

# Peace Corps Milestones



## 1960s

October 14, 1960

In a 2 a.m. campaign speech, then-Sen. John F. Kennedy challenges University of Michigan students to contribute two years of their lives to help people in countries of the developing world.

March 1, 1961

President Kennedy signs Executive Order 10924, establishing the Peace Corps.

June 1961

Tanganyika I and Colombia I begin training for service. Trainings are conducted across the U.S.

August 30, 1961

The first group of Peace Corps Volunteers, Ghana I, arrives in Accra to serve as teachers.

September 22, 1961

Congress passes the Peace Corps Act.

October 14, 1961

The "dropped postcard" in Nigeria emphasizes a need for cross-cultural understanding.

September 1964

*National Geographic* features a Peace Corps cover story.

## 1970s

June 1966

More than 15,000 Volunteers are serving in the field. Historically, this is the highest number of Peace Corps Volunteers.

September 1966

Lillian Carter, 68, the mother of President Jimmy Carter, departs for service in India.

July 1, 1971

With Executive Order 11603, President Nixon folds the Peace Corps into a new federal volunteer agency called ACTION. However, the Peace Corps' original Congressional mandate remains unchanged.

November 1974

Christopher Dodd of Connecticut (RPCV/Dominican Republic, 1966-1968) and Paul Tsongas of Massachusetts (RPCV/Ethiopia, 1962-1964) are the first RPCVs elected to Congress.

October 1977

Carolyn Robertson Payton is the first female and the first African American to be Peace Corps Director.

May 16, 1979

President Carter signs an executive order that grants the Peace Corps full autonomy.

December 29, 1981

Peace Corps becomes an independent federal agency.

January 1983

The longest-serving Peace Corps Director, Loret Miller Ruppe, and USAID establish the Small Project Assistance (SPA) program. Today, SPA funds activities in over 40 Peace Corps posts.

## 1980s

## 1990s

September 1985

There are more women entering service than men, a first in the agency's history.

1988

Barbara Jo White (RPCV/Dominican Republic, 1987-1989) creates the first World Map Project. Volunteers continue to use the project as an educational tool worldwide.

1990

The first group of Peace Corps Volunteers to serve in Central and Eastern Europe depart for Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic.

1993

Carol Bellamy (RPCV/Guatemala, 1963-1965) becomes the first RPCV to be appointed as Peace Corps Director.

1995

The first Camp GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) is established in Romania. Camp GLOW continues to encourage young women to be leaders in their communities.

December 1995

Crisis Corps (known today as Peace Corps Response), a program that provides short-term humanitarian service to countries worldwide, begins in Antigua.

February 1997

Thirty-three Peace Corps Volunteers depart to work with teachers in post-apartheid South Africa.

## 2000s

May 2003

The Peace Corps commits an additional 1,000 Volunteers to fight HIV/AIDS as part of legislation signed into law.

September 2005

For the first time, Volunteers are deployed domestically when Peace Corps assists relief operations in the Gulf Coast region following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

2010

Peace Corps re-opens three historic programs in Colombia, Indonesia, and Sierra Leone and surpasses the 200,000 mark in total Americans who have served as Peace Corps Volunteers.

March 1, 2011

Director Aaron S. Williams participates in a commemoration of President Kennedy's historic campaign speech at the University of Michigan.

2011

The Peace Corps commemorates 50 years of promoting world peace and friendship with special events in the U.S. and throughout the world.

## 2010s



## DID YOU KNOW ... ?

By the Numbers, as of February 2011

**1** University of Colorado at Boulder ranks as the Top College for Peace Corps Volunteers in 2011, with 117 alumni currently serving.

**4** Returned Volunteers are serving as members of the U.S. Congress

**7** Percent of Peace Corps Volunteers currently serve with their spouses.

**9** Countries were being served in 1961: Chile, Colombia, India, Ghana, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, St. Lucia, and Tanganyika (Tanzania).

**10** Per every 100,000 Vermont residents served as Volunteers in 2010—the largest per capita ratio. California has sent the most Volunteers historically, with 27,356 Volunteers since 1961.

**18** Director Aaron S. Williams is the 18th Peace Corps Director. He is also the fourth RPCV to serve in that capacity.

**28** Is the average age of a Volunteer in 2011.

**35** Percent of Volunteers serve in education—the largest of the Peace Corps' six sectors.

**86** Colleges and universities provide Volunteers the opportunity to get a master's degree through the Peace Corps Masters International program.

**87** Arthur Goodfriend of Honolulu, Hawaii, was the oldest Volunteer in Peace Corps history. He was 87 when he completed his service in 1994.

**130** Americans are serving as Peace Corps Response Volunteers.

**250+** Languages are taught to Peace Corps Volunteers.

**466** Volunteers are serving in Ukraine, making it the largest program in the Peace Corps.

**537** Students participate in the Peace Corps Fellows/USA program.

**3,457** University of California, Berkeley alumni have served in the Peace Corps, making it the "Top Historic College."

**5,399** Volunteers are currently matched with a classroom through the Coverdell World Wise Schools Correspondence Match program.

**8,521** Volunteers have served the Philippines, tops among Peace Corps countries.

**45,653** Applications were received in 1964, the most in Peace Corps' history.

**87,600+** Friends of the Peace Corps on Facebook. Go to [facebook.com/peacecorps](http://facebook.com/peacecorps) to join our fans.

**...still counting**  
The number of lives affected by the Peace Corps.

## ON THE SCREEN

"Volunteers," with Tom Hanks, is widely regarded as the most famous "Peace Corps Movie," but over the years, we have been mentioned numerous times in popular movies and television shows. If you have heard about another show that mentioned the Peace Corps, let us know at [communications@peacecorps.gov](mailto:communications@peacecorps.gov)



### TV Series

Boy Meets World  
Buffy the Vampire Slayer  
Community  
Crank Yankers  
Dawson's Creek  
Entourage  
Family Guy  
Family Ties

Friends  
Grey's Anatomy  
How I Met Your Mother  
How to Make it in America  
Jeopardy  
Lost  
Mister Ed  
Rocky and Bullwinkle

Sex and the City  
That 70s Show  
The Addams Family  
The Facts of Life  
The Munsters  
The Patty Duke Show  
The Simpsons  
Two and a Half Men



### Movies

The Pink Panther (1963)  
The Graduate (1967)  
Animal House (1978)  
Airplane (1980)  
Volunteers (1985)  
Dirty Dancing (1987)  
Jumanji (1995)  
Shallow Hal (2001)

A Walk to Remember (2002)  
What a Girl Wants (2003)  
Christmas with the Kranks (2004)  
Mr. and Mrs. Smith (2005)  
Blood Diamond (2006)

