DOMESTIC PROGRAMS

DOMESTIC PROGRAMS: "BRINGING THE WORLD HOME"

Long renowned for its international service and its positive representation of the United States overseas, the Peace Corps is also charged with a third goal: to help Americans develop a better understanding of other peoples. As President John F. Kennedy dispatched the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers to Ghana in 1961, he made a prediction: "The logic of the Peace Corps is that someday we are going to bring it home to America."

The Office of Domestic Programs chiefly reflects the third goal of the agency and facilitates the vision that President Kennedy noted through the following program areas:

Coverdell World Wise Schools Program

This program produces standards-based classroom resources that promote cross-cultural understanding and community service. Teachers can download visually rich and intellectually stimulating curriculum for classroom use, and prospective applicants can listen to the Peace Corps experience in the voices of current or former Volunteers on-line. A unique aspect of the program is student interaction with current and returned Volunteers.

University Programs

The Master's International program is for students who serve as Peace Corps Volunteers as part of master's degree programs and integrate their academic learning with international grassroots development; Fellows/USA is for returned Volunteers who provide service to underserved U.S. communities while pursuing graduate degrees. Two pilot programs are also underway to assist undergraduate students in earning academic credits and acquiring experience that complements Peace Corps service.

Peace Corps Week

This annual event brings current and returned Volunteers as well as their family members together with their communities to celebrate the Peace Corps' legacy of understanding between the United States and other nations.

Returned Volunteer Services

This office provides career, educational, and transitional assistance to more than 3,500 Volunteers returning to the United States each year.

Coverdell World Wise Schools Program

Established in 1989 by then Peace Corps Director Paul D. Coverdell, this program provides a variety of services and materials to help American schoolchildren learn about the world's diverse peoples, cultures, and geography. Approximately 400,000 students—in all 50 states—benefit from some aspect of the program. In FY 2007, the Coverdell World Wise Schools (CWWS) website received almost 2 million visits.

CWWS services include programs that link Volunteers and returned Volunteers with American classrooms. Through the Correspondence Match program, current Volunteers communicate with U.S. teachers and students. The program facilitates an exchange of letters, photographs, artifacts, telephone calls, and e-mails. Volunteers often visit the schools during their vacations to the United States and after completing their service. Since its inception, the Correspondence Match program has helped nearly 3 million students communicate directly with Volunteers throughout the world. Currently, about 4,500 Volunteers a year relate their experiences through correspondence exchanges. Additionally, the Speakers Match program connects returned Volunteers with schools and community groups that request information about the Peace Corps experience.

CWWS materials and multimedia publications produced for U.S. classrooms promote cross-cultural understanding and the ethic of community service. They include an award-winning series of country-specific videos and DVDs with accompanying teachers' guides, and Volunteer-written literature

supported by standards-based lesson plans, podcasts, narrated slide shows, a monthly e-newsletter, and an online poster gallery. All materials are available online for downloading at no charge (www.peacecorps.gov/wws). Publications include: *Insights From the Field: Understanding Geography, Culture, and Service; Voices From the Field: Reading and Writing About the World, Ourselves, and Others; Building Bridges: A Peace Corps Classroom Guide to Cross-Cultural Understanding;* and *Uncommon Journeys: Peace Corps Adventures Across Cultures*. Educators requested nearly 30,000 copies of CWWS publications and DVDs for classroom use during FY 2007.

University Programs

The Peace Corps' two graduate university programs offer opportunities for graduate education and domestic and international ommunity service to prospective, current, and returned Peace Corps Volunteers. Two new pilot undergraduate programs are also underway. The first program, called the Peace Corps Baccalaureate, offers students with an associate's degree the opportunity to earn credits toward a bachelor's degree at Minnesota's Metropolitan State University while serving in the Peace Corps. The second, Peace Corps Prep is a partnership with Knox College in Illinois designed to allow students to complete a tailored, internationally focused curriculum and engage in community service activities to increase their competitiveness for Peace Corps service. Together, these four programs serve the three goals of the agency's mission.

Peace Corps Fellows/USA

Peace Corps Fellows/USA develops and maintains educational partnerships that place returned Volunteers in internships in underserved U.S. communities as they pursue graduate degrees. Each year, approximately 400 returned Volunteers pursue graduate degrees at more than 40 partner universities. Financial aid is provided by participating universities, community and government agencies, and private funding entities.

Internships that help underserved populations are at the core of the Peace Corps' Fellows/USA program, as returned Volunteers engage in university communities and at the grassroots level of urban and rural America. Fellows work as interns on projects of critical importance to local communities, typically in nonprofit organizations, or they provide service as public school teachers. Degree opportunities span a wide range of professional fields, including community and economic development, nursing, and environmental education. Fellows use the knowledge, skills, and competencies they developed as Volunteers to benefit the American people.

