 he has traveled to Guyana eight times. In the future he plans to take two-week trips to Guyana four times a year.

Guyana suffers one of the highest cervical cancer rates in the world, and the rates are even higher among Amerindian women in remote villages. In an effort to address the unnecessary suffering of these women, Dr. Varallo worked with his Guyanese colleagues to develop an effective and sustainable cervical cancer prevention program. As a result, the Guyana Cervical Cancer Prevention Program (GCCPP) was created and Dr. Varallo became its first director.

An integral part of the GCCPP program is the use of mobile clinics to bring same-day screening and treatment to remote villages, which greatly improves access to care for women. These mobile clinics are almost entirely staffed by Guyanese health workers trained by or undergoing training by Dr. Varallo and other volunteers with Omni Med.

When the positive results of these efforts became clear, at the request of Guyana's Minister of Health Dr. Varallo drafted a national policy for cervical cancer prevention. Dr. Varallo is currently working with another VFP partner, JHPIEGO, an international health organization, and the Government of Guyana to rapidly expand the training of local health workers, who will provide a solid foundation upon which to build a national GCCPP.

Dr. Varallo says that the values embodied in the mission of Omni Med drew him to volunteer with the organization. The deep, trusting relationships he has built there, as well as the rich personal and professional rewards he receives while volunteering are what keep him returning to Guyana. "My volunteer experiences have been truly eye-opening and life-changing," said Dr. Varallo. "I can't imagine not being involved. In fact, I have changed my work so that I can devote more time to these causes in Guyana and elsewhere around the world."

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John Varallo

Dr. John Varallo (center in dark shirt) on rounds with a local medical team in Georgetown, Guyana, in the Ob/Gyn Department at the main teaching hospital in the country.

# NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

throughout the world. (VfP partners interested in listing immediate international volunteer opportunities through this search engine should contact [volunteersforprosperity@usaid.gov](mailto:volunteersforprosperity@usaid.gov).)

## Encouraging More Global Service by American Professionals

A public service announcement (PSA) about Volunteers for Prosperity was created to give those interested in service a glimpse into the international volunteer experience. The 30-second PSA shows skilled American volunteers putting “their knowledge and experience to work in places around the world where help is needed most,” places like Haiti, Ethiopia, and Mali. It explains that VfP volunteers use “a leave of absence, vacation, or time during retirement” to “build schools for orphans, train local healthcare workers, help aspiring entrepreneurs create businesses, and share many more skills to make the world healthier and more prosperous.”

**“Hopefully, the PSA will inspire other American professionals to consider doing what their fellow citizens have already done and continue to do—share their talents and skills to improve the lives of those in need around the world.”**

Jack Hawkins  
VfP Office Director



Physicians for Peace volunteer Dr. Mark Helbraun (left), a colo-rectal surgeon, works with a local doctor to treat an Eritrean baby.

Physicians for Peace, ©2007

Volunteers and staff shown in the PSA are associated with VfP partners Medical Teams International, Partners Worldwide, and Geek-corps, a division of the International Executive Service Corps. The PSA, accessible at [www.volunteersforprosperity.gov](http://www.volunteersforprosperity.gov), was adapted from a program video produced by VfP. (For a copy of the VfP program video, contact the VfP Office at [volunteersforprosperity@usaid.gov](mailto:volunteersforprosperity@usaid.gov).)

## Contributing to the Expansion of International Volunteerism and Service

The VfP Office actively participated in a number of meetings and forums of interest to the international volunteer community. Such outreach is critical to VfP’s continued growth.

# VOLUNTEER STORY

“This is the most challenging and rewarding project we have ever been a part of. The courage and spirit to face HIV were inspiring. Huge pieces of our hearts remain in Semonkong.”

**J**ens Wennberg and Nancy Miller are a married couple who recently returned from their second volunteer assignment with the International Center for Equal Healthcare Access (ICEHA) in Lesotho, an independent country completely surrounded by South Africa. They first volunteered as clinical mentors with ICEHA (see page 23) in Lesotho in April–May 2006 and then again in October 2006–February 2007. Jens is a physician assistant who worked for eight years in an HIV/AIDS clinic at Harlem Hospital in New York City. Nancy is a certified nurse midwife who cared for women infected with HIV at Morris Heights Health Center in the Bronx.

