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# RPCVupdate

News for RPCVs and Friends of the Peace Corps  
From the Office of Domestic Programs

## Continuation of Service: A Lifelong Dedication



*Lavon Kimberly Wright, Peace Corps Fellows/USA Program Graduate, Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development, Illinois State University.*

### Optimizing Potential With Graduate School

Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

This is a truth that thousands of returned Volunteers have personally experienced through the Peace Corps Fellows/USA and Master's International (MI) programs. Managed by the Office of Domestic Programs, Fellows/USA and MI make graduate-level study possible either concurrently with Peace Corps service, or after returning to the United States.

In 1985, Dr. Beryl Levinger (Colombia 1967-69) conceived of Fellows/USA as a way to both provide teachers with intercultural competencies in high-need public schools and to fulfill returned Volunteers' desire to continue serving. Since then, Fellows/USA has grown to include 46 programs at more than 40 universities coast-to-coast, most in disciplines other than teacher education.

A critical element in every program is the internship. Directly related to the Fellows' areas of study, internships afford them the opportunity to integrate skills learned overseas with academic

and career interests, while simultaneously addressing community needs.

"Working as a self-help housing technical advisor in Tunisia was a seminal experience for me. It was one that I not only learned from, but built on as well," explains Brad Hinkfuss (Tunisia 1991-93). "My political science course work at Illinois State University was heavily weighted toward community development and my internship supported downtown revitalization. The knowledge and experience I gained as a Fellow led naturally to my current job managing property development for a low-income and transitional housing program."

Begun in 1987, Master's International encompasses 86 programs at 50 universities nationwide that prepare Volunteers to perform at advanced levels in hard-to-fill assignment areas. Although most MI Volunteers are completing their first tour, some are RPCVs who go to graduate school to strengthen their technical skills, and experience once again the exhilaration of an international development posting.

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### Ronald A. Tschetter Confirmed as the 17th Director of the Peace Corps

On September 14, 2006, Ronald A. Tschetter was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate as the 17th Director of the Peace Corps. Mr. Tschetter was nominated by President George W. Bush on July 25, 2006.

"I am honored by the trust President Bush has placed in me and grateful to the United States Senate for their confidence," said Mr. Tschetter. "My wife and I served together as Peace Corps Volunteers, and our experience continues to inspire and affect every aspect of our lives today. I look forward to encouraging more Americans to become Peace Corps Volunteers and continuing the fine tradition of this great agency around the world."

[continued inside, left](#)



*Peace Corps Director Ronald A. Tschetter*



# A Farewell Message from Gaddi H. Vasquez

## Former Peace Corps Director (2002-2006)

It never ceases to amaze me the number of returned Peace Corps Volunteers I meet in my travels throughout the country and indeed the world. And once Peace Corps Volunteers complete their service overseas, they continue to volunteer and serve. America has deep roots in volunteerism, and the Peace Corps is one of the finest examples of our nation's commitment to serving others.

I have met with heads of foundations, civic groups, humanitarian and development organizations, corporations with large giving programs, and members of Congress—all of whom have continued their Peace Corps service in new and exciting ways. There is something about that Peace Corps' spirit of service that does not let you be content on the sidelines watching the game, you have to be in the heart of service and working for a greater good.

Anita Friedman was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Paraguay. After volunteering, she continued to serve Peace Corps as the country director in Dominican Republic and as the chief of operations for the Inter-America and Pacific region at Peace Corps headquarters. Now Anita is the executive director of the Latin American Youth Center, working to provide opportunity for young Hispanic men and women in Washington, D.C.

Chris Burns was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ghana. He came back to work at headquarters as a country desk officer in the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia region, and he is now back in the field as an associate Peace Corps director in Niger.

Anita and Chris are only two of the thousands of RPCVs who have finished their service as a Peace Corps Volunteer and continued to serve in promoting world

peace and friendship in the private and public sectors at home and abroad.

In departing Peace Corps to become the United States Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, I consider this to be a continuation of my own Peace Corps service. My travels and experience have prepared me for a new chapter just as your own Peace Corps service prepared you for the jobs and activities you are involved with today. It has been the highest privilege of my career to serve alongside each of you in spreading world peace and friendship, and now I look forward to continue talking about the grand legacy of the Peace Corps in my new position.

I wish each of you much success, and I look forward to seeing the remarkable work that you and future returned Peace Corps Volunteers accomplish in the years to come.