There are currently Peace Corps Fellows/USA programs in 26 states and the District of Columbia. Since the program's inception in 1985, more than 2,000 Peace Corps Fellows have worked to improve the lives of thousands of Americans and to raise international awareness in the process.

Master's International Program

Through partnerships with more than 50 colleges and universities, the Master's International (MI) program annually provides approximately 600 students with opportunities to incorporate Peace Corps service into a master's degree in more than 90 different programs. Currently, there are MI partner universities in 28 states and the District of Columbia. Students apply to both the Peace Corps and to a participating graduate school. (They must be accepted by both, and requirements vary by school.) Participating graduate schools establish and monitor academic requirements, and the Peace Corps places MI students overseas as Volunteers. MI students complete one or, in a few cases, two years of course work before starting their Peace Corps assignment. Through the program, MI students graduate with the valuable combination of an advanced degree and two years of substantive professional experience in an international setting.

The kinds of graduate study and assignments are as varied as the Volunteers. Some examples of how MI Volunteers incorporated graduate studies into Peace Corps assignments follow:

• One MI student designed a potable water supply system in rural Honduras, putting engineering into practice while considering the social, economic, and environmental limitations of the developing world.

• Another student, working as an agricultural and environmental extension agent in Togo, taught women how to cultivate and use soybeans in their diet, introduced farmers to inter-cropping with soil-improving plants, and helped start community gardens and tree nurseries.

Returned Volunteer Services

Peace Corps Week

The commitment of returned Volunteers to share their overseas experiences at home continues to fulfill the Peace Corps' third goal of helping Americans gain a better understanding of other peoples. Each year during the week of March 1, thousands of returned and current Peace Corps Volunteers—along with their families and friends—commemorate the agency's anniversary during Peace Corps Week. Peace Corps Week provides an ideal opportunity to share how Volunteers have helped, or are helping, people around the world.

During Peace Corps Week 2007, several thousand returned Peace Corps Volunteers gave presentations in schools, to community groups, at their workplaces, or in places of worship. Forty-one U.S. states issued proclamations—many holding proclamation ceremonies or photo-ops with returned Volunteers—in honor of Peace Corps Week. Numerous Members of Congress made remarks in the Congressional Record recognizing the important work and ongoing contributions of Volunteers. Others honored Volunteers from their home states and districts.

Returned Volunteer Services

In addition to Peace Corps Week, the Returned Volunteer Services (RVS) department provides transition assistance to returning and recently returned Volunteers through career, educational, and readjustment services.

Regional career centers, specialized career manuals and events, and other career resources are coordinated to ensure that the skills and experiences Volunteers gain or develop during Peace Corps service are used most effectively. In addition to working directly with the Volunteers, RVS forms networks and partnerships with employers, Peace Corps country directors, and headquarters staff to create and deliver relevant educational and job-search materials and services.

Mentor Program

RVS entered into a cooperative agreement with the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA)—a national organization for former Peace Corps Volunteers—to pilot a local mentor program for returning Volunteers. The program's goals are to facilitate Volunteers' ability to find employment or educational opportunities; assist in their adjustment back home; and increase the likelihood of their long-term participation in third-goal activities. As a result of the positive feedback from the pilot, the NPCA in cooperation with the Peace Corps is in the process of expanding the mentor program nationally in FY 2008.

Career Centers

Career centers located in regional recruitment offices around the country offer job postings, resource manuals, computers, fax machines, and phones. RVS coordinates activities with the career centers and tracks each center's use. In FY 2007, more than 2,500 returned Volunteers visited career centers.

Career Manuals

RVS publishes manuals as reference tools for returned Volunteers to generate ideas, formulate job-search strategies, and identify educational institutions. Current publications include *Business Careers, Careers in Agriculture, Careers in Teaching, International Careers, Environmental Careers, Graduate School Guide, RPCV Handbook,* and the *Career Resource Manual*. The latter two publications are distributed to Volunteers during their close-of-service conference. Additionally, the Career Information Consultants guide lists more than 800 individuals who offer their assistance to current and returned Volunteers seeking information about career fields or employment opportunities within their organizations.

Career Events

Since 1988, RVS has coordinated more than 31 career fairs for returned Volunteers. In 2006, RVS instituted quarterly career events, each featuring career-preparation presentations, interactive job-seeker workshops, targeted panel discussions, and a recruitment fair. In FY 2007, more than 700 RPCVs benefited from this comprehensive suite of career-facilitating services.

Self-Assessment Software

RVS licenses third-party self-assessment software to complement career events and other transition materials. This is to assist RPCVs in translating the entire Volunteer experience into something practical for job, career, or academic exploration. The software is made available to returned Volunteers upon request.

Job Bulletins

Hotline is one of RVS' longest-running and most-used publications. E-mailed twice per month, Hotline contains announcements from employers and educational institutions interested in hiring or enrolling returned Volunteers, information about career and job-search workshops, Fellows/USA program updates, and various third-goal activity information. RVS also subscribes to third-party job bulletins and makes passwords available to returned Volunteers upon request.