The rural mountain town of Semonkong is 75 miles (4 hours by bus) over a rock and rut road from the nearest doctor in the Lesotho capital, Maseru. Primary healthcare is provided in clinics by nurses or nursing assistants.

The HIV infection rate is over 30 percent. HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) testing and treatment are available in Maseru, but most rural people cannot afford the bus fare.

Jens and Nancy arrived at St. Leonard’s Health Center in Semonkong with big boxes of antiretrovirals. The nurses were delighted and overwhelmed. The couple helped start HIV/AIDS testing and antiretroviral treatment (ART) and worked on prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) and then on TB treatment. Side by side they provided daily clinical support and educational sessions and helped set up systems for the clinic. At the end of their volunteer assignment the local staff was able to provide HIV/AIDS counseling and testing; and the nurses were prescribing HIV/AIDS and TB treatment.

Jens and Nancy are proud of what the nurses accomplished in Semonkong: a sustainable, growing HIV/AIDS treatment program in the mountains. Reflecting on their experience Nancy said, “It has been such a privilege for Jens and me to be a part of it. In a country with few doctors, it was thrilling to show that nurses can implement an HIV/AIDS treatment program with short-term clinical mentoring support. This is the most challenging and rewarding project we have ever been a part of. The courage and spirit to face HIV were inspiring. Huge pieces of our hearts remain in Semonkong.”



Jens Wennberg and Nancy Miller

Jens and Nancy (2nd and 4th from left) with the nursing staff at St. Leonard’s Health Center.

## Supporting Key Presidential Initiatives

**O**n December 14, 2006, President Bush directed Vfp to support the President's Malaria Initiative to control malaria on the African continent. As a result, the Vfp Office has been reaching out to new partners who have demonstrated commitment to combat malaria. This is helping them both to recruit skilled American healthcare professionals and others concerned with malaria, and to access federal programs for the grants they need to deploy volunteers in the fight against malaria.

The Vfp Office also continued support for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) by promoting involvement of American healthcare and other professionals in implementing the New Partners Initiative (NPI). Established in FY 2006, NPI provides grants related to HIV/AIDS prevention and care services to partners that in the past had limited

access to such support, such as faith-based and community organizations. "Eligible entities are nongovernmental organizations, working in any of the fifteen Emergency Plan focus countries, with little or no experience working with the U.S. Government—defined as no more than \$5 million in U.S. government funding during the preceding five years, excluding disaster or emergency assistance or funding as a subcontractor" (source: [www.state.gov/s/gac/rl/fs/57497.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/gac/rl/fs/57497.htm)). In FY 2007 Vfp partners received NPI grants totaling over \$9.2 million dollars.

## Honoring Volunteers with the President's Volunteer Service Award

**V**fp partners honored over 1,000 volunteers with the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) during FY 2007. The PVSA recognizes volunteers for their exemplary contributions of time and talent. Among those recognized:

**Medical Teams International**, a faith-based aid organization based in Portland, Oregon, recognized 350 of its volunteers with the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) at an international volunteer reception in March. At the reception, Jack Hawkins, director of the Vfp Office, presented the President's Call to Service Award, the highest level of the PVSA, to *Marie Davis* for 4,000 hours of service to help people in need in Uganda, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Ms. Davis, an emergency room nurse at Kaiser Permanente in Salem, Oregon, has served on 40 teams with Medical Teams International. She



Jack Hawkins presents Marie Davis with the President's Call to Service Award.

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# VOLUNTEER STORY

“They were smart, hard-working, and enthusiastic about learning a new technology; they made my volunteer work more meaningful.”

**C**hen Li is an information technology professional based in Olympia, Washington. His area of expertise is geographic information systems (GIS). He has over 10 years experience working with the GIS firm ESRI. Using his vacation time, he spent three weeks in April 2007 as a volunteer through GISCorps (see page 23) to share his IT skills on a project in Afghanistan. Chen served with the Afghanistan Information Management Services, a donor-funded local nonprofit that provides information technology services including GIS to organizations across Afghanistan.

Chen Li's volunteer service in Kabul gave him a great opportunity to work with a team of about 10 staff members from Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS). AIMS has been supporting a project and activity tracking system database at the USAID mission in Afghanistan. The database needed to be spatially enabled to provide interactive Internet GIS mapping functions. Most of Chen's time was spent training AIMS staff on GIS database management and web map application development. Chen and his team of GIS professionals and computer programmers designed the web mapping application. The new application can present locations of assistance activities, indicate budget and progress status, and present statistical results of activities by region.