### Director Tschetter

(continued from front page)

The new Director and his wife, Nancy, served as Peace Corps Volunteers from 1966-1968 in India as community health workers. After returning home from India, Mr. Tschetter worked in the financial securities industry for over 30 years, gaining strong management and leadership skills throughout his distinguished career.

"I am so happy to welcome Ron Tschetter to the Peace Corps," said Deputy Director Jody Olsen. "I look forward to working with him as Deputy Director and ensuring that the 7,810 Peace Corps Volunteers around the world continue to represent the best America has to offer in the countries where we serve."

Mr. Tschetter replaced Gaddi H. Vasquez, who became the United States Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome on September 7, 2006. Mr. Tschetter was officially sworn in as Director on September 25, 2006.

"The logic of the Peace Corps is that someday we are going to bring it home to America."

*President John F. Kennedy, 1961*



### The Office of Domestic Programs

- Coverdell World Wise Schools • Fellows/USA Program
- Master's International Program • Returned Volunteer Services
- Peace Corps Week

For more information, visit [www.peacecorps.gov/rpcv](http://www.peacecorps.gov/rpcv)





From 1962-77 and 1995-99, Ethiopia hosted approximately 3,500 volunteers.

## Peace Corps Volunteers to Return to Ethiopia

On September 13, 2006, Peace Corps Acting Director Jody Olsen announced that Volunteers will be returning to the African nation of Ethiopia for the first time since 1999.

The Peace Corps/Ethiopia program is scheduled to open in fiscal year 2007, with approximately 40 Volunteers arriving next summer. The Volunteers will be working primarily with nongovernmental organizations involved in health and HIV/AIDS, community groups, and youth groups to increase effectiveness of their programs.

The Peace Corps Volunteers will work closely with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan) through the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator. The Peace Corps is currently active in 9 of the 15 Emergency Plan focus countries, and more than 2,600 Peace Corps Volunteers are working in HIV/AIDS. Ethiopia will be the 10th Emergency Plan country in which the Peace Corps is involved. The Peace

Corps Volunteers are in a unique position to assist in the health and HIV/AIDS education sector with their language skills and integration into communities.

"We are excited that we have found a way to return to Ethiopia, a program that has had a long-standing history of warmly accepting Volunteers into local communities," said Dr. Olsen. "Our hope is that the Ethiopia program becomes a model for the accomplishments that Peace Corps Volunteers demonstrate in the health field around the world."

The Ethiopia program was one of the first for the Peace Corps, originally opening in 1962. From 1962-77 and 1995-99, Ethiopia hosted approximately 3,500 Volunteers. Over the years, the primary focus was on education, with the goal of training skilled workers and promoting economic development. In addition, Volunteers worked on agriculture projects and health projects ranging from establishing pediatric clinics to working with smallpox eradication programs.

## Continued Service Through the Partnership Program

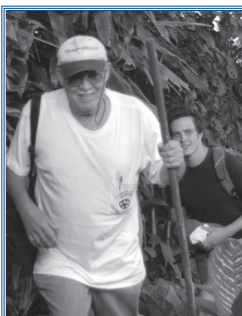
The Peace Corps Partnership Program is an excellent way for RPCVs to continue their service to a greater good without having to make the major lifestyle change of absolute service.

The program works like this: When an individual or a group donates to the Partnership Program, their contribution goes to the PCV-facilitated development project of their choice. For example, a donation of \$100 could go to build computer labs in Moldova. Or to dig wells in Mali. Or to raise chickens in Bolivia. It's the donor's choice. Once the project has collected the total amount requested through the Partnership Program, the funds are sent overseas to the Volunteer where they are used to complete the project. All projects meet a number of criteria. For example, the project must be sustainable, community-initiated, and be supported by community contributions (communities must provide 25 percent of the cost, mainly through labor and in-kind donations).

The RPCVs of Wisconsin-Madison are a great example of the legacy RPCVs can create by working with the Partnership Program. In 1987, the group began producing an annual Peace Corps calendar and directed the proceeds from its sale to the Partnership Program. Through their fundraising efforts, the group has donated over \$190,000 to more than 100 different Partnership projects.

Over the Peace Corps Partnership Program's 40-plus years' existence, strong relationships have been developed with schools, clubs, community organizations, small businesses, foundations, and faith-based organizations. It is these groups that support the majority of the hundreds of projects completed each year.