Close-of-Service Kits

RVS works closely with Peace Corps headquarters and overseas staff to create and deliver meaningful guidance to Volunteers approaching the end of their service. The office assembles comprehensive kits for distribution at close-of-service conferences and participates in a task force that identifies improvements to close-of-service activities.

President Kennedy greets the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers in 1961

THE PEACE CORPS' EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE UNITED STATES

States	Master's International Colleges/Universities	Fellows/USA Colleges/Universities
Alabama	University of Alabama–Birmingham	
Alaska	University of Alaska–Fairbanks	
Arizona	Arizona State University	Northern Arizona University University of Arizona
California	California State University at Sacramento Humboldt State University Loma Linda University Monterey Institute of International Studies University of California–Davis University of the Pacific–Stockton	Loma Linda University Humboldt State University
Colorado	Colorado State University–Fort Collins University of Colorado–Denver University of Denver	University of Denver
Connecticut		Yale University
Florida	Florida International University Florida State University–Tallahassee University of South Florida–Tampa	Florida Institute of Technology
Georgia	Emory University Georgia State University–Atlanta University of Georgia–Athens	Georgia College & State University
Illinois	Illinois State University–Normal	DePaul University Illinois State University Western Illinois University
Indiana		Indiana University
Kansas		Wichita State University
Louisiana	Tulane University	University of New Orleans Xavier University of New Orleans
Maryland	Johns Hopkins University University of Maryland–Baltimore County	Johns Hopkins University University of Maryland–Baltimore University of Maryland–Baltimore County University of Maryland-College Park (*in development*))
Massachusetts	Boston University	
Michigan	Michigan State University Michigan Technological University Western Michigan University	University of Michigan
Minnesota	University of Minnesota–Twin Cities	
Missouri		University of Missouri–Columbia University of Missouri–Kansas City
Montana	University of Montana–Missoula	

THE PEACE CORPS' EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE UNITED STATES

States	Master's International Colleges/Universities	Fellows/USA Colleges/Universities
Nevada	University of Nevada–Las Vegas	
New Hampshire	Southern New Hampshire University	Southern New Hampshire University
New Jersey	Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey–Camden	Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey–Camden
New Mexico		New Mexico State University–Las Cruces Western New Mexico University
New York	Bard College Cornell University	Columbia University Cornell Univeristy (in development) Fordham University The New School University
North Carolina	Appalachian State University North Carolina A&T State University–Greensboro North Carolina State University–Raleigh	Duke University
Ohio	University of Cincinnati	University of Cincinnati
Oklahoma	Oklahoma State University–Stillwater	
Oregon		University of Oregon
Pennsylvania		Carnegie Mellon University Duquesne University Seton Hill University University of Pennsylvania
South Carolina		University of South Carolina–Columbia
Texas		University of North Texas
Vermont	School for International Training St. Michael's College	University of Vermont
Virginia	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University George Mason University	George Mason University
Washington	University of Washington–Seattle	
Wisconsin	University of Wisconsin–Madison University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point	Marquette University University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point
Wyoming	University of Wyoming	University of Wyoming
District of Columbia	American University George Washington University	George Washington University

Home States* of Peace Corps Volunteers

as of September 30, 2007

State	Currently Serving	Total Since 1961
Alabama	52	940
Alaska	36	860
Arizona	146	3,015
Arkansas	38	840
California	943	25,832
Colorado	274	6,067
Connecticut	108	2,912
Delaware	25	424
District of Columbia	51	2,103
Florida	239	6,472
Georgia	157	2,699
Guam	0	73
Hawaii	21	1,274
Idaho	42	1,131
Illinois	367	7,287
Indiana	166	2,764
Iowa	102	2,006
Kansas	102	1,480
Kentucky	65	1,279
Louisiana	27	963
Maine	73	1,631
Maryland	215	5,090
Massachusetts	232	7,359
Michigan	344	6,103
Minnesota	235	5,720
Mississippi	16	411
Missouri	143	2,822
Montana	52	1,182
Nebraska	68	1,180
Nevada	29	831
New Hampshire	62	1,451
New Jersey	183	4,324
New Mexico	61	1,941
New York	429	11,793
North Carolina	225	3,429
North Dakota	26	514
Ohio	292	6,072
Oklahoma	69	1,146
Oregon	237	5,282
Pennsylvania	319	6,813
Puerto Rico	6	363
Rhode Island	36	901
South Carolina	76	1,250
South Dakota	27	556
Tennessee	92	1,405
Texas	382	6,048
Utah	72	927
Vermont	49	1,319
U.S. Virgin Islands	4	75
Virginia	352	6,349
Washington	363	7,911
West Virginia	22	584
Wisconsin	268	5,224
Wyoming	28	460

** Includes the District of Columbia, as well as the territorties of Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.*