Chen was pleased that he also had the opportunity to get to know the city and meet the people of Kabul. He noted that most places in the city are within walking distance, or a cab can go anywhere very inexpensively.

Chen considers his volunteer service in Afghanistan memorable because he felt he really made a difference by helping the local Afghans he trained learn new IT skills. “They were smart, hard-working, and enthusiastic about learning a new technology; they made my volunteer work more meaningful. Thank you, GISCorps, for giving me this opportunity.”



AIMS

Chen Li (middle) shares his IT skills with AIMS staff in Kabul, Afghanistan.

# VFP IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**“Volunteers like Ms. Davis inspire their fellow Americans with selfless dedication and commitment to helping others around the world.”**

Jack Hawkins  
VfP Office Director

first began volunteering with the relief organization in 1985.

During the ceremony Mr. Hawkins shared a message from President George W. Bush, who applauded the work of Medical Teams International’s volunteers and noted that “the great strength of our country is found in the hearts and souls of the American people.”

In addition to Ms. Davis, there were 13 Gold PVSA recipients, 49 Silver PVSA recipients, and 287 Bronze PVSA recipients. The levels of the award vary by total hours of service completed within a 12-month period. (See [www.presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov).)

Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals earned the award for service in more than 100 countries throughout Africa, East Asia, Eurasia, Latin America, and North America. The recipients provided not only healthcare services but also training in medical procedures, community health and development, and HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention.

Ten American professionals working through the Washington, DC-based, nonprofit organization **Partners of the Americas** (Partners) earned the PVSA in fiscal year 2007. The awards were presented during the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas Summit in Managua, Nicaragua, October 20–22, 2006.

Myrka Dellanos, two-time Emmy Award-winning journalist and member of the President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation, presented the PVSAs to the distinguished volunteers.

“I was really impressed with the Wisconsin volunteers who were honored with the PVSA and with their love and caring for the Nicaraguan people,” said Ms. Dellanos.



President’s Council on Service & Civic Participation member Myrka Dellanos presents Lucy Harvey with the President’s Call to Service Award.

Gannett Wisconsin/Dan Young

**“I was really impressed with the Wisconsin volunteers who were honored with the PVSA and with their love and caring for the Nicaraguan people.”**

Myrka Dellanos  
President's Council on Service and  
Civic Participation

Doctors, educators, and other professionals earned the award for service in various cities throughout Nicaragua, which is a partner country with Partners of the Americas. The award recipients designed community health projects; shared skills in effective gardening; helped build libraries; managed community water purification projects; and provided technical assistance for quality milk production in rural areas in Nicaragua. The volunteers also helped create Learning Centers—self-sufficient community centers that offer a wide range of vocational skills, such as baking, carpentry, cosmetology, and small business management.

Wisconsin volunteers *Arlen Albrecht, Bob Bowen, Lucy Harvey, Brad Martin, Judy Miller, Lynda Pracht, and Amy Wiza* received Gold awards; and *Mike McCord, Joanne Selkurt, and Linda Weber* received Silver Awards.

In addition to receiving the Gold Award, *Lucy Harvey*, a longtime Partners volunteer, received the President's Call to Service Award in recognition of over 4,000 hours of volunteer service in a lifetime. Ms. Harvey completed an estimated



President George W. Bush presents Kay Hiramine with the President's Call to Service Award for completing over 4,000 service hours.

White House photo by Eric Draper

16,000 hours of service during her decades of volunteer commitment.

Several other American professionals mobilized by VFP partners also received the PVSA for their international volunteer service:

President George W. Bush presented *Kay Hiramine* with the President's Call to Service Award on May 10, 2007, at a White House ceremony honoring Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month. Mr. Hiramine is the CEO of **Humanitarian International Services Group (HISG)**, a U.S.-based NGO that is a VFP partner. HISG “helps to find and to mobilize resources to meet humanitarian needs around the world, and to respond to disasters and emergencies. In 2006, HISG’s activities involved more than 60 nations and 120 projects

# VFP IN THE SPOTLIGHT

worldwide, and sent over \$8 million in donated humanitarian assistance” (source: White House News Release 5/10/07).