If you would like to continue your service in this way, you can learn more about Peace Corps Volunteer projects and how to contribute by contacting the Office of Private Sector Initiatives at 1.800.424.8580, ext. 2170; or via e-mail at [pcpp@peacecorps.gov](mailto:pcpp@peacecorps.gov). Information is also available on the Peace Corps website under the "Donate Now" button.



PEACE CORPS CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

## COUNTRY DIRECTOR

*Peace Corps country directors are unique leaders. They inspire our Volunteers to build on their past experiences and make real differences in the countries where they serve. They motivate their staff members to work their hardest to support the missions of the post, and they represent the very best of our nation to the people of host countries.*

For information and to apply, visit [www.peacecorps.gov/cd](http://www.peacecorps.gov/cd)  
The application deadline is February 15, 2007

# Crisis Corps: The Commitment Continues

For more than 10 years, RPCVs have renewed their commitment to service through the Crisis Corps. Crisis Corps allows the Peace Corps to respond to critical needs around the world by providing short-term, targeted technical assistance. By drawing exclusively on returned Volunteers, Crisis Corps can ensure that those deployed have the cross-cultural skills, language, and experience necessary to meet critical community needs around world. From responding to natural disasters to combating HIV/AIDS, RPCVs have time and time again proven their dedication to relief and development as Crisis Corps Volunteers (CCVs).

To date, more than 1,000 RPCVs have taken on Crisis Corps assignments. Drawing on Peace Corps experience and a range of skills acquired since service, Crisis Corps Volunteers work in five program areas:

- Humanitarian response
- HIV/AIDS (including PEPFAR/Emergency Plan programming)
- Disaster preparedness and mitigation
- Natural disaster relief and reconstruction
- Post-conflict relief and reconstruction

On assignment with Crisis Corps, Volunteers encounter many of the same emotions as they did in their initial Peace Corps service: a feeling of accomplishment and pride in their work, a satisfaction that comes from knowing they've helped others, a connection to those they serve, and yes, sometimes even frustration—all condensed into just a few months. As Tanzania CCV Jason Crooks put it, "Wherever we served during our Peace Corps years allowed us to grow in ways we never imagined. It



*CCV Ken Kartchner helps construct temporary USAID housing in the community of Totzoloj San Mateo, Guatemala.*

continues with Crisis Corps, and as long as we continue to serve and assist in this way, we continue to learn and grow."

Whether serving in Cameroon, Thailand, or El Salvador, CCVs agree they are able to take on these assignments because of their previous Peace Corps experience. RPCVs bring more than strong technical and language skills; they also bring cross-cultural adaptability. Crisis Corps develops each assignment individually and recruits a well-suited Volunteer for the task at hand. As a result, CCVs have enjoyed entering into well-defined assignments that allow them to "hit the ground running" and perform highly technical projects with clear and tangible results.

Though Crisis Corps may be best known for natural disaster response, hundreds of RPCVs have also joined the fight against HIV/AIDS through Crisis Corps assignments. Crisis Corps Volunteers have provided expert assistance on a range of issues from voluntary counseling and testing to working with orphans and vulnerable children. These RPCVs typically return to the field after completing public health degrees or medical programs, and bring with them the wealth of experience they have earned during and beyond their initial Peace Corps service.

Responding through Crisis Corps service has allowed RPCVs to reconnect with Peace Corps in a very special way. Last September, 272 RPCVs answered the call to assist those affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita along the Gulf Coast of the United States. In this unique first response effort, many of those Volunteers boarded planes for their assignments within a day of hearing from Crisis Corps. The response brought together RPCVs from every region where the Peace Corps serves, and from every walk of life. Those who just closed service worked side by side with those who served in Peace Corps' very first class 45 years ago. Together, they showed that RPCVs have flexibility to respond to changing demands and are hardy enough to face challenging conditions. They also demonstrated that Peace Corps Volunteers continue to have a sincere desire to assist others in a way that respects basic human dignity. That desire is at the core of all that Peace Corps does.

For information on the Crisis Corps and how to apply, visit the Web or call ...