**Winrock International** volunteer *Dr. Steven Pao*, professor of food science and nutrition at Virginia State University, received the Bronze PVSA in April 2007 for his service in November 2006 in Kazakhstan. As a result of Dr. Pao’s training in food quality and safety standards, the Ministry of Agriculture is building a comprehensive food safety management system, from scientific research and education to regional food laboratories. These improvements will benefit the people of Kazakhstan by helping to ensure the safety of the food they produce, thus allowing the country to participate more fully in the global marketplace.

In April 2007 during National Volunteer Week, VFP partner **International Executive Service Corps** (IESC) honored the following skilled American volunteers with the PVSA:



President’s Volunteer Service Award recipient Steven Pao, third from left, trains Kazakhstan inspectors in food safety techniques.

*Meg Ross* received the President’s Call to Service Award. Over half of her 4,000 hours of lifetime service was completed in Ghana, where she shared her web and graphic design expertise with local agribusinesses to help develop their marketing strategy.

Gold Awards were presented to *David Pierce*, for helping the Geekcorps provide Internet connections to radio stations in remote villages in Mali; and *Douglas Fuss*, who gave one-to-one technical mentoring to 17 Lebanese software companies, advising them on improving their marketing materials and identifying new business opportunities.

Recipients of the Silver Awards were *C. Gary Mutz*, for providing technical assistance in Morocco and Bahrain on marketing and sales; *Richard Jennings*, who shared his three decades of experience as a cashew broker with cashew processors in West Africa; and *Margaret Bishop*, who gave basic business skills training to two rural groups of female soap makers in South Africa.

Receiving Bronze Awards were *Claudia Ruiz*, for training business owners and managers in Mozambique in effective financial management practices; *Robert Lyon*, who shared his expertise in sound financial management practices with the national bank of the country of Georgia; and *Laura Matz*, who traveled to Skopje, Macedonia, to help the Business Development Center at SEE University to improve its marketing of online management courses.

For more information about the President’s Volunteer Service Award, visit [www.presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov).



# VOLUNTEER STORY

“Living and working in Cambodia challenged me to see the world in new ways and to truly acknowledge the hardship and suffering that many people around the world face every day. Those eleven months were some of the most formative months of my life. I will never be the same... thankfully.”

**A**mber Hirschy, from Huntington, Indiana, has a degree in business management and economics/finance. She put her skills to good use when she spent eleven months in Cambodia through World Hope International (see page 24) as a volunteer working with a local microfinance company to help the poor obtain financial services. Amber returned to the U.S. in March 2007.

Amber's first few weeks in Cambodia were challenging as she tried to learn the language, understand the culture, and adjust to her new surroundings. Her volunteer service involved working with a local microfinance company. In addition to writing proposals, preparing international marketing materials, and building donor relations, Amber met with company clients. During these visits she learned how the small loans they received transformed their lives. She learned first-hand the benefits of microfinance, which by providing farmers and small-business entrepreneurs with affordable working capital (such as money to buy a sewing machine or livestock) empowers them to earn their way out of poverty.

“It never ceased to amaze me when a client would show me a new home that was built because of a loan he received or the way a client's business or crops had improved and thus allowed his children to be sent to school,” Amber said.

Amber recalled that one client walked her all around his house pointing to what he had done with each of eight loans he'd received. He explained how every loan had improved his family's quality of life. Amber said he was one of the hardest-working men she had ever met. He had suffered greatly in the Cambodian Civil War (1967–75) and was handicapped from a landmine but not once did he let it interfere with his dreams to pursue and ultimately realize a better life for his family. His latest purchase, a sound system that he rents out for weddings and other parties, doubled his income!

Summing up her volunteer service, Amber said, “Living and working in Cambodia challenged me to see the world in new ways and to truly acknowledge the hardship and suffering that many people around the world face every day. Those eleven months were some of the most formative months of my life. I will never be the same... thankfully.”



Amber Hirschy (front row—far right) with local staff at the credit office in Phnom Penh.

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



Air Calvary

Air Calvary volunteers quickly disembark from a helicopter-borne health clinic to provide assistance and supplies in Honduras.

The achievements of 2007 continued to support the President's vision of giving America's highly skilled professionals opportunities to show the world the energy and idealism of the United States of America. We look forward in the coming year to furthering efforts to expand international voluntary service in support of the nation's global health and prosperity agenda.

Among the Vfp Office's plans are the following:

- In collaboration with USAID staff, the Vfp Office is exploring the possibility of adding disaster relief and response to the Vfp portfolio in support of U.S. Government efforts in the aftermath of global disasters.
- To address financial challenges for skilled Americans interested in international voluntary service, the Vfp Office will pursue options to assist prospective volunteers with resources offsetting the costs associated with international volunteer service assignments.

# VOLUNTEER STORY

“By getting to know people, showing them love and respect, and teaching ways to prevent deadly diseases like malaria, we hope that lives and communities will be transformed.”

**I**n August San Diego native Jennifer Gerson began her fourth year as a volunteer serving with the global charity Mercy Ships (see page 24). Along with more than 400 other volunteers from more than 30 nations, Jennifer lives aboard the floating hospital Africa Mercy, conducting field service in the war-battered nation of Liberia in West Africa. Liberia is one of 15 countries in Africa that is targeted for assistance by the President's Malaria Initiative. A nutritionist by training and a registered dietitian, Jennifer is a member of the ship's community health education team serving in Liberia on a five-month assignment.



Jennifer Gerson teaches a family in Liberia to install a mosquito net to prevent malaria.

Jennifer traveled inland each day to teach disease prevention to students in the small villages surrounding Monrovia, the Liberian capital. These students, volunteers themselves, will in turn become the teachers, taking what they learn back to their communities to share with family, friends, and neighbors. Jennifer began her volunteer service as rainy season was at its peak and mosquitoes at their worst, so her efforts were concentrated on malaria prevention and treatment.

Mercy Ships began distributing mosquito nets in June 2007. Recipients must first attend a malaria training session conducted by one of Jennifer's village educators. Jennifer and a teammate deliver the nets personally and help the families install them properly.

“I've always valued being healthy in all areas of my own life: physically, spiritually, emotionally,” Jennifer said. “My volunteer service gives me an opportunity to get out into

the villages and empower the community to make positive changes in all those areas as well. By getting to know people, showing them love and respect, and teaching ways to prevent deadly diseases like malaria, we hope that lives and communities will be transformed.”

# VFP AND THE U.S. GLOBAL HEALTH AND PROSPERITY AGENDA

Seven presidential initiatives comprise the U.S. global health and prosperity agenda that VFP supports:

- President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)
- Digital Freedom Initiative (DFI)
- African Global Competitiveness Initiative (AGCI)
- Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)
- Water for the Poor Initiative
- Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)
- President's Malaria Initiative

The executive order creating VFP allows partners to receive special consideration when applying for grants related to the initiatives, provided their proposals include using skilled American volunteers.

The following summarizes the initiatives and highlights recent developments.

## President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

Launched in 2003, PEPFAR pledged \$15 billion over five years to fight the global HIV/AIDS pandemic. Its objectives are to treat 2 million people with antiretroviral therapy; prevent 7 million new infections; and support the care of 10 million people in the following focus countries: Botswana, Ethiopia, Haiti, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, Côte

d'Ivoire, Guyana, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Vietnam.

PEPFAR is managed by the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and supported by the Departments of State and Health and Human Services (HHS) and USAID. The State Department estimates that since 2003, as a result of this initiative, more than 100,000 mother-to-child HIV infections have been prevented and more than a million people in the recipient countries are taking antiretroviral drugs.

A component of PEPFAR, the New Partners Initiative (NPI), was established by President Bush in December 2005. NPI created a grants program for faith-based and community organizations whose activities are directed to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS but that had limited access to federal grants. NPI uses a competitive process for distributing \$200 million in grants through FY 2008. VFP partners were awarded grants totaling over \$9.2 million through the 2007 NPI program.

*PEPFAR Highlights:* VFP partner American International Health Alliance (AIHA) received funding two years ago for an HIV/AIDS twinning center (TC). AIHA establishes and manages twinning partnerships between health-related institutions in the United States and in Africa, Asia, Eurasia, and the Caribbean. During FY 2007 AIHA placed 10 American healthcare volunteers in Ethiopia and Tanzania in support of the TC. These volunteers, whose assignments ranged from three months to a year, provided clinical, educational, and capacity-building training and mentoring to local physicians, nurses, and other healthcare providers. It is expected that

an additional 60 volunteers will be deployed by the end of April 2008 in Ethiopia and Tanzania.

A number of other VFP partners deployed skilled American volunteers in support of PEPFAR goals during FY 2007. For example, the International Center for Equal Healthcare Access (ICEHA) and Family Health International deployed 49 American healthcare volunteers for three to six weeks as clinical mentors to local physicians and nurses in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, South Africa, and Vietnam.