[www.peacecorps.gov/crisiscorps](http://www.peacecorps.gov/crisiscorps)  
800.424.8580, ext. 2250



CRISIS  
CORPS



# Diverse Peace Corps Volunteers Continue Their Service at Home in the United States



**Karen Tyler-Ruiz received the Franklin H. Williams Award**

Established in 1999, the Franklin H. Williams Award honors returned Peace Corps Volunteers of color who continue the Peace Corps mission through their commitment to community service and by supporting the agency's third goal of promoting a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. Below are the stories of two award recipients, one from 2003 and one from 2006, who exemplify this spirit of continuation of service to their own communities and to communities abroad:

Amanda Walsh (2003) quit her job as a nurse with Kaiser Permanente in 1972 to become a Peace Corps Volunteer in the health program in Niger. On a volunteer basis for the past 30 years, Ms. Walsh has collected and organized dozens of shipments of clothing, toys, food, and medical supplies to send to hospitals, mental institutions, orphanages, and various aid centers.

Five years ago, in 2001, Ms. Walsh founded "A Foundation for African Children Today" (AFACT) whose mission is to send as many supplies as possible to African children in need. AFACT is mobilizing education efforts about the impact of HIV/AIDS in the Los Angeles area, assisting African children with AIDS, and providing relief to refugee camps in Burundi.

Ms. Walsh is a very inspirational woman. At the age of 74, Ms. Walsh says, "I don't want my efforts to die with me and fall to the wayside. We own three-fourths of the world's wealth. Why can't we give more of our time and resources to prevent illnesses as simple as the whooping cough? Our community is the world."

In 1990, Karen Tyler-Ruiz (2006) joined the Peace Corps and served as a youth development community coordinator until 1993. She then worked as the programming and administration coordinator for Peace Corps/Costa Rica as well as the cross-cultural trainer (1993-1996). Additionally, she went on to be a Peace Corps training consultant for Peace Corps/Belize.

Ms. Tyler-Ruiz has worked at the Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) since 2000. Since 2004, she has served as the senior program officer for Detroit LISC. She has collaborated in the development of a strategic and geographically targeted neighborhood

revitalization initiative with a goal of transforming blighted neighborhoods into livable ones. She worked with LISC's board of directors reviewing grant opportunities and placing over \$900,000 in grant monies into targeted Detroit communities in 2005.

About her Peace Corps experience, Ms. Tyler-Ruiz said, "I really do get excited about Peace Corps. It's my real alma mater. I can understand the need for community-based work in Detroit after having worked with similar projects in Costa Rica. What overwhelms me all the time in my work here is the amount of wealth that we take for granted. The barriers here in the U.S. are manmade but resolvable. My Peace Corps experience made me realize that we have so much to build upon here in the U.S."

Both these individuals represent that spirit, common to RPCVs, that drives individuals to continue their service long after they've left Peace Corps—that drive to continue to serve in promoting world peace and friendship in the private and public sectors at home and abroad.

Constance Berry Newman received the Director's Award. Other award recipients included Anthony L. Pinder, Timothy P. Wilson, Miguel Conchas, Arthur Brown, Lisa C. Flores, J.D. Hokoyama, Roger W. Banks, Nicole Hewitt, Hugh Ho, and Robin M. Cooper.

## Graduate School

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This publication contains materials written by returned Peace Corps Volunteers and others that represent the writers' individual views. These views are not official opinions of the U.S. government or of the Peace Corps.

Amanda Rabinowitz (Tonga 1996-2000, El Salvador 2003-05) received a master's degree in sustainable development at the School for International Training. "One of the key benefits to serving as an MI Volunteer was confidence in my skills and the ability to communicate practical applications to my host country counterpart," says Amanda. "I also had more work and life experience than the first time around so I really hit the ground running. Going back overseas as a Volunteer was a very

satisfying way to complete my academic experience and it allowed me to grow professionally."

Peace Corps education programs enhance the ability of RPCVs to continue positively impacting the lives of others. To date, more than 4,000 graduates from MI and Fellows/USA programs are using their education to effect change in communities around the world.

For more information about graduate school programs:

Fellows/USA

[www.peacecorps.gov/fellows](http://www.peacecorps.gov/fellows) · 800.424.8580, ext. 1440 · [fellows@peacecorps.gov](mailto:fellows@peacecorps.gov)

Master's International

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to provide us with corrections

## Ronald A. Tschetter Sworn in as Director of Peace Corps: See Front Page



Director Tschetter and his wife, Nancy, served as Peace Corps Volunteers from 1966-1968 in India as community health workers.

*"As a Peace Corps Volunteer in India, I came to understand the true spirit of service and now, over four decades later, I am ready to give back to the Peace Corps in an entirely new capacity. I am truly honored to serve President Bush and the 7,810 Volunteers in the field, as well as staff around the world."*

Ronald A. Tschetter