## Digital Freedom Initiative

The DFI brings together federal agencies, the private sector, nonprofits, and universities to build technical capacity and spur economic growth in developing nations through new technology and pro-competitive regulation. The U.S. Government is represented by the Departments of State and Commerce, the Peace Corps,

USAID, and the U.S. Small Business Administration. DFI goals are to:

- Enhance access and connectivity to telecommunication services in rural areas and across regions.
- Encourage regulatory reform and technical assistance to support infrastructure investment, including broadband and wireless.
- Help small and medium-sized enterprises to increase their efficiency by using information communication technologies (ICTs).
- Expand use of technology in healthcare, education, and secure financial transactions.
- Increase interregional commerce and export competitiveness in Africa through use of ICTs, the African Global Competitiveness Initiative (AGCI), and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

*DFI Highlights:* In Senegal, where the DFI was piloted in 2003, over 100 private entities have been trained in small business development and ICT by skilled American volunteers.

The U.S. Government is working with U.S. companies Intel, Cisco, Motorola, Voxiva, and Hewlett Packard to support the Government of Peru's efforts to promote the spread of the Internet to more than 1,000 rural locations.

In Jordan, U.S. business volunteers assisted USAID and other government efforts to provide technical assistance, encourage innovative uses of ICT, and support policy reform.

In support of efforts to bring broadband connectivity to developing nations, the DFI held a



GISCorps volunteer Shoreh Elhami teaches a GIS workshop in Kabul, Afghanistan.

GISCorps

# VFP AND THE U.S. GLOBAL HEALTH AND PROSPERITY AGENDA

number of workshops with public and private sector partners and regulators in East Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia to encourage the free flow of information around the world.

DFI, with USAID, has also formed a software development education network that will span a dozen universities in nine countries. In FY 2007, volunteers and public-private resources were used to strengthen this effort and build capacity in Africa's leading education institutions.

## African Global Competitiveness Initiative

AGCI was established in July 2005 as the successor to President Bush's Trade for African Development and Enterprise Initiative. AGCI is providing \$200 million over five years to promote African export competitiveness and to expand African trade with the United States under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).



WATH- Accra

IESC volunteer, Richard Jennings, shares his technical expertise at a cashew processing factory in West Africa.

Assistance is mainly provided through USAID Regional Hubs for Global Competitiveness in Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, and Senegal.

*AGCI Highlights:* Since 2004 the International Executive Service Corps (IESC), a VFP partner, has been managing the African Fast Track Trade Program funded by USAID. The intent is to increase the export success of private enterprises in AGOA-eligible countries. In all, 37 African countries are covered by the program. In FY 2007 IESC worked closely with the Global Competitiveness Trade Hubs and other USAID programs to identify firms that would benefit most from volunteer technical assistance; 12 American volunteers provided technical assistance on projects and at trade shows in 15 sub-Saharan countries.

## Middle East Partnership Initiative

MEPI is designed to create economic, political, and educational opportunities for all people in the Middle East, especially women and youth. Managed by the Department of State with support from USAID, MEPI strives to link Middle Eastern, U.S., and global companies; NGOs; and governments to create innovative policies and programs. The initiative has invested over \$293 million in more than 350 programs in 16 countries and the Palestinian territories.

*MEPI Highlights:* VFP partners Financial Services Volunteer Corps (FSVC) and IESC used highly skilled American volunteers to implement a variety of projects in FY 2007. For instance, IESC deployed three U.S. business professionals

to Bahrain and Morocco in support of the Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) Export Trade Training Program. IESC volunteers created and presented workshops on international trade finance, import-export management, and marketing for local entrepreneurs.

The MEPI Morocco Fast Track Trade program, established in 2003, identifies export markets to facilitate alliances between Moroccan companies and U.S. firms. The program provides technical assistance using U.S. volunteer experts on food processing, textiles, ICT, and leather. IESC sent five U.S. volunteer business executives to prepare export-ready Moroccan small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to take advantage of free trade and investment opportunities.

In FY 2007 FSVC deployed over 30 skilled American volunteers—financial regulators, senior bankers, and banking lawyers—to Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, and United Arab Emirates to share their expertise during training forums on such topics as creation of commodities exchange markets; development of laws and regulations for financial systems; effective corporate governance; and improving SME credit risk.

## Water for the Poor

President Bush's Water for the Poor Initiative (FY 2003-FY 2005), managed by USAID, improved access to clean water for over 24 million people and to adequate sanitation for nearly 27 million. It was succeeded by the Water for The Poor Act signed by President Bush in 2005. The Act sets out clean water and sanitation goals for the world's poor as a vital component of U.S. foreign assistance programs.

*Water for the Poor Highlights:* USAID and its partners continue their work on projects that improve access to safe and adequate water supply and sanitation, improve irrigation technology, enhance the environment, and build institutional capacity for water resources management in countries around the world.

The volunteer-led activities of 15 VFP partners help developing countries build and maintain safe drinking water sources and improve sanitation systems; receive proper hygiene education; and ensure sustainability through training, education, and community development.

## Millennium Challenge Account

The MCA, announced in 2002, provides U.S. assistance through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) to reduce poverty through sustainable economic growth. MCA is based on the principle that aid is most effective when it reinforces good governance, economic freedom, and investments in people.

The criteria for a country's eligibility for assistance include commitment to policies that promote political and economic freedom, investment in education and health, efforts to control corruption, and respect for civil liberties and the rule of law.



Engineering Ministries International (eMi)

eMi volunteer Tom Fontaine, a civil engineering professor, helped design this well that pumps water uphill to a reservoir in Kampala, Uganda.

# VFP AND THE U.S. GLOBAL HEALTH AND PROSPERITY AGENDA

White House photo by Shealah Craighead



President George W. Bush, and Mrs. Laura Bush at the White House Summit on Malaria in Washington, D.C., December 14, 2006.

MCC has two assistance programs. The Threshold Program is designed to assist countries that are on the “threshold” of MCA eligibility. USAID, working with MCC, is the primary agency overseeing the Threshold Program. MCA’s larger Compact Program provides monetary assistance to countries that develop programs with clear objectives, benchmarks to measure progress, procedures to ensure fiscal accountability, and a plan to monitor and evaluate results.

*MCA Highlights:* Since it was established in 2004, MCC has signed multiyear compacts totaling nearly \$4 billion with 14 partner countries. Five compacts—with Mali, El Salvador, Mozambique, Lesotho, and Morocco—were signed in FY 2007. MCC also provided financial assistance to several eligible threshold countries. The VFP Office has introduced a number of VFP partners to this initiative.

## President’s Malaria Initiative

In December 2006, President Bush expanded VFP to support his goal of controlling global malaria. The PMI is an interagency initiative led by USAID, with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control as partners. Established in 2005, PMI, a five-year, \$1.2 billion program, is intended to provide bed nets, indoor spraying, and antimalaria medicine to cut malaria-related deaths by 50 percent in the hardest-hit African nations.

*PMI Highlights:* In its first year, PMI malaria aid reached more than 6 million Africans. Another million had received malaria control protection in FY 2006. By the end of 2007, as the program expands, 30 million more are expected to receive lifesaving medicines, sprays, and bed nets. VFP partner organizations involved in PMI can receive grants for using highly skilled volunteers including doctors and nurses to combat malaria in Africa.

At the December White House Malaria Summit, First Lady Laura Bush announced the Malaria Communities Program (MCP), a \$30 million component of PMI intended to provide grants to U.S.-based and local organizations to support malaria control projects in Africa. The primary beneficiaries are children under age 5 and pregnant women.

The first MCP grant solicitation was issued on March 28, 2007, and applications were due on May 31, 2007. The grant awards were made at the end of September 2007.



# VFP PARTNER PROFILES

The VFP Office is grateful to the dedication and commitment of our partners, U.S. nonprofits and companies, and the talented Americans they send overseas to help those in need. The volunteers whose stories are highlighted in this annual report were deployed around the world by the VFP partners featured below.

## GISCorps

[www.giscorps.org](http://www.giscorps.org)

GISCorps mobilizes technical specialists in geographic information systems (GIS) to volunteer their services to underserved communities abroad. Accurate geographic information can enhance and save lives by supporting humanitarian relief activities, environmental protection, and a variety of economic development efforts. GISCorps is sponsored by the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association of Park Ridge, Illinois. It recruits specialists to volunteer with nongovernmental and international organizations. Founded in 2003, the organization has sent volunteers to 20 countries on such projects as information technology training to locals in Afghanistan; support for medical missions in the Dominican Republic and Central America; and environmental efforts in Kenya and Namibia.

## International Center for Equal Healthcare Access

[www.iceha.org](http://www.iceha.org)

While costs of antiretroviral drugs to fight HIV/AIDS have dropped dramatically, trained person-

nel are required to manage effective administration of these life-saving medicines. The New York-based ICEHA, formed in 2001, recruits physicians, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, and other healthcare professionals to donate 6 to 12 weeks of time on foreign missions to train local caregivers in the skills needed to combat HIV and other infectious diseases. ICEHA operates in Cambodia, Vietnam, Ethiopia, and Rwanda, among other countries. During the organization's first five years, ICEHA volunteers provided more than 3,000 days of service and trained more than 400 local caregivers.

## Lifewater International

[www.lifewater.org](http://www.lifewater.org)

Based in San Luis Obispo, California, Lifewater recruits volunteer trainers from a number of professional backgrounds, including teachers, hydrogeologists, engineers, and marketing specialists. Volunteers have served on five



children in sanitation and hygiene.

Lifewater International

# VFP PARTNER PROFILES

continents, helping install water systems and training local workers to improve and maintain water supplies. Lifewater, a Christian faith-based organization, seeks long-term committed volunteers to undergo training for multiple missions. Individual missions last from one to four weeks. Since 1979, Lifewater and the local workers it has trained have helped provide an estimated one million persons with safe drinking water.

## Mercy Ships International

[www.mercyships.org](http://www.mercyships.org)

Mercy Ships International, headquartered in Garden Valley, Texas, uses hospital ships to deliver healthcare in the developing world. One of the vessels, the Africa Mercy, is the largest hospital ship in the world. More than 1,600 volunteers serve with Mercy Ships each year. Since 1978, the organization's volunteers have performed more than 32,000 surgeries, including correction of cleft lips and palates and of crossed eyes. Mercy Ships has trained more than 14,000 local healthcare and professional workers, helping to sustain improvements in global health. In addition to the floating hospitals, Mercy Ships operates two large land-based clinics in Sierra Leone.



Mercy Ships

Hospital Ship Africa Mercy transports volunteers for field service in places like Liberia in West Africa to help with malaria control.

In Honduras, Mercy Ships operates the Global Missions Health Institute, training health-care workers for the Central American region.

## Omni Med

[www.omnimed.org](http://www.omnimed.org)

Omni Med, a nonprofit launched in 1998 and based in Waban, Massachusetts, sends physicians and other healthcare volunteers to Asia, Africa, and Central and South America. Its mission is to help reduce global health disparities through education and volunteer service. Its volunteers have helped develop an eye screening and treatment program in Thailand and a cervical cancer screening initiative in Guyana. Omni Med volunteers also offer training to health providers in Belize and support St. Mary's Hospital, a major healthcare facility for the poor in Nairobi, Kenya.

## World Hope International

[www.worldhope.org](http://www.worldhope.org)

World Hope International has sponsored more than 4,000 volunteers in international service during the past year. Volunteer teams provide teacher mentoring in such countries as Bosnia, Haiti, Nicaragua, and South Africa. Experienced business, accounting, and legal professionals serve on teams offering training in microfinance in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and several West African countries. The length of volunteer assignments varies from 8 to 10 days for certain professional services to a full school year for some teachers. World Hope International, a Christian faith-based organization based in Alexandria, Virginia, has grown dramatically since its founding in 1996.

## VOLUNTEERS FOR PROSPERITY AT A GLANCE

Origin	Presidential initiative established in September 2003 to promote international voluntary service by U.S. professionals
Typical VfP volunteers	Professionals such as doctors, nurses, engineers, teachers, businesspeople, and IT specialists
Typical VfP project areas	Agriculture, economic growth, education, health, HIV/AIDS, information technology, water and sanitation, women and youth, and malaria control
Length of volunteer assignment	Flexible, ranging from a few weeks to one year or more
Who deploys and manages VfP volunteers	VfP partner organizations—U.S.-based nonprofits and businesses
VfP partner benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VfP website directs prospective volunteers to VfP partner organizations and gives links to partners' sites</li> <li>• Partners can receive special consideration in the federal grants process</li> </ul>

### Cover Photo Credits

Left: Cross-Cultural Solutions

Center: Global Water

Right: World Hope International

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